

**Less is More, More or Less. The Goddess of Wisdom Speaks:**

**An examination of Intellectual Inferiority Complex  
in a Few Women of Polish Jewish Ancestry**



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A Contextual Essay & “Film”  
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<sup>1</sup> This Art Piece was completed by 361 ArtWorks Facilitators, Jan Dworkin & Randee Levine on September 28-29, 2012. To read more about how the piece was created go to [http://361artworks.com/?page\\_id=598](http://361artworks.com/?page_id=598)

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*I kick a sleeping dog  
in the basement.  
I remind myself that I come  
from  
a family and a gender  
that was oppressed  
by lack of  
education, opportunity,  
permission to speak out in this world,  
and that I,  
their child and grandchild,  
now have that possibility,  
so I  
can speak on behalf of those  
who could not speak.*

(Hollis, 2013, Chapter 4, para. 28)



## Introduction

This project centers on women's experience of intellectual inferiority, and more specifically, the experience of intellectual inferiority in Jewish women of Polish working class ancestry, across four generations of my family. It explores the impact that intellectual inferiority has on each of us individually, as well as collectively. It shows that the experience of intellectual inferiority happens when one gender or class within a culture puts down another. It explores, further, how we sometimes internalize that downing, and end up turning it on ourselves and limiting our life decisions as a result. When external oppression and social expectations are coupled with the internalized oppression we experience on the inside, we often give up our life dreams. We settle for a smaller version of ourselves rather than becoming what we want, or what we are fully capable of becoming. My aim in this project has been to develop a deeper understanding of some of the forces at play that amplify the experience of feeling intellectually inferior, and to begin to think about new ways to tackle this complex. I hope my work helps women find the inner capacity to celebrate and honor all that they are, and all that they dream of becoming. This project was born from a strong experience I had during a mid-term exam in 2010, part of my studies for the Masters in Process Work.

### *Debut of the Intellectual Inferiority Complex*

In the first part of the mid-term exam, I worked live with a client in front of my classmates and two examiners. At the end of this component, I felt confident that I had unfolded an unknown aspect of my client's process, which in Process Work we call the "secondary process," and had satisfied the requirements of the exam. What is more known or familiar to a client is

called the “primary process.” Even if a student unfolds something primary, rather than secondary, in the live work, they have the opportunity during Part 2 of the exam to engage in a reflective and analytical discussion with the examiner. The student can still pass the exam by demonstrating their awareness and capacity to pick up feedback and eldership in this second part of the exam.

Part 2 of the exam takes place in a private room, with the examinee and one examiner. Following completion of my live work, I followed the examiner to a private room for Part 2. As the door shut behind us, the examiner asked me the first questions: “What is primary? And what is secondary?” I heard an evaluative tone of voice that I interpreted as an accusation that what I had done was not correct. What follows is a dramatic description of what happened to me:

I experienced what felt like a bolt of lightning striking my core. It travelled through my entire central nervous system, leaving me temporarily paralyzed. After what seemed like an eternity, I heard a foreign voice emerge from my mouth that I didn’t recognize at all. The words, tone, quality and energy of the voice that responded to the examiner, was not one I was familiar with. It felt like a male figure inside me. *He* was strange, uncomfortable, extremely harsh, unrelenting and unforgiving. It was like an alien being had inhabited my body, and taken control.

I later found out that Carl Jung had described such an experience of a distinct alien personality inside oneself as a *psychological complex*. Jung described a “complex” as a “...‘node’ in the unconscious that one could imagine as a knot of unconscious feelings and beliefs, detectable indirectly, through behavior that is puzzling or hard to account for” (Types of Psychological Complexes, 2011).

After this initial experience in the exam, the “alien creature,” as I named it, would retreat for short periods, but returned over and over again. It would appear while I was in session with clients at the River’s Way Clinic, while I was facilitating small and large groups as a Leadership and Organizational Development consultant, and while I was coaching executives one-on-one. It would barge in uninvited, and unwelcomed, and “take over” from my normal self. I never knew when it would come. Over time, I became paranoid. I was unable to be fully present with my clients. I felt hopeless at those moments and thought, what’s the point in trying to stay present and professional? This alien will come and when it comes, it will destroy me. And come, it would. When it did, I would become paralyzed, and my mind would go blank. I would desperately try to hold on to any semblance of power, that in actuality, I no longer felt I had, or deserved. When my client(s) left for that day, I would momentarily feel sorry for myself. As time went on, and these kinds of experiences mounted, I began to feel less and less intelligent, and smaller and smaller in relation to this alien creature. It felt like it was taking a hold of my soul.

### ***Research Questions***

As this intellectual inferiority complex creature took over my soul, I began to wonder:

1. Is it possible, by processing and understanding more about this complex, to transform it?
2. When we feel small, stupid and stuck, are there ways of leveraging that experience, to go deeper in, and gain insights, that can help us bring more of ourselves out?
3. Is it possible, through this exploration, to help women get closer to discovering our deep inalienable power, and wholeness?

I designed the research project to try and answer some of these questions. And through the research process, I added a fourth question:

4. What can be learned from understanding and discovering patterns passed down through multiple generations?

### ***A Film and Contextual Essay***

This final project includes a film and this contextual essay. The film has three goals. The first goal is to take the audience on a multi-sensory experience, enabling them to see, touch and feel how a small group of Polish Jewish women from one family over multiple generations suffered from an intellectual inferiority complex. The second goal is to share the personal transformative journey that unfolded for one of those women (myself) who was healing herself and potentially working also to heal generational patterns past, present and future. The final goal is to spark viewers' curiosity, through watching the film and participating in follow-up dialogues, to explore their own experience of familial, social and cultural freedom and oppression across generations. I hope viewers get insights into how our individual stories shape our individual intelligences and help make each of us who we are today.

The purpose of this contextual essay is to describe how autobiographical, intergenerational research into my family history and the social context was combined with Processwork techniques to create a transformational healing journey and insights into internalized oppression. It is not the purpose of this essay to provide a comprehensive history of women's and Jewish oppression over the ages, though some relevant insights from my exploration of this rich history will be shared. Rather, the contextual essay intends to enrich the creative expression of the film by filling in key details about the process and transformative journey that unfolded.

### ***Relevance and Contribution of the Project***

On one level, this project is very personal and has relevance for my own family. On another level, I believe the project has relevance for the whole world. I hope this project will be of interest to all who have experienced feeling intellectually inferior as well as to those who have felt intellectually superior to others. That just about covers all of us! This project contributes to the biographical base of knowledge on the multi-generational experience of intellectual inferiority complex, and may be of value to anyone interested in how certain aspects of who we are may be influenced by our ancestors, intergenerational trauma and internalized oppression.

### ***Chapter Overview***

The first chapter describes the evolution of this project and the methodology.

The second chapter presents the major social and historical factors that I identified as impacting on the experience of the intellectual inferiority complex in my family. It defines some key terms and describes Process Work concepts that were important to my understanding of these social and historical factors.

The third chapter, called *The Transformation*, provides the core of this contextual essay. In this chapter, I describe the inner journey that transformed my intellectual inferiority complex and I tell the story of my paternal grandmother, “Bubby<sup>2</sup> Rose,” using information from my family interviews, socio-historical research, and an imaginative ProcessWork technique. It concludes

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<sup>2</sup> Bubby is Yiddish for grandmother.

with my reimagining of the exam experience described in this introduction, showing a transformation of the intellectual inferiority complex.

The conclusion summarizes what I have learnt through this creative research project and presents my ideas for future directions of the work.



# Chapter 1 Project Evolution and Methodology: From Academic Paper to a Film and Contextual Essay

In this chapter I describe the evolution of my project and explain the research method. This final project was originally intended to be an academic paper. Three insights from the research journey resulted in the final product becoming a creative research project comprising of a film and contextual essay. (Sparks, 2006).

## *A Pattern Emerges Across Generations*

My final project initially aimed to explore four themes: Jewish identity and culture, immigration-emigration/abandonment/homelessness(displacement due to war and trauma), relationship with money, and intellectual inferiority (see Appendix A).

In December 2011, I conducted preliminary interviews with eleven family members (4 males and 7 females, spanning 4 generations) asking questions on all four themes. When I got to the question on intellectual inferiority, which I would frame by briefly sharing my own struggles with intellectual inferiority, something very unexpected happened. A striking pattern of responses emerged during this first set of interviews and shaped the evolution of the project.

The unexpected pattern was that many of the women had strong emotional reactions and all reported experiencing themselves as not intelligent or stupid. Similar reactions and stories did not emerge from the men that I interviewed (my father, brother and an uncle). On the surface, at least, the men did not seem to suffer from an intellectual inferiority complex, and overall,

reported having a healthier confidence in themselves, their talents, and their life accomplishments. Why was there this apparent discrepancy between the males and the females? Despite spanning four generations, all the females that struggled with feeling intellectually inferior were Jewish, of Polish ancestry, and from working class poor to middle class. My curiosity was piqued. Did these elements play a significant role I wondered? Were there other important factors? Many questions began to form in my mind. At this point, I narrowed the theme of my final project to focus only on intellectual inferiority complex.

### ***Narrowing the Focus to Intellectual Inferiority in Women Only***

My new aim was to explore and understand the intellectual inferiority complex in women of Polish Jewish ancestry, over four generations, within my own family. I had a hypothesis that this intellectual inferiority complex might be transmitted down through generations and I wanted to know more about what factors and influences sparked this complex in the first place. Assuming that my hypothesis was true, I wondered whether there were things that could be done to stop the transmission of the complex to further generations. The contract with my Study Committee was still to do an academic paper, with a new focus on exploring women's experience of intellectual inferiority complex through the lives of six living females, spanning three generations, and both of my deceased grandmothers.

My research included a broad survey of texts about Polish Jewish culture and history, feminism and class history in order to deepen my understanding of the themes and contextualize the autobiographical interviews. In March 2012, I conducted a second set of interviews focused on intellectual inferiority (see Appendix B). I chose to focus on eight women, spanning four

generations, of whom six were currently alive. As will be explained later in this paper, I used a Process Work technique to imaginatively ‘interview’ both of my deceased grandmothers.

### **The eight women**

1. Chaie Raizel Westel (Bernatt), paternal grandmother (1912, May 15-1997, Jan. 19)
2. Faye Findlay (Kerbel), maternal grandmother (1909, July 12-1971, Sept. 27)
3. Marlene Kerbel (Bacher), mother, 74 yrs old (1939, June 28-)
4. Ruth Jacobson (Bernatt/Beckerman), paternal aunt, 74 yrs old (1939, March 4-)
5. Barbara Bernatt (Mills), twin sister, 53 yrs. old (1960, Dec. 14 -)
6. Cathy Bernatt, 53 yrs. old (1960, Dec. 14 -)
7. Emily Bernatt, niece and brother’s daughter, 16 yrs. old (1995, Nov. 12-)
8. Hannah Bernatt, niece and brother’s daughter, 15 yrs. old (1997, January 9-)

I selected two women to interview from each generation. In the first and second generation, I chose one woman from each side of the family. In the third and fourth generations, I interviewed two sets of sisters, (including myself and my twin sister). This enabled me to compare how each generation suffered from the intellectual inferiority complex, as well as explore differences within subgroups of the nuclear family system.

All interviews were videotaped and/or audio-recorded, and transcribed. I analyzed the interview data by searching for patterns across generations. I read the transcripts and highlighted comments that were similar. With this thematic analysis, I uncovered core themes.

