

**MOURNING RITUALS AND PRACTICES IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH  
AFRICAN TOWNSHIPS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree PhD  
in Community Psychology in the Department of Psychology, University of  
Zululand**

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## DECLARATION

I **TINY HAPPY SARAH SETSIBA** declare that **MOURNING RITUALS AND PRACTICES IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN TOWNSHIPS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY** is my own work and all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Tiny Happy Sarah Setsiba

Signature:

## **DEDICATION**

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS, **RATLALANA** AND **MAKHUDUGA** WHO HAVE DEPARTED FROM THIS WORLD. THE PAIN FROM THESE LOSSES PAVED A WAY!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to **God**, the creator of the Universe, the Most High, whose faithfulness has been my strength. How awesome!

A thesis is rarely an effort of one person and the current is no exception. I am deeply indebted to all the people whose names appear below who have supported, guided and influenced me during the difficult time of producing this work

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## ABSTRACT

The 'after tears' party seems to be a popular occurrence in South African's urban townships. This study is an exploratory investigation of the urban township communities' experiences and the meaning of the 'after tears' party using a phenomenological approach. The available literature outlined the rituals and practices of various ethnic groups in South Africa and Africa performed in the event of the death of a loved one such as the slaughtering of the beast, the mourning dress, mourning period and the cleansing ceremonies. While some of the death rituals and practices are still adhered to in urban townships of South Africa, others are adapted and new practices have emerged. One such is the practice of the 'after tears' party. Within an African context, the dead are regarded as ancestors and they are treated with great respect as they are believed to have a special relationship with the living. Proper rites and ceremonies performed following the death of a loved one reflect this belief. Any deviation from the above could be perceived as a sign of disrespect for the ancestors and bad luck could befall anyone who does not adhere to the stipulated practices.

The respondents in this study are South African township dwellers who do not practice strict traditional mourning rituals anymore. Individual respondents and focus groups were interviewed on their experiences and the meaning they attach to the practice of the 'after tears' party. Data was analyzed using thematic content analysis. Insights generated from the findings of the current study highlighted the significant perceptions, meanings and feelings about the 'after tears' parties. While it is perceived as a celebration, the important functions of this party were indicated as comforting and supporting the bereaved and helping them to cope with the impact of loss of a loved one. On the other hand others condemned the practice as totally disrespectful and that it is insensitive of the people to hold a party while other people are still in mourning. It hurts the bereaved and delays the chances of recovery from grief. The 'after tears' party can be an effective coping strategy if it was conducted in a more respectful manner. The respondents' experiences of the 'after tears' party and the meaning attached to it could serve as guidelines to explore the psychological needs of the bereaved in urban societies.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

South Africa has many townships that originated from the country's unique economic requirement for inexpensive migratory labor, and these townships were managed using brutal policing systems and British municipal administrative traditions (Bond, 2007). As a result, many South Africans became urbanized and urbanization changed much of the world view, values, rituals and traditions of such people.

The current study covers information on 'after tears' party which is a party held immediately after the burial of a loved one and they have become popular in Black townships of South Africa. 'After tears' parties are commonly known in other townships as 'wie sien ons' which is an Afrikaans expression and when directly translated it means 'who is seeing us'. Among others, these will include Soweto, Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Umlazi, KwaMashu, Lamontville etc. Thwala, Pillay and Sargeant (2001) asserted that the process of westernization and the previous South African government's policy of apartheid together with the consequent migrant labour system forced a larger proportion of the Black population to seek employment in the cities of South Africa. This resulted in locating these people in residential areas known as townships.

### 1.2 Theoretical background to the study

There may not be much known about the personal experiences of the deceased, the powerful effects of death usually become visible in those who are still alive. According to Bonnano & Kaltman (1999) dealing with loss of human life is a universal human hardship for the ones who remain behind. Among all forms of experiences that occur in any given culture, society or community, death seems to be the one that transcends

them all (Kastenbaum, 2004; Hockey, Katz & Small, 2001; Rosenblatt, Wash & Jackson, 1976; Littlewood, 1992; Parkes, Laungani & Young, 1997).

In psychological terms, death is equated to a crisis because it is a stressor that forces an individual to respond and adapt in some way, or try to get strategies to cope with its impact (Frisch & Frisch, 2006). In many instances, people attempt to find ways to avoid the various impacts of death (Bento, 1994). Grief is a normal, healthy condition and an expression of bereavement or loss (Frisch & Frisch, 2006). Often, when death occurs, people who are close to the deceased tend to respond to the emotions of grief using the same coping strategies that the person has used to with other, powerful emotions in the past. Manning (1984) and Kübler-Ross (1975) asserted that the awareness of death is a basic human condition that gives significance to living. They come up with the universal reactions that people who die and people who lose loved ones go through in an attempt to find meaning in the event of inevitable death.

All societies have their own customs and beliefs surrounding death and each culture has its own approaches to dealing with loss. These may be more or less standardized but almost always involve a core of understandings, spiritual beliefs, rituals, expectations and etiquette (Parkes *et al.*, 1997). In some cultures the dead are venerated; commonly known as ancestral worship <http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/funeral> (Anonymous, n. d). In African culture, according to Mbiti (1975), death does not alter or end the life or the personality of an individual, but only causes a change in its condition. The deceased member of the family becomes an important extension of the living. Hence they are called the 'living dead' or ancestors (Mbiti, 1969; Mbiti, 1975; Ngubane, 1977).

Mourning rituals have been a constant phenomenon throughout history. Literature (Rosenblatt *et al.*, 1976; Littlewood, 1992; Parkes *et al.*, 1997; Romanoff & Terenzio, 1998; Kastenbaum, 2004) explains why and how different cultures perform death rituals depending on the meaning they attach to death. Most of the rituals have their bases in the people's traditional and religious belief systems. In most African cultures these

rituals include among others, cleansing, funeral ceremony, removal of hair, slaughtering of a cow, wearing of mourning clothes and restriction of the mourners to participate in social activities for a stipulated time.

It is believed that the funeral rites which are the most common ritual are a source of valuable support to the society in general and to those who have been bereaved, in particular. This serves as a public acknowledgement that a death has occurred. According to Radzilani (2010), a ritual is a specific behavior or activity that gives symbolic expression of certain feelings or thoughts of groups and individuals. Taylor (1980) stated that rituals represent a symbolic affirmation of values by means of culturally standardized utterances and actions. From this perspective, rituals seem to perform specific functions in a given society or culture. African women would cover their heads and everyone wore formally in a typical African funeral.

Each society has prescribed rituals that can help families in resolving their grief. More details of grief and rituals can also be unique from one family to another even in the same society due to influences of religious believes, education, and wealth status among others. Rituals serve particular functions, but primarily, they help the families to accept the reality of loss, to express the feelings related to loss and accomplish the task of grief work (Rando, 1993). According to Mbiti (1969), death to Africans is not an event which just occurs, handled and then forgotten about. When one dies, there is a series of events which usually take place. These include a period of at least one week of mourning before the actual funeral, feasting and gatherings associated with the funeral. Evening prayers may also be held in some families, depending on their family traditions. Family members usually prepare food for friends and neighbours; inform visiting mourners about the cause of death of the deceased [http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/death history](http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/death_history) (Anonymous, n. d).

Rituals play a therapeutic role to bring back the healthy status to the bereaved members. They also enhance the expression and containment of strong emotions for the family members and friends of the deceased. The repetitive and prescriptive nature

of rituals usually ease feelings of anxiety in that they provide structure and order in times of chaos and disorder in the family that is mourning (Radzilani, 2010). As stated earlier, within communities they may reaffirm ethnic or religious identity. Rituals also provide the opportunity for public display of grief.

In traditional African cultures, funerals and bereavement rituals help in the purification of the mourners who are believed to be polluted from contact with the dead. Community members participate in ceremonies that are considered to be essential for the removal of contaminated spirit and allow the mourners to re-enter society and return to the process of living. In addition to common rituals, some traditional African religions observe the pre-burial rituals and post-burial purification rituals (Selepe & Edwards, 2008). This is due to the belief that death hovers over them like a shade until such a time that they undergo a purification rite. Failure to cleanse or purify as required by tradition is believed to bring bad luck (i.e. misfortune) or evil to the family or people close to the deceased. Rituals are believed to offer comfort and relief. According to Ngonyama ka Sigogo and Modipa (in Ratele, 2004), certain socio-cultural rituals bring a sense of relief and wellbeing into communities. Such rituals may act as a psychological means of adjustment in the face of misfortunes.

Commonly in indigenous African religions, grief counseling is conducted in a community setting (Selepe & Edwards, 2008; Nwoye, 2005). Immediately after the death has been announced, a tent is pitched in the homestead of the deceased where neighbors and relatives, church members and the community members gather for prayers in the evenings preceding the day of the funeral. In these gatherings there are usually scripture readings, recollection of good memories of the deceased and people assist in different ways to make life easier for (i.e. comfort) the family of the deceased. It is common that the grieving process involves the whole community. Family members, close relatives and friends are more intimately involved due to special relationships they had with the deceased (Mkhize, 2008).