The interviews gathered biographical data about my family's experience of the intellectual inferiority complex and they also provided an unexpectedly transformational social interaction. For example, a powerful moment of healing across generations happened in an interaction

between my mother and I. This moment is included in the film, as a direct excerpt from the audio recording. I continued to live, and struggle, with my own intellectual inferiority complex.

Throughout my two-year exploration of this topic, I wrote journal entries and created artwork (drawings and clay sculpture). The complex returned frequently, and impacted my professional work. These months were dark, filled with despair, and hopelessness. Then something pivotal happened, which became the core of my final project.

### ***The Alchemical Transformation***

The turning point for me personally, and a core finding of my project, was the use of Process Work techniques to creatively transform the painful experience of my own intellectual inferiority complex. In Chapter 3, The Transformation, I will explain these techniques and what happened.

### ***Organic Evolution of the Film***

The final evolution of my project from an academic paper into a creative film and contextual essay happened as I was preparing my 45-minute final project presentation. The purpose of the final project presentation is to outline the focus of one's project, and to stimulate people's interest to know more. It is given to the larger Process Work community and one's family and friends, just prior to graduation from the Masters in Process Work program.

It was in designing this presentation that my "film" was organically born. It was not intended to be a film. I believed I was simply creating a Keynote presentation, with a musical and audible sound track integrated into it. The feedback from many audience members, following the presentation, was that I had made a film with a profound message that should be

shared with a wider audience. Based on the power and impact that this “film” had on the audience, my study committee approved a shift from an academic paper to the film and a contextual essay. A videotape of the live presentation is uploaded on Vimeo at <http://vimeo.com/user16695134/less-is-more-more-or-less>.<sup>3</sup> It is forty-minutes long and it is the official submission for this final project.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The link to the videotape of the live presentation uploaded to Vimeo is at <http://vimeo.com/user16695134/less-is-more-more-or-less>

<sup>4</sup> My future plan is to create an actual short documentary film. The link to that will be added to the Process Work Manuscripts webpage once complete to allow those interested to watch it.



## Chapter 2 Social and historical forces impacting on intellectual inferiority

In this chapter, I present the major social and historical factors that I identified as impacting on the experience of the intellectual inferiority complex in my family. The chapter defines some key terms and describes Process Work concepts that were important to my understanding of these social and historical factors. I give examples to show how they are reflected within the larger cultural, social and historical sphere as well as within the lives of the women in my family.

From my interviews and literature review, I came to the hypothesis that class differences, culture, family dynamics, politics, religion and the social systems of gender (patriarchy and matriarchy) all factor into who suffers from intellectual inferiority. Here I will provide some short definitions in order to help outline some of the complex dynamics at play in the creation of and struggle with intellectual inferiority complex. Definitions will be given for gender role conditioning, oppression, internalized oppression, sexism, internalized sexism, patriarchy, intelligence, and intellectual inferiority complex. I will also describe the Process Work theory of deep democracy and the concept of ‘ghost roles’ that were tools I used to understand and transform the multi-generational experience of these socio-historical forces and the intellectual inferiority complex they support.

### ***Gender, Gender Role Conditioning and Patriarchy***

In many cultures around the world, patriarchal and religious influences have resulted in “men”, often being thought of as more intelligent than women (Hotep, 2008; Parush, 2004).

Progress has been made in women's status and intellectual standing through the sacrifices and passion of many women, from ancient to modern times, and through the feminist movements.

Yet, if we travelled the world today, from the most undeveloped, to the most developed countries, we would still find the perception that men are smarter than women. We would still find a strong belief and that a woman's place is at home taking care of the children and being a devoted wife. And given that defined role, striving to develop one's intellect is unnecessary (Friedan, 1963; Dowling, 1981; Juschka, 2010; Parush, 2004; Shilo, 2005; Spelman, 1988).

Women, it seems, have been fighting a fierce battle to be seen, heard and recognized, as equal to man in intelligence. Women have been fighting to have a right to be university or religiously educated, at the highest levels; to have the freedom, to become what we most desire. Though we have made some progress in all these areas, we have a long, long way to go! It seems to me that no matter how much outer change we are successful in making, the inner struggle to change how we see ourselves is the tougher battle. Overcoming internalized oppression, and finding access to our inalienable power is our greatest challenge.

## **Gender**

Juschka (2010) defines gender as “a socially constructed set of accepted roles for men and women. It differs from that of the actual sex of a person in that gender roles can change with the progression of society” (p. 248).

## **Gender role conditioning**

Gender role conditioning describes how it is that we learn how to perform our genders. We learn this early on through imitating those around us that are older, including parents, older siblings, peers, etc. They teach us what is desirable and what is undesirable. Behaving outside our role can result in exclusion, ostracism, withholding of love, violence or threats of violence,



humiliation, loss and other forms of punishment. We receive acceptance, approval, admiration, connection, inclusion, freedom from violence and other rewards by acting within one's prescribed gender role (Butler, 1990; West & Zimmerman, 1987 as cited in David, 2014, p. 199).

### **Patriarchy**

Barlas (2002), a Pakistani scholar of women in Islam defines patriarchy,

... as a historically specific mode of rule by fathers that... assumes... a view of God as Father/male, and a theory of father-right, extending to a husband's claim to rule over his wife and children... as a politics of differentiation that privileges males by transforming biological sex into politicized gender, which prioritizes the male while making the women different, less than, or the 'other'. (p.12)

### **The feminine mystique**

Betty Friedan's famous text, *The Feminine Mystique*, written in 1963, came out three years after my parents gave birth to my twin sister and me. The 'feminine mystique' is the idea that women are or should be naturally fulfilled to devoting their lives to being housewives and mothers (Friedan, 1989). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, when schools for girls were slowly starting to develop, their aim was to model the "ideal woman" in the image of the perfect housewife." (Shilo, 2005, p. 151). Despite many external changes over the last fifty years, I believe the feminine mystique continues to have a massive negative impact on women and lessens their capacity to become all that they can become. This Polish saying communicates the impact of the feminine mystique to its essence: "Kiedy na dziewczynie zawolaja zono, juz jczywcem pogrzebiono", which translates in English to, "When a girl becomes a wife, she is buried alive" (Deutsche, 1973, p. 54). This idea has created what ProcessWork calls ghosts that women have internalized over generations. It has presented obstacles that women must tackle, if they want to go outside the mainstream patriarchal values that still hold strong in our world and our society today.

My grandparents, Polish Ashkenazi Jews, conveyed messages to their daughters that getting married, having children and being a good wife housewife was the epitome of being a woman. If we look at the Jewish family and Jewish law, we can see that the impact of the patriarch was strong.

Shilo (2005) explains that:

According to Jewish law, the minimal age for marriage is thirteen years for a boy and twelve for a girl... This was standard in Eastern European Jewry and it became the hallmark of learned Jews... and was justified by a variety of excuses: the hardships of life in exile, the desire to guarantee sexual purity, economic pressures, and the shortage of suitable spouses.... children became part of the adult community, as it were omitting childhood and adolescence... in the case of girls, the bride also become subordinate to a new master—her husband instead of her father. (p. 38)

Shilo notes that in Orthodox and historical Judaism, gender roles were strictly defined and the rules and rituals of daily life highly regimented. This was considered necessary to control the sexual temptation that women represented for men. At home, the father was the master. Along with praying and studying of the religious texts, fathers had the responsibility of finding suitable husbands for each of his daughters. For centuries, this was done with the help of a local matchmaker. Female children as young as 10 years old were engaged to be married to young Jewish boys. Once married, and despite the fact that her husband might only be 12 years old, he became the new master to which she must answer and obey. These young boys had little experience with life, let alone with being a husband. The young children were pressured to produce offspring as soon as they were biologically able to and most became full-time mothers at an age commonly thought to be too young in contemporary society (Shilo, 2005).

My aunt and my mother had their first child at the age of 19 and 20 respectively. Though my aunt had completed training to be a land title researcher, her husband called her on her first

day of work, and told her his assistant quit and he needed her to come in the following day and replace her. My aunt felt she had no choice but to obey her husband's wishes. She quit that job and never returned to land title research. I understand this experience as an individual example of the unconscious oppression that the larger patriarchal system has on women.

### ***Oppression***

Ruth (2006) defines oppression as “the systematic, one-way, institutionalized mistreatment of the members of one group by those of another group or by the society as a whole. ... People may be mistreated but in order for it to be considered oppression, it needs to be built into the system around us” (p. 116). Mullaly (2002) helps unfold further what Ruth says:

What determines oppression is when a person is blocked from opportunities to self-development, is excluded from full participation in society, does not have certain rights that the dominant group takes for granted, or is assigned a second-class citizenship, not because of individual talent, merit, or failure, but because of his or her membership in a particular group or category of people. (p. 28)

### **Internalized oppression**

Rosenwasser (2000) summarizes Brown (1995), Schwartz (1995) and Sherover-Marcuse (1994) explaining that:

Internalized oppression is an involuntary reaction to oppression which originates outside one's group and which results in group members loathing themselves, disliking others in their group, and blaming themselves for the oppression – rather than realizing that these beliefs are constructed in them by oppressive socio-economic political systems. (Cited by Rosenwasser, 2000, p. 1)

Mason (1990) points out the greatest challenge about internalized oppression saying:

Once oppression has been internalized, little force is needed to keep us submissive. We harbor inside ourselves the pain and the memories, the fears and the confusions, the negative self-images and the low expectations, turning them into weapons with which to re-injure ourselves, every day of our lives. (p.1)

David (2014) expresses poignantly the challenges of internalized oppression,

Internalized oppression can be hard to see. Because we live inside it, it can be like an invisible gas with no odor. Unless we can add some kind of sink to the gas, we will not be able to tell whether it is accumulating in the room, about to suffocate us, or to explode. (p. 199)

Speaking personally, I feel I suffer from internalized oppression when I experience feeling intellectually inferior to others. Within a few seconds in the company of certain people, I can feel insignificant and worthless in terms of my intelligence. Despite the fact that I am well respected professionally in my field, receive affirmations from others that I am smart, have two Masters Degrees, am now completing my third, I can still end up feeling insignificant and unintelligent because of not knowing something. In researching this project, I discovered that all the females in my family over four generations suffered from this as well. Where does this internalized oppression come from?

### **Ghosts, ghost roles and marginalization**

It is known that those who are in positions of power or influence generally define expected and acceptable behaviors and roles within a family, an organization, a culture or a society. Those that fail to live up to the expected norms of behavior or roles often become marginalized or oppressed by the majority. They may be ridiculed, shamed, disowned, scapegoated, sent away or fired. The apparent goal is to permanently remove the disturbance or the behavior from the group, family, workplace or social structure. This marginalization is the dynamic behind gender role conditioning defined above.

In Process Work, a 'ghost role' is defined as:

a role in the group that is not directly spoken for but whose effects are nonetheless felt in the group atmosphere and can be seen in the behavior of group members who react to the Ghost Role.... Ghost Roles are referred to in conversation but are

not represented directly because of a group identity that is against the Ghost Role's particular viewpoint or behavior. Bringing a voice to the Ghost Role allows for interaction with it, which can be relieving to the field. But most important, it makes the information that the Ghost Role contains available to the whole system. (Schupbach, 2004)

Though ghosts are most often not directly represented, one can sense or feel them in the atmosphere, often as disturbances. When a woman or a young girl says, 'I have nothing worthwhile to offer' or 'I am not smart enough to do x, there are several possible ghost roles. One ghost role is the one who *is* smart. Another ghost role is the role of the oppressor (the one who says, 'you are not smart') that the woman has internalized. This could come in many forms: a religious leader quoting religious texts that say woman is intellectually inferior to man and that women should obey their husbands; a father or mother who repeatedly tells their daughter she is not smart enough because she is a girl and she should not try to do certain things. Another ghost role is a supportive figure that might say that girls can do anything and everything that boys can do.

Process Work explains that although a ghost role might disappear temporarily, it does not go away permanently. The marginalized role or ghost role recedes, often angry and hurt at feeling unheard, dismissed and misrepresented. Over time, those who are marginalized end up internalizing the outside accusations. Joe Goodbread (2009) describes this process: "those who are marginalized come to accept...[a] world view that they really are different, inferior, dangerous, crazy; that they form a distinct and stable category of otherness from what is normal, acceptable, and mainstream" (p. 81).

### **Sexism**

Sexism is both discrimination based on gender and the attitudes, stereotypes, and the cultural elements that promote this discrimination. Given the historical and continued imbalance of power, where men as a class are privileged over women

as a class, ...an important...part of the term is that sexism is prejudice *plus* power. (tekanji, 2007a)

### **Internalized sexism**

“Internalized sexism is the involuntary internalization by women of the sexist messages that are present in their societies and culture.” (tekanji, 2007b)

We receive messages of sexism through external and internal oppression. Messages and behaviors coming to us from the outside, through institutions and individuals, e.g. “Women are too emotional to be in positions of authority” are examples of external sexism. Internalized sexism is taking in and believing the stereotypes and misinformation that our sexist culture tells us about being female and what it means to be a woman. We may have inner thoughts like, “what do I know...?”, “who am I to speak...?” The impact of external and internal oppression is painful and limits women individually and collectively, depriving the world of our best thoughts, decisions and actions.

### ***Defining Intelligence***

The etymology of the word ‘intelligence’ is from the Latin verb *intelligere*, which means to comprehend, perceive or choose between (intelligent, n.d.). In a journal article entitled, *A Collection of Definitions of Intelligence*, the authors collected 70 definitions of intelligence, spanning collective, psychological and artificial intelligence definitions (Scarf, 2008). Another source cites a collective definition, endorsed by 52 experts, which states that: “Intelligence is a very general mental capability that, among other things, involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience” (Gottfredson, 1997).

People tend to compare themselves to academic, social, familial, and cultural benchmarks of intelligence and then create a hierarchy of intelligence that they then measure themselves and others against. Over time, we internalize these external assessments and tend to feel a sense of inferiority, superiority or equality to others with regards to our intelligence. This external and internal evaluation depends on the context of the individuals or group we are comparing ourselves to. So, although in a general sense, someone may feel inferior to others intellectually, there will be times when that person also feels equal or even superior to certain individuals and groups.

In addition to the more standard definition, there is another class of intelligences called the *hot intelligences*. *Hot intelligences* include the social, practical, emotional and personal intelligences. (Mayer & Mitchell, 1998; Mayer and Salovey, 2004). Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2004) define emotional intelligence as

the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the ability to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (e.g., Mayer & Salovey, 1997)

It is relevant to note that in 1917, in Krakow, Poland at one of the first schools for girls started by Sarah Schenirer, the focus was to, “preserve their unique qualities, building upon what was regarded as their innate capacity for greater emotional sensitivity.” ( Ross, 2006, p. 5)

As this project focuses on eight women of Polish Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry and their struggle with not feeling intelligent enough, it is relevant to share some background on how Judaism viewed the role of women and intelligence as reflected in the original Jewish religious texts.

**How Jewish religious texts view the role of women and their intelligence**

The Old Testament, also known as the Hebrew Torah, or the Pentateuch (five books of Moses), is considered to be the ultimate source of Jewish law. All of the people that interpreted and developed the Torah into Jewish law were men. The essence of Jewish intellectual life was defined, and demonstrated, by immersing oneself in the study of the Torah and the Talmud. This enabled one to gain authority and knowledge of the Jewish faith. Men and boys were granted the responsibility and expectation to dedicate their lives to the rigors of in depth intellectual study of these texts. Klepfisz (1990) points out a painful dilemma for women: “Jewish women were raised in a culture that highly valued participation in an intellectual tradition, and simultaneously barred them from access to that tradition” (Klepfisz, 1990). Why were women not permitted to study the Torah?

One of the reasons the rabbis forcibly restricted and limited a woman’s access to an intellectual life was that men were believed to be weak when it came to controlling their lustful urges (Gerbakher, 2012). Women were considered to be a sexual temptation to men, and therefore dangerous. In addition, emphasis on trying to protect a woman’s sexual purity, over her intellectual development, created a set of rules that were highly oppressive to women in the medieval and classical periods. Women were not allowed in the religious courts, denying them the power of witness, speech, study or authority. Both of these factors had a significantly negative impact, on the status and rights of Jewish women, and on their ability to develop and contribute intellectually, to society (Gerbakher, 2012).

In the *Mishnah*, Rabbi Eliezer, in Sotah 3:4 strongly condemned teaching women the Torah. He said that everyone that teaches his daughter Torah, teaches her filth [*tiflut*, lasciviousness] (Gerbakher, 2012 p. 10). In the eleventh century, a Tunisian Rabbi, Nissim B.



Ya'akov said, "the Sages...were opposed to fathers teaching their daughters Torah, since according to Talmudic opinion this will cause them to fall into corruption, deception and cunning..." (Weisberg, 2003, p. 24). Religious laws were constructed to create separation of men from women. In the Babylonian Talmud, *Berakhot 24a*, it says that "women are an other [separate] people," so different from men that they require a completely different set of physical, moral and intellectual imperatives (Peskowitz, 1997). To deny women the Torah, Gerbakher (2012) concludes, "...is to deny them the entire Jewish religious and legal system...and to brand them a separate and inferior intellectual entity." (p. 10) During the classical and medieval periods, the notion of female intellectual inferiority, "was taken for granted, both in the Jewish community and in the gentile society of that era..." (Wolowelsky, p.

Many of the social policies that were constructed by rabbis to guide daily, community and religious life were based on the implicit and explicit understanding, that intellectually, women were inferior to men. For over 3000 years, Jewish men barred women from ritual roles in synagogues. They demanded subservience from women in the home, and forbid them participation or leadership within the judicial system (Shilo, 2005; Gerbakher, 2012; Weininger, 1906).

During the Haskalah or Jewish Enlightenment in Germany and Eastern Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the role of women in Jewish intellectual and ritual life was deeply challenged. This resulted in a rupture within the Ashkenazi Jewish communities and the formation of Reform Judaism. Since 1922, when a vote passed in America to allow the ordination of female Rabbis, over 600 female Rabbis have been ordained throughout Europe, N. America, Australia and Israel. Women have since been given a new and more egalitarian intellectual role within Reform and Conservative Judaism. (Gerbakher, 2012)

**The triarchic theory of intelligence and its significance**

Through my research for this project, I came across Robert Sternberg and his theory of Triarchic Intelligence (1996). More than fifty-six years earlier in 1940, David Wechsler described “non-intellective” as well as “intellective” elements of intelligence, by which he meant affective, personal and social factors. Wechsler proposed that, “...non-intellective abilities were essential to predict one’s ability to succeed in life” (Cherniss, 2000, p. 3). Sternberg not only supported Wechsler’s proposal but in 1997 published a book entitled, *Successful Intelligence: How Practical and Creative Intelligence Determine Success in Life*.

Sternberg defines three types of intelligences: Analytical, Practical and Creative or Experiential Intelligence. This discovery was significant to expanding how I looked at, defined and thought about intelligence and the intellectual inferiority complex. I was able to use Sternberg’s theory to help the women in my family be able to each celebrate aspects of their intelligence they had not previously identified as intelligence.

According to Sternberg, the type of intelligence that is most often evaluated through I.Q. (Intelligent Quotient) Tests is Analytical Intelligence. People high in analytical intelligence are able to take apart problems and see solutions that are not often seen (Sternberg, 1999). We sometimes refer to people as being *book smart* who are high in analytical intelligence.

In contrast, practical intelligence includes a combination of abilities including adaptation, shaping and selection to one’s environment. Practical intelligence is often referred to as *street smarts*. The third type of intelligence is Creative or Experiential Intelligence. This type of intelligence focuses on the ability to perform tasks or respond to situations, effectively, based on how familiar they are.

As I discovered in my research, neither one of my grandmothers was *book smart*. Analytical intelligence, the type of intelligence that much of mainstream society and culture values or defines people's intelligence by, is one that none of the females in my family identified as being strong in. Why is that? I believe that part of the reason is the influence of patriarchy, religion and sexism, as outlined above. All of them, however, rated themselves as having high Practical Intelligence or *street smarts*. My aunt, younger niece, twin sister and I also self-rated high in Creative Intelligence.

Sternberg tells us that Creative and Practical Intelligence are the two kinds of intelligences we need to nurture in order to be successful in our lives. Sternberg's theory suggests that successfully intelligent people are those who have the ability to achieve success according to their own definition of success, within their socio-cultural context. They do so by identifying and capitalizing on their strengths, and identifying and correcting or compensating for their weaknesses in order to adapt to, shape, and select environments (Sternberg, 1985). When we attune to the environment, using a balance of analytical, creative, and practical skills, we demonstrate that intelligence is modifiable rather than fixed. (Sternberg, 1996)

My film features the practical and creative intelligence and talents of each of the six living females in my family. It also shows how some did not follow their deepest career dreams, as they believed that they were not smart enough or capable enough to fulfill those dreams. The mechanisms behind internalized oppression and an intellectual inferiority complex helps bring to light the dynamics at play when extremely talented and intelligent females are unable to see themselves in that way.

### *Intellectual Inferiority Complex*

As mentioned earlier, Jung described a complex as “a ‘node’ in the unconscious that may be imagined as a knot of unconscious feelings and beliefs, detectable indirectly, through behavior that is puzzling or hard to account for” (“About Complexes,” 2011). Furthermore, Brooke explains that Jung “conceived of [a complex] as fragmentary personalities or splinter psyches, within which there is perception, feeling, volition and intention, as though a subject were present which thinks and is goal-directed” (Brooke, 1991, p. 126).

Alfred Adler, an Austrian psychiatrist is credited with first talking about the existence of “the ego complex”, which was separated further into “the complex of inferiority” and “the complex of superiority” (“About Complexes,” 2011). He defined the inferiority complex as “the presentation of the person to himself and to others that he is not strong enough to solve a given problem in a socially useful way” (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956, p. 258). Intellectual inferiority complex is one amongst many types of inferiority complex. Conversely, people with superiority complexes may be “boastful, self-centered, arrogant or sarcastic. Such people are likely to feel important by making fun of or demeaning others” (Sharf, 2008, p. 118).

In my research I found that the experience of being regularly demeaned or downed about one’s intelligence by others with more authority or power may be a key contributing factor to the internalized oppression of believing one is not intelligent. Both the younger and older women featured in the film share stories about themselves being compared to siblings or to other women socially and culturally and the profound and lasting impact that had on their own sense of feeling inferior to others intellectually throughout their lives.

**Universality of the intellectual inferiority complex**

Of course, it is not only women and girls from Polish Jewish working class and middle class backgrounds that may suffer from an intellectual inferiority complex. Girls and women across cultures all over the world may struggle with feeling “less than” or intellectually inferior to others. Boys and men may also suffer from intellectual inferiority. This project did not focus on them because it was guided by the pattern that emerged in my interviews.

***Deep Democracy: A Process Work Paradigm For Addressing Social And Historical Oppression***

Deep democracy is one of the principles underlying Process Work and it means creating space for all voices to be heard. Deep democracy is based on the premise that we have all roles inside of us and as we become more aware and conscious of that, we can develop more and more fluidity in moving and shifting between roles. Deep democracy also presupposes that when conflict occurs, it is usually a result of some roles being represented and others being pushed down and marginalized (ghost roles). One of the ways to work on conflict and transform it is to identify the ghost roles then bring them in and engage with them.