Radzilani (2010) points out that social, economic and political change have transformed the face of death rituals in modern industrialized societies. As a result, some rituals appear to have diminished in South African contemporary townships. There seem to be different trends characterizing funerals in the past and in the present. Furthermore, the political situation in South Africa in the past century seems to have contributed to the way in which funerals came to be characterized currently (Manenzhe, 2007). For example, the political unrests of the pre-democratic era, the HIV/AIDS epidemic of the post-democracy years have claimed many lives in South Africa. In the past, funerals were initially peaceful and dignified until people started reacting against the apartheid regime. The effect was that funerals of victims of political unrests became war zones between angry communities and the law enforcement agents. Funerals were *popularized and became political theatres, sometimes leaving no platform for the bereaved families to mourn their dead member as they wish* (Manenzhe, 2007; Singer, 2001). Funerals in African families have become such a common feature in recent years in that people who mourn tend to spend most weekends at burials. The recent trend observed in South African township funerals has adopted new rituals of mourning. African funerals which were once solemn and sad occasions, have reinvented as stylishly riotous celebrations, replete with alcohol, music and dance among the Black elite. The celebration is called 'after tears' party, held immediately after the burial. At such occasions, women no longer cover their heads and dress codes have become positively risqué, with women in very short, tight skirts and men in the latest fashions (Posel, 2002).

### **1.3 Motivation for the study**

In the past two years (2008 to 2009), the researcher was invited by the radio program on Thobela FM, a South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) radio station in Polokwane, the capital of Limpopo Province in South Africa, to present a psycho-educative series on bereavement, grief, mourning, current trends in funeral rituals and mourning practices. Listeners to the program were invited to call in and give input and opinions about loss and bereavement. This process was an eye-opener for the writer

as she realized the importance of taking cultural practices into context. The controversial type of mourning called 'wie sien ons' (translated as '*who is seeing us*'), which is practiced in the townships throughout South Africa, featured in discussions in that program. That program generated interest for the researcher to explore the phenomenon of the 'after tears' in South Africa. The researcher believes that the 'after tears' practice is perceived differently by different people. Also, people mourn their dead differently. This also motivated the writer to conduct research in an in-depth manner.

#### **1.4 Statement of the problem**

There seems to be differing opinions regarding the 'after tears' party held immediately after the funeral. According to Van Rooyen (2009), Dr Mndende who is an African traditional religion theologian said many traditions had been westernized, including the Xhosa mourning tradition and there is this new 'immoral thing' in the townships called 'after tears' while you were in mourning. She further warned that it seems not acceptable to be enjoying a party while people are in mourning. Van Rooyen (2009) further quoted Vally in 'The Times' (January 19, 2009) to explain that culture is not static or cast in stone, it changes and people begin to ascribe a meaning to it that probably is different from what other people may think it is. The 'after tears' party is regarded by others in the community as immoral and not part of African culture, while some view it as a way to strengthen and console the bereaved. 'After tears' partying is not documented in formal literature, but it seems to be gaining popularity. The problem seems to be the celebration mood displayed immediately after the burial of a loved one. It is customary for the bereaved families to continue to be in a sad mood for a culturally stipulated period of time. The sharp emotional contrast seems to be the core concern to those who still hold traditional mourning practices with high regard. The study explores the changing trends in ritual practices and mourning among the different ethnic groups in South Africa. As much as culture is dynamic, it is important to know what informs change in certain cultural practices.

## **1.5 Aims and objectives**

### **1.5.1 Aim of the Study**

The study aims to understand the perceptions of the people living in urban societies and to explore their psychological needs with regard to mourning the dead in the modern environments as opposed to traditional African settings.

### **1.5.2 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

- To explore the experiences of the township people on the phenomenon of the 'after tears' parties
- To understand the meaning attached to the 'after tears' parties
- To explore the people's feelings about effects of the 'after tears' parties on the mourners.

## **1.6 Research questions**

The research questions are:

- What are the township people's experiences and perceptions about the 'after tears' parties?
- What is the meaning of the 'after tears' party to the bereaved and to those who offer support to the bereaved?
- How do the people feel about the 'after tears' parties?

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

There seems to be limited scientific literature that focuses specifically on the changing nature of mourning rituals. Contemporary funerals seem to be approached differently

when compared to past traditional funeral practices. From this perspective, it is imperative to understand how cultural practices evolve parallel to religion and traditional beliefs including the way people view mourning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As mentioned earlier in the discussion, rituals perform therapeutic functions, a way to assist the bereaved to cope. It will be important to find out the role of the 'after tears' party with the experiences of the people who practice it in terms of coping with the loss of a significant member of the family, community and the society.

South Africa has yet to come to grips with the varieties of cultural expressions, those that maintain some form of distinctiveness and group identity. The study hopes to make a contribution to add to the dynamic nature of cultural practices in the field of death and mourning rituals. This study also hopes to break new ground in searching for meaning where certain practices emerge especially in traditional customs and practices not documented in the formal academic literature. The study will lay a base for future research on the needs of the people living in urban environments in the process of mourning the loss of a loved one.

## **1.8 Chapter layout**

**Chapter 1** presented the motivation for conducting this study. It discussed the study background, motivation of the study, problem statement, research aim and objectives, research questions and the significance of the study.

**Chapter 2** presents the literature reviewed on mourning rituals and practices.

**Chapter 3** presents the theoretical framework used in the study in which social learning theory is discussed.

**Chapter 4** presents the research design and methodology. It discussed the research design and approach by explaining the study process.

**Chapter 5** presents the findings of the current study.

**Chapter 6** represents the discussion, recommendations and conclusions drawn from the current study.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

According to Neimeyer, Burke, Mackay and van Dyke Stringer (2010) mourning the death of a loved one is a ubiquitous human experience. Like any other significant life transitions, following the death of a loved one, the bereaved individuals need to adjust and go back to normal life. Most cultures have prescribed bereavement and mourning rituals to facilitate adjustment of the bereaved. The current chapter will mainly be on the performance of bereavement/mourning rituals among traditional rural and modern urban South African communities. A particular focus will be on the changes observed in the way these rituals are currently performed in South African urban communities.

Grief work is not easy (Shange, 2009). It does not only demand time but an environment that will allow the person to readjust at his/her own pace. Certain bereavement rituals that have been performed in the past seem to have diminished in many of South African urban environments. Some communities have been forced to forgo some of the mourning rituals and adapted others in their living environments. People deal with one death after another within a short space of time as a result of HIV/AIDS (Demmer, 2006; Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999) and also other life threatening diseases, suicides and traumatic road accidents and this could impact on the effective performance of proper traditional death rituals.

South African societies have gone through a period of political, economic, cultural and other forms of transition during the past centuries and this still continues in modern times. In the past, many Black people migrated from traditional environments in the rural villages mainly for economic reasons. Some of them were forcefully relocated by the South African government to Bantustans or homelands that were based on ethnicity and that became a home for the majority of Black people. As a result, they found themselves in alienated environments that were somehow not conducive for them to continue with their traditional rural lifestyles. Among these included performance of various rituals

and customs which have a special meaning for African people. New lifestyles were soon adopted, some of the traditional practices were adapted and others completely abandoned. For a person who grew up in the rural areas, it becomes a shock to realize the different lifestyle that the people who live in the urban areas have adopted. The chapter will explore the phenomenon of the 'after tears' party which has become part of the practices performed after the burial of a loved one in most South African urban townships.

## **2.2 Mourning the dead**

Mourning the dead is a universal practice which is mediated by religious and cultural practices in different societies (Maloka, 1998). This usually involves the core beliefs and customs, spiritual practices, and certain expected behaviours that will be symbolic of mourning the death of a loved one (Mbiti, 1969). For example, when a death has occurred, there are prescribed behaviours and rituals performed such as what is worn, how the bereaved are addressed, how feelings should be dealt with and what will be done to symbolize the separation of the deceased from the people who are left behind (Parkes *et al.*, 1997). According to Kilonzo and Hogan (1999) clearly prescribed and strict rituals exist in every tribe determining for everyone the appropriate behavior in the face of death.

In African societies, meticulous care is taken to fulfill the funeral rites, to avoid causing any offence to the departed also called the ancestors or the 'living dead' (Mbiti, 1975). As an example there is a funeral ritual which is intended to be a public acknowledgement that a death has occurred. There are also cleansing ceremonies and rituals such as 'ukubuyisa', (Gumede, 1990; Mkhize) in Hook, (2004) a Zulu word to imply the return of the spirit of the deceased home or a memorial service, performed to complete the process of accepting the status of the deceased among the remaining members of the family. This custom is universal in South Africa (Gumede, 1990).