Another skill that is very helpful in living deep democracy is to develop the ability to “switch roles”: to step into and become the other. By deeply feeling into what the other feels and thinks, we can often gain insights that will bring innovative and transformative resolutions to difficult and challenging situations.

There is a phrase in Sanskrit that comes from Hinduism, *Tatvam Asi*. Translated, *Tatvam Asi* means I AM THAT. I am the other. Normally, we identify as being THIS but not THAT. So for example, I am a rational, calm and logical person. I am not an irrational, wild and emotional

person. Most people identify or try to identify with those roles or experiences that the majority supports; and they try not to identify with those roles that the majority judges negatively.

The problem is that the roles and experiences we do not identify with, the roles we think are *not us*, or the roles that the majority tries to eliminate, do not just disappear. They go underground, and may not be seen or felt for a while, but eventually they begin to resurface. You might walk into a room and feel a lot of tension, anxiety, sadness, laughter or high positive energy in the air. Someone may start crying uncontrollably or scream and express rage. These outbursts may seem to come from “nowhere” yet a careful observer will notice that there were signals in the atmosphere. If the role or experiences are pushed down further, they will go quiet for a while but eventually they will emerge again. On the outside, it will feel like challenging situations get worse or escalate. Often the result is that those inhabiting the ghost roles will be further isolated and marginalized. Transformation and change happens when space is made for the marginal voices to rise up, engage with the mainstream and for both sides to genuinely hear one another.

In the next chapter I present the story of how I was able to transform my experience of an intellectual inferiority complex and work creatively with these social and historical forces, ultimately discovering an ancestral part of me: Rose, the goddess of wisdom.

## Chapter 3 The Transformation

In this chapter, I describe the inner journey that resulted in a profound transformation of my intellectual inferiority complex and the discovery of an ancestral part of me, from my paternal grandmother: Rose, the goddess of wisdom, who lives within. I tell the story of my paternal grandmother, “Bubby<sup>5</sup> Rose,” using information from my family interviews, socio-historical research, and an imaginative “interview” process that was part of the Process Work transformation of the inferiority complex for me. The chapter concludes with a reimagining of the exam experience described in the introduction, showing the transformative impacts of this creative research project.

### *The Crazy Possibility of Dying While Living*

The entire drama of the alchemical opus, according to Jung, reflects an inner drama, whose opening scene is the prima materia. The beginning is vague and obscure, highly unknown but highly potent, and the opus finally culminates in the “cymical [sic] wedding, the extreme act of union in which the work reaches its consummation.” (Jung, 1953, vol. 14, par. 104. Cited in Dworkin, 1984, p. 19)

The intellectual inferiority complex creature that I described in chapter one took center stage as the main character in my two-year inner drama. Following the discovery that four generations of females in my family also suffered with this intellectual inferiority complex, I wanted to find out more, to go deeper. I wondered if it were possible to somehow prevent the sudden and violent takeover that seemed to happen beyond my control when this creature arrived. Was it possible to turn away from the claustrophobia that I experienced that sent me into a panic and made me feel like I would run out of oxygen and die? I felt desperate to stop this

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<sup>5</sup> Bubby is Yiddish for grandmother.

pattern, the pain, the fear, and the paralysis associated with it. It is natural when pain comes for us to “turn away” from it and want it to stop. Hollis (2013) tells us that: “Complexes per se are neither good nor bad. What matters is how they play out in our lives. Or, very pragmatically, what they make us do or what do they keep us from doing?” (Ch. 4, *para.* 7). Fortunately, Process Work offers an alternative to turning away from the complex.

The emphasis of Process Work is to *follow process*: to follow that which is wanting to happen, to move towards rather than away, to welcome what appears, understanding that in it’s appearance is something that we need. It might be a quality or a state we are after. If we can open to following what is happening, the most profound transformations are possible.

Amy Mindell tells us:

In order to unfold the details of any particular experience, it is important to notice our everyday approach to experiences as well as the dreamlike or unknown background aspects of those events of which we are not quite aware. Only when all aspects of an experience are unfolded with awareness does the wisdom embedded in the experience reveal itself most fully. (Mindell, Amy, 2008, p. 212)

But it isn’t an easy path to take. Process Work suggests that rather than prevent the arrival and takeover of my complex, rather than turn away from the claustrophobia and fear of dying that comes with it, that I move towards it, and surrender fully, trusting that on the other side is something unknown that is waiting to happen. Everything from my normal cognitive and rational mind told me that this was crazy, ridiculous, and insane. Yet my cognitive, rational mind, unable to provide an alternative so far, considered that I might have nothing to lose in trying.

On September 27, 2012, I spent a full-day working with two Senior Process Work Institute trainers, Jan Working and Randee Levine, deeply exploring my own intellectual inferiority



complex. Though this day was not part of the planned methodology for the project, it deeply informed the research from a heuristic perspective. Clark Moustaskas refers to one part of the heuristic process, *indwelling* as:

turning inward to seek a deeper, more extended comprehension of the nature or meaning of a quality or theme of human experience....It follows clues wherever they appear; one dwells inside them and expands their meanings and associations until a fundamental insight is achieved. (Moustaskas, 1990, p. 24)

It was during this day, that I made contact with and imaginatively 'interviewed' both of my deceased grandmothers. The process that unfolded that day led to a personal transformation and deep healing with regards my own intellectual inferiority complex.

What I will share below is the transformation that unfolded “on the other side”, when I accepted this invitation to move towards, rather than away from what had been haunting and paralyzing me all my life.

### ***Part One: Surrendering to Death***

What follows is a first person narrative of what happens to me when the intellectual inferiority complex inhabits me. Jung described the experience of a complex as “*Ergiffenheit*, the state of being seized or possessed” (Hollis, 2013, Ch. 4, para. 8). My account is told as a creative and dramatic enactment of what happens in general when the complex appears, based specifically on what happened in my inner work journey with Dworkin and Levine. On that day, I met the intellectual inferiority complex and went where I had not gone before. The information communicated comes from audio recordings of that day, from artwork and poetry that was used to express what happened during the inner work journey and from memory. This narrative along with the visual creative enactment in the film creates a holistic depiction.

**Death by Decapitation**

Like a ninja, it comes “out of left field” with no warning and with one swift stroke, it decapitates me. I am headless, and the core part of who I know as me, is gone. In what seems like only a second, I go from being whole to shrinking to this tiny, tiny being that no one can see anymore. No one can see me, hear me or feel me. I am trapped somewhere deep down where no one can find me, not even me. I want to escape but I can’t get out. The decapitator has lopped off my head and buried the rest of me. I am AWOL (away without leave) from my normal cognitive functioning, with no apparent way back. It is like I am in this deep deep cavern, way down.

As I go further into this experience and notice what is happening even more, I notice several things happening.

Something is repellent about the whole experience. Nausea and intense claustrophobia come like two waves at the same time. Something is closing in and when I try to go into the claustrophobic experience, I panic. I can’t get enough oxygen. My lungs can take only short incomplete breaths. My heart feels both constricted and like it will explode out of my chest.

I try to imagine and visualize and feel what is on the other side of the claustrophobia and the panic.

I am in this tiny room with no space to move and with no human contact. I am all alone. I know the oxygen will eventually leave me, and I will die. I wonder whether I can open fully to the experience of dying? Though reticent and partly skeptical, another part is open and hopeful that I will find something new and I decide to at least try. I know that what is on this side has kept me imprisoned for too long and is becoming intolerable.

**Letting go into death through the dreambody**

We are able to access the dreamlike or unknown background aspects through what Arnold Mindell calls the shaman's body or dreambody. The shaman's body or dreambody is "a name for unusual experiences and altered states of consciousness that try to reach your everyday awareness through signals such as body symptoms and movement impulses, dreams and messages from the environment" (Mindell, 2008, p. 3-4).

I go inside and surrender, allowing my dreambody to take over. I find myself in a tiny room, and the walls are closing in. It is very difficult to not completely freak out. I have been in this tiny room with the walls closing in before, and have always escaped before allowing that scene to complete itself. Despite being terrified, I am determined to go all the way. I go very slowly, which in some ways intensifies the fear and the anticipation. But it is the best I can do. Eventually the walls close in and as my body is crushed, I feel my breath expire.

I keep talking to myself, saying 'just go Cathy. Let yourself die'. I let myself go more and more into that space where there is no more air until finally, I die.

Everything is completely quiet and pitch black, for what seems like a long long time. I imagine this is all there is: this is death. Then something happens. Suddenly I am moving backwards through space very fast through a force field causing my head, hands, and feet to be thrust forwards while my core is thrown back in a concave shape. I feel very discombobulated, nauseous and cold. Being unable to see anything in the pitch-blackness makes it more disorienting. My nausea increases, and I am sure that I will throw up. Then I feel something hot coming from behind me. I try to turn my head sideways slightly, and catch a reflection of light. I see orange flames coming towards me as I continue to move backwards. For some reason, I don't feel afraid of these flames. I feel that there is something in the flames, and in the heat, that will hold me and somehow keep me safe, and also alleviate the awful symptoms that I am experiencing. Somehow, I

know the flames will not burn me. I continue moving backwards. The heat gets stronger and stronger, and when I look behind me, there is a bright orange fireball coming closer and closer. It is bizarre, but I am still not afraid. I know that the fireball is not going to burn me. I know that it will envelop me; and envelop me it does. I am surprised to sense this and to trust it. I imagine this must be what it is like to be born. I realize that in moving backwards through space and feeling the orange fireball envelop and hold me, I am breaking out. I am breaking free, and escaping from the stuck place I had been imprisoned in. I feel that when the orange fire ball opens and releases me, I will be born anew!”

### ***Part Two: The Goddess of Wisdom is Born***

I feel that Levine and Dworkin enabled me to let go and experience dying completely, at an inner dreaming, metaphorical level through their support and trust. After letting go and surrendering to death, after the black stillness, followed by the journey through space, and the orange fireball enveloping and releasing me, I felt something deep inside me shift. It felt like I had just given birth to something new. I couldn't immediately put words to it or feel what it was. I needed some time and space. After a three-hour break, the session continued.

### **Shapeshifting**

The next part of my journey, following the death experience, involved a technique called 'shapeshifting' which allowed me to imaginatively experience each of my grandmothers. Arnold Mindell explains:

Shapeshift into “x”. That is, feel as deeply into that figure as you can, and use your whole body to become it. See through its eyes and let it make sounds and/or speak through you. If “x” is very surprising or unusual, trust that it will show its direction and wisdom if you allow it to unfold. (Mindell, 2005, p. 123)

Shapeshifting is a technique that originates from shamanism. Traditionally it describes the ability of one being to physically transform into another form or being, sometimes animal,

sometimes human. In some ways, empathy, the capacity to step into someone else's shoes, to really try to feel and experience what the other is feeling and experiencing, is the preliminary stage of shapeshifting. Psychological shapeshifting begins with empathizing, and then takes it further by putting aside one's primary identity. It tries to fully pick up and become the energy and spirit of the "other". By doing this, one is able to get in touch with parts of themselves that were previously impossible to access. The technique often leads to a moment of realization: that I AM THAT, that I am the other. When used in conflict situations, the realization that comes often results in a de-escalation of conflict and an experience of feeling compassion for the other or self-compassion for oneself. Often momentary resolutions, new shared understandings, and transformative shifts happen with whatever had been challenging or disturbing. To get the best results, when we shapeshift into another, it helps if we stand like them, move like them, pick up their gestures and their tone of voice, and try to fully embody the essence of who they are.