### 2.3 Definition of Concepts

The terms 'grief', 'bereavement' and 'mourning' were imperative to clarify as they set the context of this study. Grief, mourning and bereavement are the reactions accompanying the human state of loss. Although there are differences in the formal definitions of grief, mourning and bereavement, they overlap in meaning and they are often used interchangeably in the thanatology literature and in contemporary language (Castle & Phillips, 2003; Woodrow, 2007; Buglass, 2010).

Grief is defined as intense emotional response associated with the loss of a significant person, often precipitated by the death of a loved one (Rosenblatt *et al.*, 1976). Grief is further defined as the individual's personal response to loss and has emotional, physical, behavioural, cognitive, social, spiritual dimensions (Stroebe, Hanson, Stroebe & Schut, 2001; Hartshone, 2003; Buglass; 2010). According to Mbizana (2007) grief is a normal, internalized reaction to the loss of a person. The above definitions could mean that grief is a personal reaction that is usually precipitated by the loss of a loved one and the reactions may not be visible and may also not suggest that the person is sick or weak.

The definitions of mourning specifically emphasize the visibility of expression of the grief. This means that while grief may not be clearly tangible as it is an internalized reaction, mourning is visible. Sanders (1995) and Kastenbaum (2004) defined mourning as the culturally patterned visible expression of the bereaved thoughts and feelings. According to Rosenblatt *et al.* (1976) mourning is the culturally defined acts that are usually performed when a death occurs. Stroebe *et al.* (2001) assert that mourning is a reflection of the social expressions or act expressive of grief that is shaped by a given society or a cultural group. While Cook and Oltjenbruns (1989) defined mourning as denoting the social prescription for the way in which we are expected to display grief.

Furthermore, Robben (2004) also argued that grief may be a universal emotion of bereavement but its social expression in mourning is culture specific. Mourning also

indicates the process of coping with loss and grief (Bhana, 2008). According to Woodrow (2007), psychoanalytic approaches described mourning as both the conscious and the unconscious process and courses of action promoting the undoing of psychological ties which binds the mourner to the loved one who has passed away.

Rando (1993) finally perceives grief and mourning as processes in the continuum. Without the experiences of grief, mourning cannot take place. Sometimes grief is perceived as the beginning part of mourning and this makes it difficult to separate the two processes as they are very closely linked. Some cultures do not even have language equivalents for the terms grief and mourning.

The definitions of mourning outlined above seem to suggest that mourning can be intrapsychic, physiological, cognitive process which is demonstrated behaviorally and it is mostly influenced by the socio-cultural context within which the person lives. Therefore mourning is not a singular process of a series of reactions within an individual but an interaction between the person and his environment i.e. culture and the social context. Mourning is culturally determined and it ranges from observation of outward signs to performance of certain cultural rituals. The rituals are social prescriptions that describe what people do and how they should behave when they have experienced the loss of an individual (Hockey *et al.*, 2001). They are believed to perform specific functions, i.e. to assist the people acknowledge the reality of death and to cope with the loss of a loved one (Radzilani, 2010; Ramanoff & Terenzio, 1998; Cook & Oltjenbruns, 1989). Mourning is further explained in terms of complicated mourning and pathological mourning. There has been a growing interest of research in these areas of mourning over the recent years (Opperman & Novello, 2006; Drenth, Herbst & Strydom, 2010).

Bereavement represents the experiential state or being in a state of mourning that one endures after realizing a loss (Bhana, 2008). Bereavement is also perceived as a period during which grief and mourning occur (Rosenblatt *et al.*, 1976). In the current study, the terms grief, mourning and bereavement were used as co-concepts.

## 2.4 Mourning Rituals and Practices

### 2.4.1 A Historical Review

The process of mourning and the rituals accompanying this process in the South African context have been studied by various authors. (Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999; Manyedi, Koen & Greef, 2003; Magudu, 2004; Ngubane, 2004; Demmer, 2006; Rosenblatt & Nkosi, 2007; Shange, 2009; Selepe & Edwards, 2008; Bhana, 2008; Radzilani, 2010; Dlukulu, 2010).

Kilonzo & Hogan (1999) examined the psychological significance of traditional African mourning practices in the context of HIV/AIDS pandemic and implications for mental health. The findings of the study highlighted that the increase in psychiatric and psychological problems are associated with incomplete mourning and unresolved grief. A study conducted by Manyedi *et al.* (2003) explored the widowhood experiences and beliefs about the mourning process of the Batswana people. The findings indicated that among the Batswana people widowhood is complicated by the cultural beliefs and customs which may be a stressful experience for the widows. Similar studies to Manyedi *et al.* (2003), conducted from different contexts are Bhana (2008), Magudu (2004) and Rosenblatt & Nkosi (2007). Bhana's (2008) study focused on the social constructionist understanding of mourning by Indian widows. Magudu (2004) focused on the experience and perceptions of 'ukuzila' among the Amahlubi tribe in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. The article highlighted that the mourning customs were more oppressive to women than men. Rosenblatt & Nkosi's (2007) findings on the South African Zulu widows in a time of poverty and social change also outlined that among other findings, the mourning rituals stretched over a year in some ways estranged widows from the entire society.

Further studies include Ngubane (2004) who focused on the traditional burial practices of Zulu people. Ngubane (2004) asserted that most Zulu people are unable to perform their traditional custom due to the changed nature of environments which they live in.

Recently, Radzilani (2010) focused on the performance of bereavement rituals in a TshiVenda speaking community. Selepe and Edwards (2008) explored the intervention model of grief counseling applied by the African Indigenous churches (Mapostola) in Venda. One of the findings highlighted by the study is the way in which social support is valued within the VhaVenda communities. On hearing of the death of a loved one, support is expected from families, friends and the entire community. The therapeutic value of performance of death rituals is bringing the community together. Shange (2009) focused on bereaved employees in South African organizations. Finally, a study by Demmer (2006) focused on professional caregivers in rural KwaZulu Natal on AIDS-related loss and grief.

Dlukulu (2010) conducted a recent study and has focused on the rituals performed in the Black urban townships. A particular point of focus was on how widows in transitional societies experience bereavement and the bereavement rituals of loss and change. The findings of this study highlighted that bereavement in transitional societies is complicated by factors such as the inability to perform all the prescribed traditional rituals, some of them being adapted. There could be other recent studies conducted on mourning in South African urban contexts, however, given the rapid transitional nature of urban population, research is imperative in order to explore the needs of the people living in urban environments in dealing with the death of a loved one. The above literature highlights the vast work that has been done on bereavement and mourning within the South African context. However, most studies conducted so far seem to focus on spousal bereavement, particularly the experiences of widowhood within different cultural groups.

Despite the fact that death has become a common occurrence in South Africa, most of the studies focused on the rural areas of South Africa and few studies have so far focused on the changing nature of the mourning rituals in the South African urban Black township communities. Research on the changing nature of the mourning rituals and the changing people's living environments seems to have received limited attention.

The observation of the researcher has been that the practice of the funeral ritual and the mourning practices accompanying the death of a loved one have been redefined in South African townships when compared to the way funerals were conducted in the past. One distinct feature that seem to be a common practice and seems to have become popular in the urban townships of South Africa, referred to as the 'after tears' party. Immediately after the funeral, friends of the deceased gather to have drinks, mostly alcoholic beverages, usually in a party mood, with loud music and dance. That would be a way of saying the departed has completed his earthly role, those who remain should forget about him and continue with life (Letsosa, 2010).

African cultures have their practices, traditional beliefs and customs surrounding death and performance of death rituals. In light of the nature of how Africans treat death and mourning, the 'after tears' party seems to be strange to African people (Posel, 2002). The current study undertakes to gather information on the direct experiences of the bereaved and those who attend funerals in the townships on the phenomena of the 'after tears' party.

## **2.5 Some issues relating to mourning**

All cultures have rituals that mark the finality of death and prescribe socially supported mourning behaviors. Socially sanctioned ceremonies and rituals have been used by cultural groups as vehicles for transmitting group beliefs and expectations and also maintain order within a given culture (Becvar, 2001). According to Kilonzo and Hogan (1999), the society molds its members from early childhood to integrate life and death events into their human experiences.

Rando (1988) defines a ritual as a specific behaviour/actions or activity which gives a symbolic expression to certain feelings and thoughts of the actors individually or as a group. It may be a habitually repetitive behaviour or a one-time occurrence and may be performed publicly or privately. The same applies to mourning rituals because the bereaved are actors and they symbolize something by performing the rituals. Romanoff

and Terenzio (1998) defined rituals as cultural devices that facilitate preservation of social order. The common element in these definitions of rituals is their symbolic nature and the behaviors or actions to indicate that they are performed and they are visible. Even though cultures prescribe and practice mourning rituals, there is a great difference among those practices and they change with time.