There are many additional ways of preparing to fully shapeshift into another. In order to be interviewed as each of my deceased grandmothers, I first needed to shapeshift into becoming them, one at a time. I shapeshifted into each grandmother, and went on an urban "vision quest." The term "*vision quest*" was first coined by 19th-century anthropologists to describe the rite-of-passage ceremonies of certain Native American cultures. It usually takes place isolated in nature where the person fasts and awaits a vision or guidance from a spirit. The purpose of this urban vision quest was to assist me in being able to viscerally experience life through each grandmother's eyes. I chose a path and walked the same path twice, once as each grandmother. As each grandmother, I noticed what flirted with me through all of my senses. I photographed those flirts, touched things, listened to sounds and tried to keep awareness, tracking how I felt moment by moment. After returning from the vision quest, I did some artwork, to express the

essence of what I experienced as each grandmother, along the quest. Levine and Dworkin then interviewed each “grandmother.” The interview with my maternal grandmother lasted 10 minutes. Though I was extremely close to her as a child, I hadn’t realized how little I knew about her life. Next, came the interview with my paternal grandmother, Chaie Raizel “Rose” Westel, which lasted 35 minutes. Though I had not previously felt as close to her as I did with my maternal grandmother, I was to discover that I knew her in the deepest, most profound and intimate way. I discovered that I was her and she was me!

### **The Goddess of Wisdom, Chaie Raizel “Rose” Westel**

When I opened my mouth to respond to the first question Dworkin and Levine asked, the voice that emerged was not mine, but Bubby Rose’s. It was more than just her voice with her Polish English accent. It was the essence of her whole spirit. It was her. From out of the death experience that I had gone through earlier in the day, from out of the orange fireball that enveloped me, came the GODDESS of WISDOM, Chaie Raizel “Rose” Westel. She was in the room. I was her. The full transcript of the interview with Bubby Rose, the Goddess of Wisdom is in Appendix C.

Who was Chaie Raizel “Rose” Westel? My grandmother, Chaie Raizel ‘Rose’ Westel, was a Polish, Jewish woman born in Międzyrzec Podlaski (Poland) on the Belarus border on May 15, 1912. She came from a poor working class family and had no formal education. When Rose was only 4 years old, her mother died giving birth to her third child. Shortly after her mother’s death, her father ran off to another town and married another women. He abandoned my grandmother and her older sister, leaving them as orphans. She and her sister were raised by a step-grandmother.

I remember my grandmother telling stories of how horrible life was in Poland for the Jewish people and for her as a young Jewish girl because of the growing anti-Semitism in Europe. The 1940 film *The Eternal Jew*, considered by many to be the greatest anti-Semitic film of all time, painted a picture of the Jews as savages. It was produced at the insistence of Joseph Goebbels, Adolf Hitler's minister of propaganda, and was created to justify the separation, exclusion, and ultimately the destruction, of the Jewish people. The narrator describes the Jews of Poland as filthy, sly, ugly and perverse; “an alien people which have taken over the world through their control of banking and commerce, yet live like animals” (Hippler, 1940). At the end of World War Two, almost all 12,000 Jews of Miedzreizec, Podlaski had died in the gas chambers of Treblinka.

I believe the oppression of the Jews as a people combined with the oppression of women within Jewish culture and the larger patriarchal society are significant factors in how Jewish Polish women viewed themselves overall. The fact that my grandmother was a Polish Jewish woman from a poor working class family is important to understanding some of the oppression that weighed heavily on her and her family. The sources of oppression came from not only outside her cultural world but also from right inside of it.

Looking into this world, we learn that there are two groups of Jewish people in the world, Sephardic and Ashkenazi. Sephardic Jews are of Spanish or Portuguese descent. They come from the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, and North Africa. Their customs and rituals are based on Babylonian Jewish traditions. My grandmother was of Ashkenazi lineage.

The Ashkenazi Jews are descended from the Jewish communities of Germany, Austria, Poland, and Eastern Europe. They date back to the 10th century. Today Ashkenazi Jews make up

about 80 percent of the world's Jews. (Shilo, 2005; Owens, 2005; Hoffman, 1997). Ashkenazi Jews are most stereotypically reputed to be wealthy upper class people, to own and have control over most of the money coffers in the world, and to be a highly intelligent and learned people. Though education was highly valued in Jewish culture, it was most accessible and encouraged for those of the middle and upper classes. Thus, in addition to working class Jewish women being considered as an inferior gender intellectually, they were further marginalized based on class. Wengeroff (2000) exposes an example of oppression that happened within the Jewish community based on class differences:

Among the Jews, the working class, mostly unschooled, was considered the lowest class of the population. No wonder, as the Jews are a people who honor learning above all else, whose aristocracy is of the intellect and spirit. Sarcastic expressions like, He understands chumesh (the Torah) like a shoemaker” or “like a tailor” were common. Even today, it is not a rarity for a Jewish father to refuse to give his consent to the marriage of a son or daughter if the proposed family is tailors or shoemakers. (Wengeroff, 2000, p. 227)

When my grandmother was growing up, there was no value given to developing the mind of a woman. The less developed, the better. Male society assigned learning exclusively to itself, excluding women from places of study and depriving them of access to education. There was an almost universal lack of education for Jewish girls throughout these generations. The Torah said that “Most women are not predisposed to study...” (Shilo, p. 150). Under these circumstances, the perception of the intellectual inferiority of women was a self-fulfilling prophecy. Women who had some education, but not advanced degrees, and who worked in factories making stockings, dresses, cigarettes, and matches were known as “half-intellectuals” (Jacobs, Jewish Women’s Archive). Imagine what it must do to one’s self-image when the outside world considers you to be a “half-intellectual.”



**Life for Jewish Working Class Women in the Shtetl**

In Poland and much of Eastern Europe, the Ashkenazi Jews from the working class lived in what are known as shtetls, small villages or towns, and for the women, life was very tough. My grandmother lived in a shtetl until she was 16 years old when she immigrated to Canada. What was life like for a poor working class young woman living in a shtetl at that time?

If you looked at the outside of a typical Jewish shtetl home, what you would see in front of the entrance, is a small storefront, where the wife of the home would set up shop daily, and sell anything from livestock, nails, matches, pots, boots, or offer to mend or repair any number of things. The atmosphere within the shtetl was of a lively marketplace, with people bargaining back and forth, speaking in Yiddish, Polish, and Russian depending what time in history we are looking at.

If you looked into a side window of a typical shtetl home, you would notice a dark interior, and toward the back would be a small desk with a light. The husband would be sitting there in a chair, studying the Torah or Talmud, from early morning until late at night. If there were sons, from the age of 5, they would be sitting next to their father, beginning their own study of these religious texts (Schimdt, 1989). Life was hard and hunger was a constant companion for most of the shtetl Jews. Women managed and cared for the domestic aspects of the home, and also ran the family businesses. Many families had more children than they could afford. Even if the freedom and permission had been there to study, for most young girls, there was simply not enough time or money to do so. Their daily life consisted of preparing meals, cleaning the house, tending to the family business and figuring out other ways of earning enough money to feed and clothe their children.

My grandmother's dream, like most young girls of her day, was to live the ideal of the "feminine mystique": to fall in love, get married, have children and be an impeccable mother and housewife to her husband. She fell in love with Albert Joseph Barna when she was 10 years old and after immigrating to Canada, she worked for five years and saved enough money to bring him to Canada. Rose and Albert were married in 1934.

### **The Rite of Passage and The Death of a Dream**

In 1936, just prior to giving birth to her first child, something went wrong and Rose had to have a caesarian. When she awoke to discover that she had not had a natural childbirth, she was devastated. To give birth naturally was Rose's dream and for her, it represented the final initiation into being a legitimate and complete woman. She felt she had failed the rite of passage into full womanhood. Though she and Albert wanted more children, she would only consider it if she could have her next child by natural birth. She asked the doctor many times and he promised her without a doubt, that YES, she could have her next child by natural birth. She didn't know then that her doctor had lied to her.

In 1939, Rose's daughter, Ruth, was born by caesarian. Rose felt she had failed again. She would never be a full and complete woman. Metaphorically, a part of her had died. The trauma and failure to complete the rite of passage into womanhood as she defined it left her unable to be fully present as a mother and a wife. I believe Rose was caught between two worlds: between life and death.

My grandmother tried to express the enormous pain, sadness and grief she was experiencing at the loss of her highest dream. She became very depressed, cried all the time and was not able to function well on a daily basis. Those around her did not welcome her expression

of grief. She was expected to *pull herself together, to get herself under control, to get over it and get on with it*. When she couldn't do what was expected, people began to say that something inside her had snapped and that she was *not right in the head*. Seven months after giving birth to her daughter, Rose was sent to 999 Queen Street, an insane asylum on the shores of Lake Ontario in Toronto, Canada. She spent the next four years of her life there and what happened to her is difficult to even write about.

### **The Frontal Lobotomy**

While my grandmother was at 999 Queen St, she was given a full frontal lobotomy. Why would they do that to my Bubby Rose? Lobotomy comes from the Greek word *lobos*, meaning lobes of the brain, and *tomos*, meaning cut. It is a psychosurgical procedure in which the connections between the prefrontal cortex and underlying structures are severed. The frontal cortical tissue is destroyed. Doctors performing lobotomies at that time thought that if you sever the white matter between the frontal regions and the amygdala, you would disconnect the emotional response from the thought process connected to that emotion (Voytek 2007; Mo, 2007; Frater, 2009). After a frontal lobotomy, people ... have diminished intellectual capacity and lose some of their personality” (Tamarkin, 2001). Additional affects on a person after a frontal lobotomy may include, “... calmer, apathetic affect, loss of emotional response to others,...childlike and slovenly behavior,... and sometimes... destroyed individual personalities (Psychosurgery, n.d.). In 1953, after the USSR banned lobotomies, a *New York Times* article quoted Dr. Nicolai Oseresky, at a meeting of the World Federation of Mental Health, stating that lobotomies, “violate the principles of humanity” and change “an insane person” into “an idiot” (Laurence, 1953). Fortunately, for my grandmother, and for all of us who had the honor and

privilege of knowing her, they did not succeed in fully killing her human spirit or in making her an idiot!

At the time my grandmother lived, men were the bosses at work and leaders outside the home. At home, the husband was master. When women in my grandmother's day spoke up against the expectations that mainstream society had of women, the response was to criticize them, isolate them and oppress them. Social pressures, alongside the basic human desire we all have to be loved, accepted and respected, resulted in the majority of women complying with what society and the patriarch expected of them.

Was it possible that they sent her away, locked her up and gave her a lobotomy, because they simply didn't know why she was crying and depressed all the time—that they didn't know she was grieving the loss of a life's dream? Was the goal of giving my grandmother a lobotomy to “cut out” her capacity to scream and shout, and give expression to her enormous grief, by decapitating the emotional part of her brain? Was it an attempt to permanently repress or inhibit part of the essence of what made her human? Is it possible that if they had allowed her the space and time to fully grieve, to completely go into the death experience, that she might have come out on the other side, transformed and able to live fully and realize her other dreams? How might her life have been different?

### **Chaie Raizel “Rose” Westel: Her dreamingbody and the gift of the lobotomy**

As horrific as the lobotomy was in almost every way, I feel that it also provided Bubby Rose with a gift. The lobotomy gave my grandmother the freedom to follow the more unknown parts of herself, to speak the unspeakable and bring relief and ease into the larger field when she did.

Arnold Mindell explains how in Process Work we can come to a similar place through the dreambody. To become our whole selves requires that we learn to drop rigid identities and learn to live and die many times (Mindell, 1993). By living and dying many times, we are able to access what Mindell calls the dreambody. He says that if you take,

momentary body experiences... as invitations to the unknown—if you let them evolve and unfold—they mirror recent dreams and become the dreamingbody. (Mindell, 1993, p. 22) “From the inside... you feel connected to something essential; you become your whole self. (Mindell, 1993, p. 25)

The times when Bubby Rose would follow herself, she would tell stories or ask people direct questions about things that from a mainstream view were taboo or considered inappropriate for women in those days. She was raw, wild, spontaneous and carefree. She seemed connected to her dreambody. She could drop her rigid identities and let go of her hesitations and the social boundaries that were in place to keep her smaller. Whatever she felt or thought, she said. You never knew what was coming and when it would come. There is one story that highlights this spontaneous, boundaryless, and wild spirit that lived within Bubby Rose.

My twin sister, Barbara, and I were sixteen years old. We were visiting our grandparents and hanging out in the kitchen with our Bubby Rose, as she cooked our favorite mushroom barley soup. Suddenly she looked at us and said, “So, how is the sex with the boyfriends?” My sister and I were stunned and momentarily paralyzed by the question. We looked at one another and said almost simultaneously, “Bubby, we are not having sex with our boyfriends.” And she replied, “No sex with the boyfriends? Why not? What’s wrong? Sex is natural. Your body wants sex no?” When we reported that neither of us had boyfriends, she exclaimed in surprise, “What, no boyfriends? Why not? Two beautiful girls like you. When I was your age, I had many

boyfriends.” We had no idea how to respond. Most grandmothers of her time would encourage their young teenage granddaughters to be virgins until after marriage. Not our Bubby Rose!

When Bubby Rose was able to bring out these more marginal voices that were inside of her, to engage with the world, she brought laughter and sometimes shock to others and she seemed more alive.

At other times, Rose held tight to the “feminine mystique” and to the traditional views of the role of women in her day. For example, she forbid her daughter to go to university, saying that her goal was to find a husband, get married and support him and raise a family. Only her son was to be given the opportunity of an education. She said that it was a waste to educate a woman. In this way she kept her daughter smaller. In this moment, she became the oppressor.

In some moments, perhaps when she was complying with family, cultural and societal pressures that she may not have wanted to, or to the boundaries and limitations that the doctors in the insane asylum tried to create with the lobotomy, she became sad and appeared angry. She would shout or scream at others when they told her to be quiet. I believe that in these moments, she felt unheard and unseen. The external attempts to silence her became internalized. For my grandmother, this oppression may have been expressed in her painful, chronic body symptoms.

### **Emergence of ghost roles through body symptoms**

In Process Work terms, my grandmother’s body expressed in dramatic and painful ways what her words and emotions could not. The impact of her experiences at 999 Queen St took a heavy toll on her physical body. After leaving the mental institution, my grandmother suffered with open, oozing sores on her legs for the rest of her life. She had to wear special stockings and

have her wounds dressed daily by her husband. She was unable to walk long distances and rarely left the apartment.

Mindell writes: “Following sensations such as aches, pains and dizziness means living your dreamingbody” (Mindell, 1993, p. 20). I imagine that my grandmother’s oozing sores were her spirit expressing the uncontrollable, non-stop grief that was unable to come out through her natural tear ducts. When we do not have avenues to bring out the dreaming and the passion that wants to emerge or if we are repressed or oppressed from expressing in natural ways, our bodies will manifest our dreaming through body symptoms that can be very severe and painful (Mindell, 1993). I often wonder what my grandmother might have done in the world had she been given the space and time to fully grieve the loss of her rite of passage into womanhood, as she had defined it. What would have happened if she had been supported to bring out all parts of herself during her time of crisis? What would have happened if she had been allowed to fully experience the death of her dream and to emerge in a new form?

I often wonder what might have happened if the people that were with my grandmother at the time of her first caesarian had been able to feel into her experience of what it was like to not be able to give birth to her first child naturally. How different might things have been if they had been able to provide the space and freedom for her to really grieve fully, to express everything that was there in her?

Through this research project, I realized that I knew a part inside me that was like the part of Bubby Rose who succumbed to the social and cultural pressures, and stayed silent verbally, but expressed itself through painful body symptoms. It was the part in me that the intellectual inferiority complex could succeed in demeaning, overpowering and marginalizing. It was the

part my eldest niece spoke of knowing as well, that keeps her from raising her hand in class and speaking out. It is the one in my twin sister that keeps her believing she will not be able to complete the academic requirements to become a mid-wife. It is the one that stopped my mother from following her dream to go to business school and someday become a CEO. Mindell says that, “If you try and control or manipulate your energy, you end up feeling ill or dead. If you follow your body’s sensations, you feel more completely here, as if you are really living and creating life.” (Mindell, 1993, p. 20)

Through my individual transformative experience with Levine and Dworkin, I found the other part of Bubby Rose alive in me, the part of her that has no boundaries, who is carefree and can speak the unspeakable, the part that can name the ghosts and engage with them. And something profound shifted in me. I felt an ability to suddenly engage with the complex directly and take it on.

### ***Part three: Rose, The Goddess of Wisdom, Crashes the Party (Exam Dialogue Reimagined)***

One day in August 2013, while kayaking alone near Mt. Hood and reflecting on my final project, this wild, no-boundary spirit part of my grandmother appeared and took me back to that exam where the complex first appeared and showed me how differently that whole scene would have looked had she been awake and present. I imagined how my Exam on Body Symptoms might have looked if Bubby Rose, the Goddess of Wisdom, had crashed the party with the examiner and my intellectual inferiority complex.

Here is how that scene might have looked:



**Examiner:**

What's primary? What's secondary?" (In a tone that indicated what Cathy had done was wrong).

**Goddess of Wisdom to Examiner:**

What's primary? What's secondary? Not so fast. Let's go slow. Did you see what happened out there? Cathy manifested Jesus Christ in that boy out there. That's a bit impressive, no? Primary or secondary, that was Jesus Christ, for goodness sake. Before you take her deep into a learning discussion about the important things she missed, let's celebrate her and the things that she DID do that were impressive. She feels great about many of the things that she did out there and she wants to speak to those for just a minute or so.

**Cathy to Examiner:**

I loved the atmosphere in the room. I thought it was very creative to stand on a chair so I could reach and work on my client's shoulder, meeting him at his level. The way that I brought him down to the ground and helped him transform into Jesus. I thought that was awesome.

**Intellectual Inferiority Complex to Cathy:**

Oh you are so stupid! You don't know anything. How is it possible to be that stupid? You sucked out there. You missed the secondary process, you idiot. Jesus Christ wasn't what was trying to happen. Wow, it's shocking how dumb you are.

**Goddess of Wisdom to Intellectual Inferiority Complex:**

Oh, shut up, Mr. Know It All. She isn't dumb or stupid at all. That was creative genius at work out there. Now, she may have missed some important signals, and the secondary process. And there is learning, growth and development—no question. Just imagine, Mr. Know It All, with that further growth and development, what might she help her client manifest. Perhaps she would have manifested not just the SON, but the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost!"

**Intellectual Inferiority Complex:**

He pauses in silence for a long time. Then he nods, acknowledges what the Goddess of Wisdom has just said and turns to wander off to try and find someone else to inhabit that doesn't have the Goddess of Wisdom as an intimate new roommate.

This imagined discussion between the Goddess of Wisdom and my Intellectual Inferiority Complex is an inner conversation that is now possible for me to have. By allowing myself to go fully through the metaphorical death experience and the resulting transformative birth, I have access to Rose, the Goddess of Wisdom inside of me. There have been many times in a one-to-one Executive Coaching session or with a client in a therapy session or in a large or small group that I have felt confused or scared to say something. At those moments, if I take a moment and shapeshift into the wild, carefree Rose, the Goddess of Wisdom, suddenly I find the courage and the metaskills to say whatever is there. The results when I come from that place are most often incredible and lead to breaking through the stuck and confused places.

## Conclusion

In this conclusion, I summarise what I learnt from doing my creative research project on intellectual inferiority, as experienced by the women in my family. I share my findings and some directions for future research and practice.

The research questions that guided my project were:

1. What can be learned from understanding and discovering patterns passed down through multiple generations?
2. Is it possible, by processing and understanding more about this complex, to transform it?
3. When we feel small, stupid and stuck, are there ways of leveraging that experience to go deeper in and gain insights that can help us bring more of ourselves out?
4. Is it possible through this exploration to help all women get closer to discovering our deep inalienable power and wholeness?

### *What did I discover?*

...we can never presume that the complex, with its ready agenda of regression, will not grab hold of our leg and pull us under. It is often the work of our lives to grow larger than the constrictive arena in which complexes would have us play. (Hollis, 2013, Chapter 11, para. 16)

The experiential discoveries that I made along my journey have transformed me in deep and profound ways. I discovered that going consciously towards metaphorical death, when that is what is trying to happen, is the right direction. I discovered that by allowing myself to surrender completely to death, that something new was waiting to be born on the other, something that I could never have known beforehand. Hollis highlights this point saying that,

While it is terrifying to be out there on that dancing wire between the known past and the unknown future, it is not time to look down, hasten back to safe but dreary

familiar, or freeze in petrified possibility. We are out there on the high wire of all of our possible futures, and we belong there...Pascal once noted...it is not a matter of whether or not to set sail—we are already launched...How do we accept, finally, that we are not our history but our unfolding journey? (Hollis, 2013, Ch. 10, para. 6)

In my exploration of the intellectual inferiority complex, my metaphorical death gave birth to Chaie Raizel “Rose”, the Goddess of Wisdom, the sacred spirit of my grandmother. Though not on earth in her physical form anymore, I discovered that the essence of her lives in me.

Death gave birth to the wisdom of Rose’s lobotomy, and the wisdom of the metaphorical decapitation that I experience, when the intellectual inferiority complex takes me down. When I feel my intellectual inferiority complex rising up, I can now call on Rose to join him on center stage, and engage with him. Through her engagement with him, the script and choreography of the “old show,” the longest running show in my inner theatre, changes. It is a new show! Rose, the Goddess of Wisdom helps brings back to life, my wild, free and edgeless spirit.

Rose’s metaskills are innumerable. She is captivating, entertaining, shocking, raw and funny. She is a gifted teacher in modeling how to give voice to the “undiscussables”. She knows how to create a safe space to help draw out the ghosts and make them visible. In doing what Rose does, she shakes up the earth and the people on it. She frees other people to be more authentic and real.

I knew that my intellectual inferiority complex was frightening, intimidating and a ruthless harsh critic. I discovered however, that there was more to him than that. He has other qualities that I have been blind to. I discovered that he wants to help me bring in my analytical intelligence. However, he is not so good at “HOW” to communicate that to me in a friendly way.

Rose is able to engage my intellectual inferiority complex, match his energy and help transform his message so that I am able to hear, integrate and make use of it.

***How does my journey make sense for other generations of women in my family?***

On one level, the transformative death and birth experience that I underwent on September 27 was a very personal and individual journey. I was working on my own intellectual inferiority complex. On another level, I believe I was working for my entire family system over many generations.

Many of the females in my family said that the interview process itself was very valuable. Most of them had never talked about how they had suffered and continue to suffer with their own intellectual inferiority complexes. Being asked questions and having someone listen with genuine interest had its own healing affect. A few said that they found the process therapeutic.