The performance of death rituals in African societies is influenced by the belief in the continuation of life (Mbiti, 1969; Mbiti, 1975; Gumede, 1990; Khathide, 2007; Tlhagale, 2000; Masango, 2007; Wiredu, 1995). Shange (2009) asserted that after death rituals and ceremonies will differ depending on one's culture and degree of adherence. According to Tlhagale (2000), in the African world-view, death is a transformative process that confers a supernatural status of the deceased. Appropriate funeral rituals ensure that the deceased become ancestors. Wiredu (1995) further asserted that funeral rites are performed for the purpose of ensuring that the deceased would be able to join the ancestral spirits because in African tradition, when a person dies, it is believed that his spirit cannot reach the destination to the land of the "living dead" before the performance of death rituals.

In African cultures, when a family member dies, the whole community and the bereaved family members including the relatives of the deceased have to perform bereavement rituals. There are public rituals where the community will participate in, such as the funeral and the services that would be offered to the bereaved family during the process of the preparation of burial. There are also private rituals which are mostly performed by the family and the close relatives of the deceased (Romanoff & Terenzio, 1998). This indicates the traditional significance in performing rituals and the special meaning that rituals have for African people.

The ancestors are believed to be the mediators between God and the living (Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999; Radzilani, 2010), they are also believed to be overlooking and taking care of the living, participating in the active lives of the living (Mbiti, 1975). Hence, the

practice of the death rituals which is symbolic of the relationship that people have with the ancestors.

## **2.6 The functions of mourning rituals**

According to Kilonzo and Hogan (1999) each ritual in the traditional mourning process has a deep psychological function. Mourning rituals have multiple functions for the family of the bereaved (Friesen, 1990). In the traditional African religious cultural practices, mourning rituals serve both the needs of the individual and of the community. As an example, people come to terms with the reality of death with the funeral and the community traditional, ethnic or religious identity is reaffirmed.

### **2.6.1 Making change manageable**

Rituals address adjustment to present change in role and status, community tensions, reworking previous losses and relocation of the deceased into a new role and function in the community (Friesen, 1990; Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999). This means that the rituals facilitate adjustment to present change in role and in status of the deceased. As an example, when the person that has died is a husband, his wife becomes a widow and there is a specific dress code that she must wear, also accompanied by certain behaviours and actions. Gumede (1990) asserted that death upsets the social equilibrium of the society, therefore certain prescribed rites and ceremonies are used to restore the disturbed balance. Rando (1993) also asserted that rituals are most often used to facilitate relinquishing of relationships and transition to a new role.

### **2.6.2 Public Display of grief**

In most societies, rituals such as funerals, prayers and memorial services serve as a public acknowledgement that a death has occurred and they provided opportunity for the public display of grief (Cook & Oltjenbruns, 1989; Romanoff & Terenzio, 1998). This means that in performing the mourning rituals, the bereaved families show the

community and the public that they are grieving. In a way, this calls for community support and acknowledgement. The dress code becomes a symbol of accepting new social status and they carry a message that the person is now in mourning. Radzilani (2010) highlights the importance of rituals such as dress codes and prescriptions and she asserts that should there be no social prescription, the bereaved people may behave in a way that does not position them as in need of support from others.

### **2.6.3 Therapeutic value to the bereaved**

Rituals are seen as the best entry point to facilitate healing (Walsh & Mc Goldrick, 1991), since death is seen as painful and traumatic for the survivors (Bento, 1994). Each ritual in the traditional mourning process has a deep psychological function and they provide a vehicle for expression and containment of strong emotions (Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999; Romanoff & Terenzio, 1998). This implies that grief reactions can also be accompanied by strong emotions and performance of a grief ritual can serve as a vehicle of expressing those emotions. During mourning, groups of people join with each other to express words and behaviours symbolic of support and comfort. Neighbours have the opportunity to express their condolences, share what they have to assist the mourners to deal with the reality of loss. Therefore, rituals allow for those supportive interactions to happen which can strengthen family and group ties.

### **2.6.4 Construction of community identity**

Rituals are also vehicles through which communities are delineated and distinguished from others. They also symbolize how people identify with their culture, religion and also with the deceased (Radzilani, 2010). In communities where cultural and religious identities are emphasized, they serve to strengthen and reaffirm group identities. According to Dlukulu (2010), identity is anchored in a particular social context or in a specific set of social relations. Therefore the identity formation process involves a dialectical relationship between the individual and the society. This implies that we become who we are as a result of a particular form of socialization.

### **2.6.5 Purification of the mourners**

In traditional African societies, when a family member has died, the family of the deceased is regarded as contaminated or polluted from contact with the dead. Community members participate in the ceremonies that aim at removing contaminated spirit from the mourners and they will be reunited to the society again (Ngubane, 1977). Mourning rituals are believed to assist in the process of purification of the mourners in this regard. Mourning rituals within the South African context are seen to be performing the same functions as those mentioned above.

### **2.7 African Grief Work**

Western theories on bereavement have provided insight into the phenomena of grief and mourning (Nwoye, 2005). From the works of Freud (Clewel, 2002), Bowlby (1980), Lindemann (1944), Kubler- Ross (1969) to the more recent works of Stroebe, Stroebe and Hanson (1993), Stroebe and Schut (1999), Cook and Oltjenbruns (1998), Parkes (2001), Bonnano and Kaltman (1999) and Archer (2001) inform about the different phases that the bereaved go through for mourning to be resolved, normal and pathological grief reactions and the models developed to facilitate healing for the bereaved. Psychoanalytic theories refer to this process as 'grief work'.

The assumption inherent in the theories is that grieving is predictable and therefore controllable. If the bereaved has shown certain symptoms for a stipulated period then she/he would have successfully dealt with the loss of a loved one (Neimeyer, Prigerson & Davies, 2002; Bhana, 2008). The other assumption is that the expression of grief and mourning is universal. However, there is a variation among cultures in the way people resolve their grief. According to Hockey *et al.* (2001) the experience of dying and bereavement occur within a specific social context. From this perspective it is important to take into consideration the context within which the bereaved find themselves, such as the socio-cultural, political, economic and physical contexts.

Nwoye (2005) defines African grief work as the patterned ways invented in traditional communities for the successful healing of the psychological wounds and pain of bereaved persons. A healing system grounded in ecologically sound rituals and ceremonies that facilitate experiential healing and its target clients are any members of the community burdened by the painful loss of a loved one. African people perform rituals to cope with the impact of the death of a loved one. Performance of mourning rituals symbolizes how people identify themselves with their culture, religion and also with the deceased.

According to Nwoye (2005), while Western researchers have been largely concerned with the individual reaction to loss, the African perspective focuses on the spiritual/systemic/interactional nature of healing and grieving and the resources that the community makes available to the bereaved. This is done through community interventions which is not only work done by professionals but also by indigenous community efforts to bring healing to one of its grieving members. For example Selepe and Edwards (2008) has outlined the grief counseling model by the African Indigenous Churches in a South African village. Bopape (1995) developed a Bapedi framework of mourning and bereavement and its implications for helping professions. The above highlights some of the strides that have been taken by African people in contextualizing the process of grief work in African societies.

## **2.8 Performance of grief rituals in South African rural environments**

Performance of death rituals has been and it is still a traditional practice in most rural environments in South Africa. These are carefully adhered to because of the value that is attached and the functions believed they perform within the communities.

### **2.8.1 The beginning of family mourning**

African mourning rituals reflect the beliefs and attitudes towards death and as such they begin immediately after the family member has been confirmed as dead. Mkhize (2008)

explains that in most African societies, when a death is announced, the family is immediately regarded as 'polluted' (isinyama) or 'sefifi' in Setswana, which implies a negative shadow which also means that the family is thrown into a state of disequilibrium. Zulus consider a family death to have contaminated the relatives of the deceased. The term 'pollution' in the context of the death of a family member was also used by Hutchings (2007), Ngubane (1977) and Ngubane (2004) to refer to a state of contamination. In Zulu culture, death is regarded as highly intensified form of contamination or pollution. The family of the deceased will be contaminated and anyone who touches the corpse will also be regarded as such.

The period preceding the burial will be accompanied by certain rituals that will be performed. These include the smearing of the windows with ash to reflect a gloomy atmosphere, turning wall pictures from sight, switching off radios and television sets (Bopape, 1995). The rationale behind all these efforts is to demonstrate openly the intensity of their deep sorrow and remorse. Again, the rationale would be to symbolize death to the whole community.

Among the VhaVenda ethnic group, it is also believed that when a death occurs in a family, the family members have been symbolically crushed by a mud wall and need to be released. This imaginary wall surrounding the survivors symbolizes their bereavement (Radzilani, 2010; Selepe & Edwards, 2008). As a result, they may not take part in the normal life of the society until they have been purified or cleansed through performance of a ritual. There is a mourning period which usually takes longer for the family of the deceased. This mourning period prescribes to the family what acceptable behaviors are and what are not until the stipulated end of the mourning period. As an example, Gumede (1990) highlighted the behaviors that were regarded as taboo in traditional African societies during the mourning period, such as overeating, losing one's temper, talking loud or laughing. All things were to be done in moderation.