At the end of the Final Project Presentation, my aunt shared how the process impacted her. She said:

[It] brought back 70 years of memories. It also brings to life a lot of things you live with in your family. You go through experiences for so many years and you don't really think about them in depth. And then suddenly, your niece comes up with questions and makes you think about thoughts that you buried in your mind, and didn't really think about how they affected you or... how you grew from them...it... puts a lot of unrest I had with certain things... at peace. (Ruth Jacobson speaking at Final Project Presentation, 2013)

**The Significance of the Triarchic Theory of Intelligence**

I discovered that the women in my family ooze Creative and Practical Intelligence. Some did not discover these intelligences in themselves, until much later in life. The film celebrates

each of the females in my family, the intelligences they have, and how they manifest those in the world today.

My aunt became a prolific and gifted Chinese Water Painter and sculptress at the age of 60. My twin sister is gifted at renovating houses. Both of my nieces are talented artists and photographers. My mother, if she could have been anything at all, given the encouragement and support of her parents, would have become a CEO. She has ‘out of the box’ ideas flowing at work everyday, about how to do things better in the business. People she has worked with at the same company for more than 24 years, responded to a questionnaire I sent to them and spoke about the talents and skills they see in my mother that align with her CEO dream.

### ***Where to from here...***

This project has not only transformed me, but has given birth to a desire to work with women in the world on this topic. It has been fascinating to find, as I worked on this project, that women in all areas of my personal and professional life, began to talk about their experiences and struggles with feeling intellectually inferior, and their attempts to cover it up and hide it. Sometimes, they would begin sharing and talking about it without any prompting from me, without knowing that I was researching the topic. These girls and women were of all ages, and from diverse cultures, classes, and professional fields. It seems, on the surface at least, that few women escape suffering from an intellectual inferiority complex.

I have had a few showings of the film, for small groups of people so far. In Japan, after showing it to four Japanese women, ranging in age from 35-55 yrs of age, an intimate discussion unfolded. Each of them shared stories that brought up cultural and generational influences and patterns from their family histories that impacted their own development.

In Portland, after showing the film to a small group of about 10 participants, a 30-year old South African man raised his hand and said that as he watched the dialogue between my mother and I, he had a sudden and very painful realization. He realized that he, his father and three brothers had spent much of their lives, criticizing and downing their mother, telling her often, that she was stupid and invalidating her ideas and thoughts. He felt so ashamed. About twenty minutes later, he came up to me in tears, saying that he had just called his mother in South Africa, and apologized to her for his part in doing that to her, and expressed his shame. They cried together, and it was a profound healing moment for him. If nothing else came from this project that made it more than worth it.

And I want to do more! I want more people to wake up as that man did. I want to create space for women to share their stories and experiences and for a wide audience to be able to witness them. I want to create workshops that help foster deep awareness and provide practical tools, that encourage women to go towards, and not only away from, the experiences that happen to them when the intellectual inferiority complex walks in uninvited, and help them mine the gold and give birth to something new.

Bubby Rose, the Goddess of Wisdom has shown me ways of reconnecting to my inalienable power when I lose access to it. I have a more holistic view of intelligence. I have learned some profound strategies for engaging and transforming the complex to make it useful in my life and my work. I would like to help others be able to do the same. This project is the beginning of a new chapter, as well as the end of a previous one!

I dream that my work moving forward in the world, may help even a tiny bit, to assure that we do not go backwards in time and that we each find ways to become all that we are capable of

becoming! This project has sparked a passion that is growing and has opened a door into what I believe will lead me on a deeper exploration of internalized oppression in women with regards to intellectual inferiority complex.



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## **APPENDICES**

***APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW #1: DECEMBER 26-29, 2011*****Intellect-pragmatism**

1. Do you think of yourself as a more intellectually-oriented person or a more pragmatic, hands-on type of person?
2. What stories do you have about that from your life and what stories do you have about that from our family?

**Intellectual Inferiority Complex**

2. The reason I failed my Phase 1 exam was because I had this sudden experience where my mind went completely blank, like somebody cut off my head and I felt completely stupid with no access to my brain. It was like this intellectual inferiority creature took me over. Have you ever experienced anything like that in your life? If so, can you share examples or stories of when and where that has happened to you?

**Relationship with money**

4. What stories come to your mind in your life or in our family when it comes to money? Has it been an important factor in your life?

**[Immigration-emigration, abandonment, homelessness & displacement (leave b/c of war and trauma—asylum seeking, refugees)]**

5. What do you think about in relationship to our family when I mention immigration-emigration-displacement, abandonment and homelessness? What stories come to your mind?

**Jewish Identity/ Jewish Culture**

6. How do you feel being Jewish has shaped who you are? How do you relate to yourself as a Jewish person? How important has that been to you? Do you have associations from your upbringing that stand out?



***APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS on the THEME of  
INTELLECTUAL INFERIORITY***

**March 2012**

**Intelligence, Career Choices, School, Relationship**

1. How do you think about your academic intelligence?
  - a. Where would you rate yourself on an academic intelligence scale from 1-5, 1 being the worst, 5 being the best.
  - b. Where do you think others who know you well would rate you?
  - c. If there is a discrepancy, what are you thoughts if any?
  
2. How about common sense street smart intelligence?
  - a. Where would you rate yourself on a street smart intelligence scale from 1-5?
  - b. Where would others rate you?
  - c. If there is a discrepancy, what are you thoughts if any?
  
3. How about emotional intelligence?
  - a. Where would you rate yourself on an emotional intelligence scale from 1-5?
  - b. Where would others rate you?
  - c. If there is a discrepancy, what are you thoughts if any?
  
4. What kind of messages did you get from your family about your intelligence?
  - a. What messages did you get about gender and intelligence?
  
5. What kinds of messages did you get from your cultural organizations or religious institutions or the world around you about your intelligence? (include gender and intelligence)

6. What did you want to be when you grew up? (include gender and intelligence)
  - a. Did it change over time and if so, to what and why?
  - b. What if any messages did you get from your family about what you should, could or would be when you grew up?
  - c. What kind of messages did you get from your cultural or religious institutions or the world about what you could or should be when you grow up?

### SCHOOL

7. What were your memories about school with regards to your academic performance and abilities?
  - a. Positive memories
  - b. Difficult memories
  - c. What were the messages that you got from your teachers

### RELATIONSHIP

8. Let's reflect on your main relationship in your life.
  - a. Same or different career interests?
  - b. Same or different religious or cultural background?
  - c. Same or different intelligence?
  - d. Any thoughts or reflections about that?

***APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPT of INTERVIEW with BUBBY ROSE*****R: Rose** (Goddess of Wisdom)**Ra: Randy** (361 Artworks Facilitator) **J: Jan** (361 Artworks Facilitator)

R:	Well, what do you want to know? What do you want to know. You want to know about my life?
Ra:	I want to know what you would do if nobody ever held you back from anything.
R:	Well, you know in Poland I was a mandolin player. Played in an orchestra. I was loving my music very much.
J:	Oh wow.
R:	Then my mother died. And I came to Canada when I was 16.
J:	You have such a wonderful voice. Your voice is incredible.
R:	You think so? You like my voice?
J:	Yes, oh my god you are incredible.
R:	Oy
J:	Oy
Ra:	So you loved your mandolin?
R:	Yes I was very good mandolin player there in Poland. You know I was very beautiful as a young girl. Many boys liked me. I was very popular.
Ra:	Ya.
R:	But I fell in love with Albert. You know I came to Canada with my sister. We were orphans. I came to Canada on a boat. My rich uncle brought us and um when I came to Canada I worked for 5 years in sewing factory and I worked very very hard because I wanted to bring my Al to Canada. He was my love, And five years I worked and made enough money and I brought him to Canada.
J:	You brought your boyfriend to Canada?

R:	Yes that's right.
J:	Wow you were a very unusual woman. A liberated woman.
R:	Well, when I was 16, I had no parents. I was an orphan. What to do. I had to make a living. I had to make money with my sister. Both we worked very hard in factory everyday.
J:	but you followed, you actually brought your boyfriend? (In tone of disbelief)
R:	Boyfriend, smoyfriend. When he came to Canada-I think 3 mths later I think we got married. That's right and we got married. Now he is my husband now. What boyfriend?
J:	right but I am so impressed. If you hadn't worked so hard and brought Albert to Canada, none of us would exist.
R:	Yes, and? Laughter Vat, so?
J:	I thought you were such a strong woman. It's very unusual that a woman can...nowadays women are oppressed.
R:	Oppressed? What do you mean oppressed?
J:	Well sometimes women don't feel so empowered.
R:	Empowered. What does empowered mean?
J:	Yay
R:	What are these big words you people use these days. You do what you have to do to get by. And when you love somebody, so you work, you bring them, you get married. Then the rest of life continues.
Ra:	I love you. I LOVE YOU BUBBY ROSE. I LOVE YOU.
R:	Of course you love me. I am lovable. But what's to love about me.
Ra:	I'll tell you what's to love about me. I'll tell you what I love. It's just that you are so down to earth and you are so real and authentic and about life and not about big words and thinking about stuff.
R:	Well thank you.

J:	I love that you are genuinely located in yourself, in your powerful self. I mean nothing oppresses you. Excuse me. I mean nothing puts you down. Nothing holds you back. Your full personality shines.
R:	Well, I mean, I am a woman. I do what a woman does.
Ra:	What do you mean?
R:	I mean I married my husband, I had two children. I, oy, oy, oy, yes, yes, yes a painful story but anyways...
J:	What do you mean it was a painful story?
R:	You know to be a woman is very special. And to, and for me. Well you are women so maybe you know. Do you have children?
J:	No
Ra:	No
R:	Oy What no children? What's wrong? Two beautiful women like you and no children? What do you mean, no children?
J:	I know, it was a bad...I know
R:	Oy, anyways, children are meant to be born natural birth. But in my case, they you know, they cut my tummy and they make ugly scar and they don't give you chance to have natural childbirth. It made me very sick. And I was away from my children four years in total. And they did something to my head.
Ra:	Wait, you were away from your children for four years.
R:	Yes I was in the hospital for four years. My son would come. My husband would come every week bless his heart to visit me. But my son could not come up and visit me so he stayed down on the ground and from my room upstairs I would throw him pennies down to him.
Ra:	It's Awful
J:	It's horrible and I just can't believe how amazing it is to be speaking with you. I feel just so grateful that you have come to talk to us.
R:	I have many things to tell you. I can talk for long time if you want. Many stories. You want some chicken soup.