Ngubane (1977) explained that the central role of a married woman whose husband had died is designated as the chief mourner. The beginning of the mourning period will

include the chief mourner occupying a sacred mourning physical space. This could also mean being isolated from the community for the period of mourning. The chief mourner whether a male or female, will usually be in the main bedroom on a mattress or floor or on the traditional mat called 'legogong' (recently, because of the scarcity of traditional mats, a mattress will be used which will be unmounted from the stand) where he or she will be spending most of the time (Bopape, 1995; Mkhize, 2008). The chief mourner will be covered with a blanket and she fasts and only married women will be allowed to sit with her. The widow will wear a black garment or a mourning attire 'inzila' (Mbizana, 2007) which is a dress specifically designed for mourning. In other traditions, the children of the deceased will also wear a small black pin on the calf of the hand to show that they are observing the period of mourning.

If the deceased is a wife, then the widower will wear a black band around his calf for a stipulated period of time. In Southern Africa the period of strict mourning usually continues for at least a week after the funeral. The widow will continue to be isolated from contact with the community before and after the burial for a culturally stipulated time frame. In African cultures, the stipulated time for a widow to be in mourning is usually a year. During that time, the widow and other bereaved members stay at home and are not allowed any social contact or even sexual contact. They do not participate in any social activities or public gatherings like weddings, funerals, parties and church services as they are believed to be contaminated (Magudu, 2004).

Similar descriptions have also been recorded by Manyedi *et al.* (2003) about the widowhood experiences among the Batswana, Bopape (1995) on the Bapedi framework of mourning and Radzilani (2010) on the experiences of VhaVenda widows and the practice of religious and cultural rituals. The end of mourning for the widow is usually marked by a ritual or a ceremony where she will be taking off the black garment and symbolically restored back to normal life in the society.

## 2.8.2 Community mourning

Several authors explain the process where the community will join in with the mourners (Selepe & Edwards, 2008; Bopape, 1995; Dlukulu, 2010; Mkhize, 2008). The message of death of a family member is usually spread by word of mouth as well as over the radio as fast as possible. According to Dlukulu (2010), the first phase of mourning usually begins when relatives and friends surround the widow immediately after the death of her husband. Members of the community come to 'inquire' about what happened to the family known as 'ukuzwa' in IsiZulu or 'go tlhoboga' in Sepedi (Mkhize, 2008; Bopape, 1995).

There is usually a mixture of Christian religion and traditional practices in most of the communities regarding the way they offer support to the bereaved. Bopape (1995) recorded that on hearing of a death of a community member who could also be a member of a particular church in the community, the clergy immediately calls the home of the bereaved to offer condolences and conduct prayers. Such prayers are attended by the whole neighborhood. Selepe and Edwards (2008) also recorded that grief among the Zion Apostolic Church members or Ma-Postola is a shared community experience.

When death is announced, church leaders as well as members, neighbours and the community at large flock to the family where tragedy has struck to verify the news and assure the bereaved of their support. Involvement of various stakeholders ensures holistic support. Community members provide labour such as pitching of the tent, cooking and baking, assisting with buying groceries and other errands while the church leaders provide psycho-spiritual support. According to Magudu (2004), this period where the community members gather at the house of the deceased is a period of support with varying forms of tradition, culture, social and religious practices including the group's interpretation of its supportive function.

Similar practice of community involvement is also recorded in other parts of Africa. Shiino (1997) described the process of a death ritual among the Luo in Kenya. From the

time when death strikes, close relatives are usually the first ones to arrive and the whole community would begin to show up few days after at the deceased's home. Maloka (1998) also highlighted the practice of community mourning among the Basotho of Lesotho. Kilonzo and Hogan (1999) also recorded the performance of community rituals in the face of a death of a loved one in Tanzania. Ranger (2004) also highlighted process of community support among the different cultures in Zimbabwe at a time of death of a community member. Wiredu (1995) compared the funeral and mourning practices of the Africans in the Northern parts of Ghana, the Akans, the Yorubas of Nigeria which is also recorded by Adamolekun (2001) and the Luo in Kenya which are reported to be more elaborate and lavish in their approach to death. Funerals are among the most important and visible observances in cultural life.

### **2.8.3 The Burial**

Most cultures dispose off their dead with a ritual such as burial in order to separate the dead from the living. South African traditional cultures are not an exception. There are usually a number of rituals accompanying the burial and these vary according to ethnicity, clan, kinship and belief system.

According to Ngubane (1977) in traditional Zulu culture, as soon as the husband's dies, the body is prepared by the chief mourner helped by other married women. Burial usually takes place on the day after the death. The body was buried as soon as possible in order to avoid decomposing since there were no mortuaries in the past. According to Gumede (1990) it may be hot and the body might decompose with a bad smell, the body will be covered with branches of *Umsuzwane* or *Umhlonyane* which are branches of trees that emit a strong aromatic smell like mint. Contrary to the current practice where the mortuary ritual took over, the corpse will be taken to the mortuary where it will stay for a few days while the family is busy preparing for the funeral/burial.

On the eve of the burial the corpse would be brought back from the mortuary into the house for an overnight vigil called 'moletelo' (Bopape, 1995; Letsosa, 2010) or

'mulindelo' (Selepe & Edwards, 2008). The function of the night vigil is to support and allow the community members to say their last goodbyes, even testify about the deceased. Ritual killing in the form of slaughtering a beast which will also take place the night before the burial and this will be for provision of food for the people who are attending the funeral and in the past. The skin would often be used to wrap the corpse for burial since there were no coffins in the past. The ritual killing is also performed as a sacrifice or an offering to the ancestors (Tlhagale, 2000).

Burials in South Africa are heavily influenced by Christian and traditional African religions. A number of traditional rituals are still observed to be practiced even among Christian members and many of them are evident in many funeral services. As an example, at the breaking of the dawn, on the day of the burial just after the night vigil, there is a ritual called 'u tovhowa' in TshiVenda (Selepe & Edwards, 2008) which is the final viewing of the corpse. Bopape (1995) also asserts that as the corpse is carried out of the house, a traditional praise-making is done by a close elderly relative. The eulogy serves as a means of honouring the deceased and also for psychological relief. Eulogy is supposed to evoke a response from the bereaved to cry as it is believed that crying is therapeutic. This also happens at the cemetery and during the burial where the bereaved would be sitting at one side of the grave and is not expected to take part in the singing (Bopape, 1995). The clergy and the community including church members usually participate in the burial process. The people attending the funeral will mostly be expected to maintain complete silence at the graveside except when they would be singing hymns. Women are expected to wear long dresses and cover their heads and men are supposed to wear formal jackets as a sign of respect.

Burials are usually preceded by a family diviner who will go to the grave before the burial and perform a traditional ritual. The clergy will be mostly conducting the funeral process. After the burial, the community will be invited to go back to the family of the deceased for a meal. All the community members must wash their hands with water that has special cut aloe leaves (Dlukulu, 2010). Reference has also been made to a plant called *Lippia javanica* or *umsuzwane* in Zulu, as a plant that is used in Zulu burials for

washing (Hutchings, 2007). In Zimbabwe, a similar practice had been documented by Ranger (2004) where special traditional herbs will be used to cleanse the tools that were used to dig the grave and those who carried out the burial.

After the funeral, the period of strict mourning for the bereaved family will be observed which lasts for at least a week. The bereaved family would observe the 'ukuzila' period (Rosenblatt & Nkosi, 2007; Hutchings, 2007). There would be symbols to commemorate loss still sticking around such as complete silence at the home of the deceased, lighting of candles, parties and celebrations would normally be prohibited as a sign of respect for the family of the deceased. The bereaved would also continue to engage in cleansing rituals for purification with special medicine, using Black medicine during the mourning period, until the end of mourning or death 'fades' away (Ngubane, 1977; Gumede, 1990; Hutchings, 2007). Contrary to the Western cultures where it is presumed that life will continue after the burial, people get on with their normal lives.

African people have traditionally used their homestead as a final resting place where their dead would be buried. As an example a man would be buried in a kraal in the yard of the homestead. This was done because there was a specific meaning attached to the dead being buried at their home. Dlukulu (2010) explains this concept as place identity. There is often an attachment to place, which has become woven into the individual's personal identity. Every person has an environmental past that consists of places, spaces and their properties which have served instrumentally in the satisfaction of one's biological, psychological, social and cultural needs which serve as part of the socialization process during which self-identity is developed.

Ngubane (2004) contested that to die in the traditional belief is like going back home where you belong. Hence the use of words *ukugoduka*, *ukudlula*, in Zulu or 'go *tsamaya*' in Setswana, which implies that when a person dies he/she joins the people who died before them. As such one needs a proper burial, where there will be elements of respect and dignity. Ngubane (2004) further outlined that any respectable Zulu person was buried at home at the back or sides of their family's huts irrespective of age

or gender except of the head of the family who was buried alongside the top of the cattle kraal. Recently, especially in South African urban environments, people have moved away from burying their dead in their homesteads due to political and other reasons. Technological advancement and shortage of burial space in metropolitan area has contributed to popular use of other alternatives to traditional burial such as burying in designated areas (common graveyards). The other form of disposing the dead in urban environments which is gradually gaining popularity is cremation (Mbizana, 2007).

## **2.9 Development of urban Black townships in South Africa**

During the 1900 there was rapid urbanization as a result of industrialization in the major cities of South Africa. The discovery of diamonds (in Kimberley) and later gold (on the Witwatersrand) in South Africa in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a significant turning point in the social and economic history of the country (Maloka, 1998). This development resulted in acceleration of land dispossession and engendered the system of labour migrancy as there was a demand for cheap labour for the mines and creation of compounds to house and control African mineworkers (Maloka, 1998).

The result was overcrowding on the compounds and this created mushrooming of informal settlements. The history of mine related occupational diseases like pneumonia, silicosis, tuberculosis etc. as documented by Maloka (1998) and Maylam (1995). They both highlighted that this resulted in the development of segregated areas for Black people to live such as townships. This urban segregation was perceived in terms of the fears that white people had about Blacks who were believed to bring disease and crime (Maylam, 1998). As an example, there was a public health panic about the outbreak of the influenza which was thought to be of Black origin (Bond, 2007), and the bubonic plague of 1901 that broke out in Cape Town later to Port Elizabeth and then to Durban (Maylam, 1998). As an example, first township to be established was in Cape Town in 1091 was known as Ndabeni as a result of the outbreak of the bubonic plague. Later other townships such as Langa, were further established which moved Black people farther away from the cities as possible.

Before the advent of apartheid in 1948, most of Black Africans had already been assigned to Black only townships (Bond, 2007; Morris, 1998). The introduction of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 which empowered municipalities to set up separate townships for African residents and the Group Areas Act of 1950 which created racial categories (Maylam, 1995; Morris, 1998) ensured that the use of land in the cities were determined on racial basis. The apartheid government forcibly moved thousands of families not classified as whites out of neighborhoods that were too close to areas designated white group areas or were racially diverse.

Around the 1960s, townships mushroomed across cities such as Johannesburg and other main urban centers such as Durban, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, the Vaal, Bloemfontein etc. Dlamini (2005) documented that the first Black township to be established in Durban was around 1958. Durban's two largest Black townships known as Kwa Mashu and Umlazi emerged as a result of the South African government's attempt to resolve what was referred to as 'Black problem' because the Black immigrants moved from the rural areas to work in the city and they were faced with the problem of accommodation.

Johannesburg's city populated exclusively by Black people is Soweto (an acronym for South Western Townships). Soweto is regarded as the largest Black township in South Africa consisting of 26 townships which are more multiracial. Most of the residents came from all the ethnic groups and tribes of South Africa, including other parts of Africa. The struggles of the people who lived in the townships during the apartheid era led them to resist the apartheid government.

## **2.10 Features of Urban Black Townships**

Black people of South Africa were soon faced with urban environments which were unfamiliar and different from their traditional settings and they had to adjust rapidly to these environments. The new environments that they found themselves in were controlled by laws i.e. the influx control, Group Areas Act, Immorality Act, Liquor Act, to

name a few (Stuart, 1989). They did not own land so they could not do as they wished with their allocated land in the townships. The small yards and the 'matchbox' houses characterized urban townships. This had implications in terms of the use of space and changed the traditional living arrangements of Black people. This also somehow restricted the families in terms of family size to accommodate a smaller household.

Maluleke (1995) describes the township as a 'hangover' from an industrial revolution, as reluctant successors of single sex compounds and as places of hiding for many black people who came to the cities with the hope to find better life and jobs. As time went by, townships became 'home' to many people with a distinguishable culture and a sense of history. Some of the prominent features that characterized South African township were outlined by (Maluleke, 1995) which will be discussed below:

**Crime-** For a long time crime has been a significant variable in the township subculture. The oldest and most common form of crime has been 'murder' with people dying like flies especially over the weekends (Maluleke, 1995). More so, some of the criminals became role models for the young. Bozzoli (2000) asserts that the township of the time generated a variety of sub cultural forms which included youth subcultures, gangsterism, truancy and crime which were later perceived as threatening to the social fabric. Stuart (1998) further concurs that South Africa has a thriving culture of criminality and gang membership. The issue of the origin of gangs has been outlined by various authors (Dlamini, 2005; Bozzoli, 2000; Maluleke, 1995).

**Alienation** -Township people are a specific embodiment of the alienation of Black people as a result of oppression. Township houses, the way they were constructed with little space and no luxuries could not be legally owned by their inhabitants until recently. In the past, they did not take care for them since they knew that they did not own the houses, it was enough for them to have a 'bed' and a 'primus stove'. Since this was not home no one cared to respect the premises and they could not even perform rituals in a place that was a temporary space for them. (Maluleke, 1995).

**Protest** -Townships were known as the centers of Black political protest. Areas such as Soweto, Alexander and Sharpeville were symbols with great resonance in the global arena of anti-apartheid struggle (Bozzoli, 2000). Manenzhe (2007) highlighted that many townships became associated with political protests during apartheid era, many people dying during the course of the struggle.

**Innovation** - Music in the township became a past time for many township dwellers. The origin of genres such as 'kwela' and 'mbaqanga' was in the townships because different ethnic groups used to meet to perform traditional dances and music during Sunday afternoons (Maluleke, 1995). Recently, popular music called 'kwaito', a South African urban genre came to the fore around the 1990s (Mhlambi, 2004) which is believed to have been strongly shaped by South African political history. These kinds of music were mostly heard at what were called 'shebeens' (Morris, Jones & Nel, 1997) which was a place where liquor was sold and mostly men would go and socialize over drinks. Before the end of apartheid era, there was strict control exercised over the selling and drinking of liquor by African people. An example of the kind of Legislation introduced was the Liquor Act of 1928, (Morris *et al.*, 1997).

Another innovation from the townships was the development of a distinct language called '*tsotsitaal*' (Maluleke, 1995; Mhlambi, 2004; Dlamini, 2005). According to Slabbert and Finlayson (2000) language plays an important role in establishing identity of an individual and that of a group. Language has a symbolic value by being a means through which the values of the individuals and that of a group are expressed. The knowledge and use of language that is used in the townships and many different languages that township people speak is held in high esteem (Slabbert & Finlayson, 2000). This means that multilingualism in a township is a norm for residents. However, for a person that is not a township dweller can have a negative opinion about people living in the township based on their use of language. Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007) highlighted the differences in the Zulu that is spoken in Soweto and the Zulu spoken in the rural KwaZulu-Natal and this is equated to the loss of customs and traditions of the ethnic group.

**Subcultures** - The emergence of the subcultures such as gangsterism has been recorded by Dlamini (1995), Maluleke (1995) and Bozzoli (2000). According to Maluleke (1995) and Ditshego (1995) among the township subcultures around the East Rand area were groups such as 'Amagents' and 'Toasters' who had a distinct culture especially when they will be burying their group member. They will be seen by the way they perform their burial rites. One such rite is the 'sacrifice' of a stolen luxury car, which is battered, spun around and burnt at the graveyard. This ritual is often accompanied by gunshots into the air and sometimes the coffin containing the dead person shot at before it goes down. Technology has overtaken tradition and modern funerals have changed the people's lifestyles (Ditshego, 1995).

Manenzhe (2007) noticed how family 'rituals' or 'practices' for burying the dead were overtaken through imposed traditions by colleagues of the deceased especially from some political affiliation. Ditshego (1995) argued that funerals have lost their solemn dignity during the mid 80's when political unrest developed in the country when the so called comrades came to the fore. When they were buried, shots were fired as a show of solidarity and what started out as heroic behavior was the beginning of a threat of danger to many ordinary people. Very soon funerals became occasions where the youth were out of control.

The above descriptions outline some of the features that came to characterize urban townships in South Africa. It appears that the lifestyle that the people had to adopt was largely influenced by the environment in which they found themselves. As a result, many practices including traditional customs and practices were adapted to accommodate the conditions. An example would be the burial customs and practices that traditional African societies used to follow in rural areas. According to Ngubane (2004) the burial customs of the rural Zulu people included the homestead as a burial space for the family members. In urban townships, performance of such rituals would be restricted by factors such as the denial of land ownership, lack of space and political restrictions such as creation of common cemeteries as burial grounds for the deceased.

## 2.11 Mourning rituals in urban Black townships

Stuart (1998) argued that very few South Africans live within a traditional cultural framework. About 63% of the country is urbanized with the majority having been urbanized for more than one generation and this has changed much of the world view, values, rituals and traditions of such people. Even if this is the case, few studies have focused on the performance of bereavement rituals in South African urban environments. As an example, Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007) compared the experiences of mourning for Zulu widows in urban Soweto, a township in South Africa that of a Zulu widow living in the rural KwaZulu-Natal. Dlukulu (2010) had focused on the experiences and coping with bereavement of Black urban widows in a transitional society. The findings of Dlukulu's (2010) study highlighted that the absence of some traditional rituals in the mourning process of the bereaved widows living in urban environments appeared to have been a significant in determining coping with the loss of their loved ones.