J:	Oh, oh, you're the one who has so much to say.
R:	oh yes
J:	so many stories
R:	Sure, that's right. Life is interesting.
Ra:	Tell us some interesting stories.
J:	So they messed with you.
R:	Yes, since I came from the hospital. Since that time, I have not been well. In my legs I get open sores. They are terrible. I wear special socks and all this pressure on my legs. I am very unwell, very unhealthy. Oy my husband. He wishes so much that I was well. Oh my husband. He wants to go to the movies with me and to dinner. But many times I say, Al, I cannot go somewhere. It's hard for me to go walking and we should stay home. And I think he is going crazy a little bit.
Ra:	What did they do to you in there?
R:	You know I don't know exactly what they did but they did something to my head they tell me.
J:	Do you feel different in the head? Since you were there? You feel different from inside
R:	I mean, WHO KNOWS? How I was before and how I am now. How I am now is how I am now. I don't know how I was before because you know I don't remember. I don't know what they did to me.
J:	Do you feel any, I mean ,well what are you interested in? What are you interested in doing in a day to day way? How do you enjoy...
R:	Well I, I, I, I Love to cook and I love to cook for my grandkids and my kids when they come to dinner. Sometimes my grandchildren they sleep over you know and you know they love my mushroom barley soup and
Ra:	Oh I love it too. I want it.
R:	oh you love it, well I am very good cook but my, don't tell nobody this but my husband. In the morning when the grandkids sleep over he tries to make them eggs you know. He says I'll make you eggs and he say...they almost have a fit. They don't want his eggs. You know

	<p>why? Because he makes runny, snotty eggs and you know I try to tell him, Al, cook the eggs, cook the eggs, but I am telling you they don't like it and I feel for them. But anyways, he's their grandfather and he loves them so what can I do. I yell at him a lot and I tell him to not do many things but sometimes I need to let him do no.</p>
J:	<p>Cathy as you do this you have to unbelievably identify with what you are doing and what is coming out of you. This is you. THIS IS YOU. This is YOU. You are just the most gorgeous, unbelievable, fascinating, interesting, entertaining woman that I have ever met. I could listen to you for hours. This is the essence of you.</p>
R:	<p>Cathy: Edge behavior coming now (in R's voice still)</p>
J:	<p>Yes, and tell me, what's her hooby dooby name</p>
R:	<p>Chaie Raizel Rose Westel</p>
J:	<p>do you like to read?</p>
R:	<p>Ye, Yes, Yes, I think I do.</p>
J:	<p>What kind of</p>
R:	<p>I read Yiddish. In Poland we spoke Yiddish. Yes, I was very unhappy in Poland. Poland was very difficult place. They hated Jewish people there very much and life was very difficult there and we were very lucky to leave Poland but you know not all of our family left and many died in the Holocaust.</p>
J:	<p>Oh I am terribly, terribly sorry</p>
R:	<p>But I speak yiddish</p>
J:	<p>Before you left did you read a lot as a girl</p>
R:	<p>Well, I read music, because you know I played the mandolin so I was very interested in music and I read about composers and I knew...yes, yes I liked to read, I think I read. I don't remember if I read. Because you know they did something to my head.</p>
J:	<p>Yea you don't remember. And now if you could read things and study, what would you study?</p>
R:	<p>Well I think if I could I would like to play in the symphony. I cannot do it because I am not a well women and have many health problems but</p>

	you know the symphony is a wonderful wonderful thing.
Ra:	Can you hear the music that you might be playing?
R:	Well you know it's very interesting thing but um I never played the mandolin for my grandchildren but you know my granddaughter Cathy, her favorite instrument in the symphony—you know what it is?
J/Ra:	The mandolin?
R:	The violin
Ra:	I was going to say the violin.
R:	Yes the violin. You know if she could, maybe I wish she could study violin and she said she would like to play the violin. And so I fell like, even though I never played the mandolin for her, somehow she has the music inside of her and sometimes we listen to violin music together.
J:	Oh my god.
Ra:	Like what do you hear right now? Like if you could imagine the music...
R:	Very what shall I say, passionate. The kind of violin music that makes you feel passionate. You know there is some violin music.
Ra:	Can you sing it for us?
R:	ah no no no no no
J:	just some sounds.
Ra:	Just the energy
J:	just the energy of some of the sounds
R:	I can, my granddaughter has an iphone and I can give you to listen. I would just squeak a lot. My music is not...
J:	What is it she would play?
R:	you go to iTunes I think she told me and you go to classical music and I think she has violin music there. You can choose something.



J:	but can you make some sounds please, just some sounds please (begging tone) As if you were the mandolin itself. And the sounds could come out of you, just the sounds. I need it from you.
R:	I don't know how to do it
J:	Randee you can do it.
Ra:	(tries to make sounds)
R:	Oy oy oy oy oy
J:	Sorry we didn't mean to offend you.
R:	Oy oy oy oy oy vey, not a bad thing. I meant when, when you start to so that I remember, I hum a lot.
J:	Oh show me your humming. Oh your the hummer..please hum
R:	Yes and my grandmother Cathy, she's a hummer.
J:	Take your time.
R:	(she Hums a somber like tune...)
R:	I need time to go there
Ra:	It's beautiful. The mood of it. That was surprising to me
R:	What was the mood.
Ra:	There was a sorrow. What did you hear?
R:	When I hum I it comes from this deep place, from long long ago... there is much sorrow in the past. About our people and our experiences
Ra:	I feel that too.
R:	I was thinking yesterday. My granddaughter, when she told me that she becomes aware now that she is humming and she told me maybe she should record when she is humming and I told her it's a very great idea to do that because she doesn't know what she hums. It comes from somewhere else.

J:	When did you last talk to your granddaughter?
R:	Well yesterday I told you. I've been dead for a long time you know.
J:	oh, when did you die, what year?
R:	Well I went to her wedding 1994. I was still alive. I wasn't well. My husband he already died. And when did I die. 1995 or 1996.
J:	Did you like her husband? She was married to someone who wasn't Jewish.
R:	yes but right he was goyim. Yes nice boy, nice boy, but very strange wedding you know. I mean he was wearing a skirt. For a boy he was wearing a skirt. You know he comes from Scotland and so he was wearing one of those skirts and you know she was wearing this Japanese long thing and underneath was this white fancy wedding dress. Very strange. But for me, what it is he stepped on the glass and they made a kind of hoopa... very unusual and very creative kind of wedding. Outside in beautiful garden. What do you say... (R keeps on making stomping sound with her foot)
J:	When you step on the glass? The hoopa..something under the hoopa
R:	Yes so you have this boy with skirt and long socks and strange shoes and she is wearing long Japanese thing and they are standing together and they have the ceremony and when he did it, I screamed OY, OY, MAZEL TOV. I screamed mazel tov and it made me very happy but a little strange you know.
J/Ra:	Laughing
R:	but I liked it. They did it for me I think.
J:	oh they did it for you
R:	Yes I think. You know he's a sweet boy but he wears a skirt. Someone should talk to him about this.
Ra:	I am trying to figure out what you are doing that is so incredibly captivating.
J:	I wish we, well we do have it on tape. But it's a performance.
Ra:	There is something, when you speak, I am so captivated.
J:	Unbelievable.

R:	Well, if you ask me the question you asked the other grandmother like what would I be if I could be anything, even if I go to school. I think I would be an entertainer.
Ra/R:	Yea, I like to entertain people. I like to talk for sure. I like to talk. Every time Al tells me, Rose stop talking and I say Al shut up. I have something to say. I have many stories.
J:	yes, nothing can shut you up. You are not what you call oppressed. Nothing can shut you up. You died but you kept talking.
Ra:	through Cathy
J:	You kept talking through Cathy after you died. You didn't stop. Your voice did not stop talking after you died.
Ra:	But there is something about the way she does it. She is edgeless.
R:	oy oy oy, yes the edge. They don't use this word but they tell me, many people tell me that, I, I, I say everything...
J:	yes, yes
R:	my grandchildren for instance, Bubby you shouldn't ask about having sex with your boyfriend. I say why not? I mean, is it strange for grandmother to ask
Ra:	You are so confident. And you are so in yourself like Jan was saying. I am trying what you do. There is something so special. Maybe you will know better from the inside Cathy. When you speak from her, how is that different from Cathy speaking. There is something different. You said, you say whatever you want...
R:	and
Cathy:	It's true, she doesn't have that filter, like the social filter or there's no filter. The lobotomy gave her permission to be completely and totally free.
Ra:	Exactly, hello everybody
J/Cathy:	Hellooooo
Ra:	Hello girl

	(Laughter)
J:	totally
Cathy:	wow that is the value of the decapitation. The freedom
J:	one of the things I am interested in, that I am really interested in. That was fucking unbelievable
Ra:	Yeaaaaaaa
Cathy:	really
J:	that was the most wonderfulest experience I have had in a long time, listening to you.
Ra:	it's interesting, as the listener, I have a really different experience listening to you speak as her than I do as you speak as you. And I think it's that edgelessness. And that freedom to say whatever she wants.
Cathy:	yes that's true. That's amazing...
J:	so something that I am really interested in... That I am upset by, that I don't understand enough about is that neither of these women actually are intellectual in the tradition sense and I feel. I am not sure, but I am wondering if there is some kind of, that the oppression is the oppression of the creative, artistic side. It's not the fucking intellectual oppression... and the thing that thinks it's intellectual that it should be intellectual is the oppressor
Ra:	totally, totally
J:	Is the oppressor. And it bothers me.
Ra:	it's a different kind of intelligence. That's what we are saying assuming that it should look a certain way is the oppression.
J:	and it's interesting because of us coming in as artists to do this project with you and it's HELLO, who values the artist. The mandolin, the music, the knitting, the craftswoman
Ra:	the pride that your father took you to Mexico and he was the hippie and into experiential learning you know
Cathy:	When I was struggling with writing the literature review for this paper, I was struggling b/c you know you said you can't do a creative project.

	You have to do an academic paper right.
J:	I said that.
Cathy:	My study committee said that—all of you, because I had done a website for my MACF final project
J:	oh yea yea yea, right
Cathy:	and it made sense do an academic paper if you are studying intellectual inferiority complex. Anyways I was struggling and struggling and struggling and I kept on I couldn't find my voice. I was looking for this academic intellectual. And one day...
Ra:	Well you just found your voice honey.
J:	yea honey
Cathy:	...well somebody said to me, one of my cohort members said, you are this amazing storyteller, why don't you just speak from your storyteller voice and something clicked and I went home and that is what I did for my website. I wrote stories and I recorded them.
J:	yea I do remember that
Cathy:	And so I started to write again and I found this...you haven't read it yet. I found this voice where I invite people into this house with three rooms and the first room is with, is where Moses comes in with the tablets and the rabbis are sitting around. So I invite them in and I talk about this experience and then I invite them into the 2 <sup>nd</sup> house
Ra:	I have to interrupt.
Cathy:	Ok interrupt.
Ra:	In the moment the way that you are speaking. You are not speaking like your grandmother. Like I just noticed myself
Cathy:	zoning out?
Ra:	Starting to drift and I noticed the signal actually You're rushing. You're rushing. You are trying to get it done and so in a way, I am responding to that signal where your grandmother. I want you to tell me the same thing but with her voice.
J:	Yea tell it as the grandmother, the same story, that's a great idea.

Cathy:	hmmmn, ok (long silence)
R:	Ok so (rose's voice)
J/Ra:	Yea, great
R:	I want you to come into my house with me. To this special house, ok.
J:	Ok!
R:	Come into my house and in this house there are many many rooms, but we have to go slowly from one room to the next. You want to go with me.
Ra/J:	Sure. I am there, I am in.
R:	the first room we have to climb a mountain. Are you ready?
Cathy:	I would go like that
Ra:	That's, there's a total difference. The first one is sort of academic. And you are rushing. This one is kind of like, come on we are going on a journey. Come into my house. We're going to. You'll listen back to it and you will be shocked.
Cathy:	Yea that was really great feedback. That was really great feedback.
J:	Wow
Cathy:	That was very interesting that I could. First of all, it's interesting that when I started to do this, I didn't know if I could speak from my grandmother's voice that I was so deeply close to cause that whole side of the family there is this cold atmosphere but this one, this side of my Dad's family, there's warmth and though I wasn't as close to her as I was with my other grandmother, I feel her. I mean this whole lobotomy thing is like...it's so interesting.
Ra:	That was so cool
J:	that was incredibly cool—the lobotomy
Cathy:	Let's go get lobotomies.
J:	totally...but for you getting a lobotomy means finding her voice, you know dropping the voice of the intellectual and finding her voice and...it's

	so amazing. You are so educating and fascinating.
Cathy:	Thank you, thank you.
J:	wow
Ra:	I just feel like something is complete there...





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