Many people who live in urban townships and cities are economically active. Upon losing their loved ones, they are allocated a few days of leave to prepare (3 days family responsibility) (Shange, 2009) for the burial of the loved one. This may make it difficult for them to perform and adhere to proper, pre-burial and post burial rituals because time is too short before they are expected to be at work. According to Shange (2009) grief work is a complex process which does not last just for 3 days as provided by the family responsibility leave.

The idea of a special place that the bereaved family occupies (mostly the widow) begins from when death is announced until the end of the mourning period has been outlined in **2.8.1** of the current chapter. However, the observation is that recently it appears that sitting at a special place in some urban township funerals is optional for a widow. The observation is that the widow would be making the funeral arrangements, would also be moving about in the house to make sure that things are in order. This has also been recorded by Dlukulu (2010). The bereaved including the widow or widower would be

free to participate in social interactions and the stipulated mourning period is no longer adhered to by the bereaved.

In terms of time, the period preceding the burial in traditional societies would be a day or two. However, in urban townships, the observation has been that there would be more or less a period between five to six days before the day of the burial. Contrasting it to the rural burials Ngubane (2004) highlighted that urban burials involve a lot of coordination of many different agencies: the local authorities, the florist, the coroner (an official who investigates the cause of death and issues a death certificate), the clergy and the bureaucratic urban system. In addition to this, the deceased gets to be moved away from home to the mortuary where he would stay and the body washed and prepared and only come home on the day before the burial for the final viewing. All of these come with a cost!

Ngubane (2004) asserted that this has made the modern urban burial system to lack respect for the dead person and this pushed the traditional customs away and also the significance of participating at the burial of your loved one is lost. Township funerals commonly take place on Saturdays which Singer (2001) refers to as the 'day of the dead'. Probably because of the working class who only gets to be at home on Saturdays. The other reason could be that families are scattered from each other and they could only be finding time to be together on Saturdays when they are off from work.

However, an observation made by the researcher is that, over the recent years, burials in urban townships no longer take place only on Saturdays but throughout the week. Snyder, Butler & Goff (2006) highlighted that in South Africa, it is not unusual for a person to attend several funerals in a single day. This could be partly influenced by the high mortality rate in reported to be prevalent in South Africa associated with HIV/AIDS. Between 2000 and 2010, it was estimated that about 5 to 7 million South Africans would die from AIDS (Demmer, 2006; Snyder *et al.*, 2006).

According to Kilonzo and Hogan (1999), as a result of untimely multiple losses through AIDS, communities are forced to forgo traditionally prescribed mourning practices and rituals. This incomplete mourning and unresolved grief is usually associated with increased psychiatric and psychological problems due to the inadequacy of these abridged mourning processes. The sudden devastating effects of the AIDS epidemic appear to be disrupting the traditional response to death.

Another practice which has been observed to have changed is the 'ukuzila' which is a symbol that a widow is grieving properly and that she respects her husband's family (Magudu, 2004; Ngubane, 2000; Rosenblatt & Nkosi, 2007). According to Ngubane (2000) the practice of 'ukuzila' is defined as showing respect by avoidance. Avoidance of certain behaviors and places to show respect for the deceased (Magudu, 2004) and this should last until the end of the prescribed mourning period. There are symbols that represent the practice of 'ukuzila' such as the wearing of the mourning garment by the bereaved. In this case the wife of the deceased would wear a mourning dress and if it is a wife that has died, the husband would put a black arm band. The children would also wear the black pieces of cloths on the calves.

In their study of South African Zulu widows, Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007) found out that of the widows they interviewed, some did not wear 'ukuzila garments' because they were prohibited by religion or Christian denominations that did not approve of the practice. There could be other reasons why women do not participate in the 'ukuzila' practice in the urban areas. Occupational demands may not favour participating in some traditional rituals. As an example, some women in professions such as nursing, the army and the police services where they are required to wear uniform at work. The conditions of employment also allow them a few days away from work and sooner they are expected to be back at work to continue with their normal work life which may interfere with the culturally prescribed mourning period. Given the prescribed lifestyle that the bereaved is supposed to follow when in mourning, it may not be possible in an environment where one is required to be at work and interact with people at different

levels. This could have contributed to the change in the practice of wearing a black garment in the urban townships.

According to Parkes *et al.* (1997) millions of people no longer live in their original homelands for a number of reasons to live in multicultural cities. Amongst them are economic forces, government terrorism, actions of colonial powers etc. Proper grieving sometimes may not be possible because grieving involves engaging in a lot of rituals and if the social and the physical environment do not support those it can be very difficult for the bereaved. For instance with cultures that perform certain rituals, there may be certain plants that the mourners may need to perform purification rituals, certain foods that they must eat that may not be available in a different environment for the mourners to complete the mourning process and the rituals attached to it.

Another observation made by the researcher is that in recent years, especially in some of South African townships, some of these practices like smearing ashes on the windows, turning wall pictures and mirrors from sight and switching off the television sets and radios seem to be gradually fading away. Death is no longer represented by such symbols. The absence of such important symbols makes it difficult to spot the house where a death has occurred. This might contribute to the loss of meaning death has had in the communities.

The slaughtering of the beast seems to remain to be a ritual that has been maintained in urban communities and the homecoming ceremonies before the burial where the corpse is brought home for the final viewing. According to Dlukulu (2010) the practicalities of transitional societies (which in this case would be urban black communities) demand that bereavement should be brief and intense, mourning should be resolved quickly so that the person could go back to normal life as soon as possible which is something that could be perceived as un-African.

Funerals in the past used to be attended by a sizeable majority of the community members if they could. Nowadays, especially in the urban environments, the size of the

crowd seems to reflect the person's status and his involvement with people around him/her. This also includes the social class that the deceased belonged to and the lifestyle he/she lived as reflected by friends at the funeral (Dlukulu, 2010; Letsosa, 2010). Also emphasized by Maluleke (1995) is that these days in townships, everyone goes to the funeral and it seems like the funeral has become a cultural event. Not only large numbers of people attend the funeral but they also reserve their best for the occasion. The funeral has also substituted church attendance on Sunday morning in the township and the stokvels and the burial societies have the funeral as a central focus (Maluleke, 1995).

The dress code at urban funerals also highlights some of the changes that occurred over time (Ditshego, 1995). Unlike in traditional rural environments where dress code is strictly stipulated, women must cover their heads and wear long dresses at the funeral, the widow must be covered in a blanket on the day of the funeral and men must wear their formal jackets at the funeral to show respect for the occasion, the urban environments seem to have a more relaxed approach when it comes to the dress code. Posel (2002) asserts that funerals which were once solemn and sad occasions, women no longer cover their heads, dress codes have become positively risqué with women in very short, tight skirts and men in the latest fashions.

These observed changes in the approach to death seem to be noted in other parts of Africa. According to Wiredu (1995), one of the most negative features of contemporary culture in some African countries is that in recent times, the emphasis upon funerals has shown a tendency to degenerate into expensive exhibitionism, which in view of the strong pressures of conformity in African societies, can drive even the reluctant to ruinous funeral expenses.

The issue of respect is central to the African culture, however, the term can mean different things to different people. In the context of death of a loved one, all the rituals of death are symbolic of giving the respect due to the ancestors, to the bereaved and to the deceased member of the family. The emerging rituals of death in the black urban

townships such as the 'after tears' parties could be frowned at by rural people and be perceived as lack of respect for the dead and for death itself. According to Dlamini (2005) urban Zulu customs have been evaluated against traditional rural Zulu customs and these urban practices were basically viewed as 'ukungahloniphi' or lacking respect. As a result, disrespectful practices have been associated with urban behaviours.

Masango (2007) also referred to the concept of respect in the way adults teach children values especially in African villages. As the children grow, they are shaped in respecting people. Any sign of deviance, it would be viewed as a sign of disrespect. The current mourning practices of urban township people could also be viewed as such as they seem to deviate from the known and accepted traditional ones. One such practice is of 'after tears' party.

## **2.12 Religion and mourning rituals**

In many African traditional societies, African religion has been a universal religion for many centuries before the advent of western religions. The beliefs in the ancestral spirits seem to be the most prominent feature of African traditional religion (Masango, 2007; Mbiti, 1969; Ngubane, 2004; Tlhagale, 2000) who are referred to as the "living dead". Therefore there are often complicated ceremonies connected with death, burials, and funerals because of the belief in the spirits of the dead (Ngubane, 1977). Some of these practices have been observed to be maintained in the urban environments while others have been adapted and reinvented.

Some parallels would be drawn on the changes that have occurred in the performance of death rituals in urban environments influenced by religion. Thwala *et al.* (2000) argued that the Nguni culture along with Christianization, the process of westernization and the previous South African government's policy of apartheid, together with the migrant labour system forced a large number of the Nguni population to seek employment in the urban areas. As a result of these occurrences, there was a decline in

traditional religious concepts, values and practices. Among the concepts, values and these practices were the death and mourning rituals.

Religion plays an important part in the lives of African people. South Africans adhere to more than one religious practice. Some South Africans are Christians, some are Hindus, Muslims and others adhere to traditional African religion. Some adhere to both Christian and traditional African religion. According to Ngubane (2004) and Coplan (2011) 80% of South Africans adhere to Christianity with very small Jewish, Islam and Hindu minorities.

The advent of democracy in South Africa has led to a greater recognition of the wide variety of religious and cultural practices on its soil. Ngubane (2004) argued that as a result of this, the Zulu people in South Africa, in particular did not fully enjoy their cultural, religious and linguistic rights through urbanization and immigration from the rural area. They found themselves in an environment that is not conducive to practice their culture and religions and more specifically, their burial customs.

The central role of the church is seen during times when a family member has died. During the preparation for the funeral, the members of the church and the community members would visit the family of the bereaved offering prayers, singing and reading of the bible scriptures throughout the week (Selepe & Edwards, 2008; Bopape, 1995). The funeral leads to the culmination of the role of the church when the priest will be performing the burial by reading the scriptures at the graveyard and offering prayers and comforting the bereaved family.

Urban culture has it that performance of death rituals is more important for individual families than the community. Some families still continue to practice traditional mourning rituals which are prescribed by African religion. Other families blend them with Christianity (Denis, 2004), while others practice what is accepted by their church denominations only. In her study of the VhaVenda widowhood experiences, Radzilani (2010) explored the different groups of VhaVenda widows who adhered to performance

of traditional mourning rituals and those who practiced Christianity where performance of cultural mourning rituals is prohibited.

### **2.13 Social support and mourning**

Social support is very important in African cultures especially when a death has occurred in the community. According to Shange (2009) not merely availability but the extent and quality of social support is an important determinant of resolution of grief. Nwoye (2005) argued that in the African culture, pathological grief is not known due to the nature of support offered to the bereaved person. However, recent studies conducted on complicated grieving i.e. Opperman & Novello (2006) highlighted the presence of complicated grieving among South Africans which could highlight the changing nature of the supportive functions of African communities. A study conducted by Shange (2009) also highlighted that the people benefitted from support from friends and relatives. However, the studies do not highlight how social support can prevent the onset of pathological grief reactions in people, who have lost their loved ones.

### **2.14 The 'after tears' party**

Even though numerous parties and celebrations end most of South African township funerals, there is very little academic literature that explores the phenomenon of the 'after tears' party in South African urban townships. Manenzhe (2007), Letsosa (2010) Posel (2002) and Maluleke (1995) were found in the academic literature mentioned the 'after tears' phenomenon in their studies. According to Letsosa (2010) mourners have adopted a practice that is referred to as 'after tears' where friends of the deceased gather for drinks after the burial and this would be a way of saying that the departed friend has completed his earthly role. Those who remain should forget about him and continue with life, making the best of it while they can.

Posel (2002) highlighted the contradiction of life and death in the new rituals of mourning and celebration which have recently been documented in urban African

townships, particularly among the affluent communities. To the outrage of many church and community leaders, there seems to be a trend within some urban Black elites to flout and offend African 'traditions'. Funerals which were once solemn occasions have turned out to be places where people make their mark, and say who they are. Maluleke (1995) recorded the 'celebratory' atmosphere of many funerals as the 'tear wiping party' or '**visnons**' and he further explains the phenomenon as a 'weird ritual of gangster funerals.' According to Maluleke (1995) the 'tear wiping party' usually takes place on a Saturday evening, usually arranged at a neighbour's or a friend's house. In many forms 'celebrating the life' has replaced 'mourning the dead' as the purpose of funerals. There is more talk of 'moving on' and 'letting go' than of remaining stuck in the sorrow of those who died.

Selepe and Edwards (2008) described the grief counseling process of African Indigenous Churches that practice both Christianity and traditional African religion. Mkhize (2008) also outlined grief therapy from an African traditional point of view. Bopape (1995) also described the process of mourning and bereavement among the Bapedi which is based on a mixture of African traditional religion, Christianity and Western background. The above writers seem to acknowledge that the South African approach to death and mourning blends both traditional African and Western religious cultural practices. Nwoye (2005) also outlined the process of community intervention in grief work from an African perspective. According to Nwoye (2005) the African perspective on grief work focuses on the systemic/interactional nature of healing in grieving and the resources which the community makes available to bereaved persons to facilitate healing in the bereaved.

The practice of the 'after tears' party seems to have overtaken traditional and religious rituals of mourning that seems to have commonly been accepted as a way of helping the bereaved to cope with the reality of the loss of a loved one. These seems to have been started by people who were trying to cope with the loss of a loved one and wanted to turn on a new page, to move on with their lives. While it comes across as seemingly a popular form of 'forced therapy' among the urban Black townships of South Africa, very

little is known if the effects of the 'after tears' party are long lasting enough to replace other traditional and religious methods of coping with the death of a loved one. Western form of therapies has also recently been popularly used by many Black African people as a form of coping with death and loss of a loved one, such as grief counseling or bereavement counseling/therapy.

With the advent of the 'after tears' party as a new 'death ritual', the effectiveness of the traditional mourning rituals become uncertain if they are effective on their own especially performed in urban environments where the inhabitants have gone through transitional phases and transformation. The role of the church or religion in assisting the mourners to cope with the death of a loved one also comes into question. The third question could also be the role of Western form of therapies in assisting the mourners to deal with death of a loved one. Has the 'after tears' party replaced the traditional and religious and contemporary western forms of coping during the event of death? Ngubane (2004) asserted that many African people continue to alienate themselves from their traditional socio-cultural background in the name of civilization, modernity, progress and development.

## **2.15 Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the mourning rituals practiced in traditional African societies and the functions of the rituals when a death has occurred. Unlike in western cultures, death and mourning in African cultures don't end with a funeral. There are rituals and ceremonies observed and performed by the deceased's family members after the deceased has been buried. South African unique history of colonization, industrialization and the practice of segregation policies seem to have affected the lives of the black people who lived in townships. The features of urban townships were also discussed. Living in these strange environments seems to have interfered with the traditional lives of many Black South Africans and as a result some of their traditional practices diminished. Partly due to the environment itself which could have not allowed people the freedom to continue with their cultural practices. New practices emerged such as 'after

tears' party in the urban township which seems to have become popular in urban township funerals. This is the study's interest. The next chapter outlines the theoretical framework in this study so as to give the reader a perspective on the phenomenon of the 'after tears' party.

## **CHAPTER 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The aim of this section is to outline and explain the theoretical framework on which the current study is based. Social learning theory is proposed as a theoretical basis for understanding the phenomenon of the 'after tears' party. The Social learning theory has been pioneered by Albert Bandura. In this chapter, some of the basic principles of social learning theory will be outlined to explain the social context of the practice of mourning rituals and of the 'after tears' party.

### **3.2 Social Learning Theory: A theoretical review**

Social Learning theory (SLT) also known as Social Cognitive theory (SCT) has its roots in the work of Albert Bandura the psychologist (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1986). Bandura viewed learning as an interaction between humans and their environments (Callery, 1990). Therefore human behavior is a continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental determinants (King, 1999; Smith & Berge, 2009). The three variables interact with one another to explain individual's actions.

The theory originally evolved from theories of behaviorism (Stimulus-Response theories) which emphasized that observable behavior is a result of environmental stimuli as opposed to internal events like thinking and emotion. Social learning theory introduced the concepts of cognitive response and as a result, it is also called Social Cognitive Theory (Rosenstock, Strechter & Becker, 1988; Tutuska, 2006). The theory has often been called the bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning theories (Wood & Bandura, 1989).

Social learning theory also purports that learning may take different forms, including new behavior patterns, judgmental standards, cognitive competencies, and rules for creating behaviors. According to Bandura (1986), most human behavior is learned by **observation** through **modeling**. According to Bandura (1986), through the years, modeling has always been acknowledged as one of the most powerful means of transmitting values, attitudes and patterns of thought and behavior. Smith & Berge (2009) defines modeling as doing what others do and this is similar to what Flett (2007) terms imitation. This could be defined as observing others behaviors and doing what they do or a person using another person's behavior as a stimulus for an imitative response.

There are determinants of behavior which means the factors which influence behavior or people to behave in certain ways and these are **positive and negative reinforcements** for behavior. These are **perceived consequences, self-efficacy** which is the person's feeling of adequacy to perform a new behavior. Lastly, there are **social norms** which suggest that people do things to please or follow people they admire (Strand & Smith, 2008).

Social learning theory also focuses on the important role played by vicarious, symbolic and **self-regulatory** processes. Lorenzo, Kawalek and Ramdani (2008) asserted that vicarious learning is learning through observing the effects on the social environment of other people's behaviors or people learning what is expected through the experience of others. According to Bandura (1986) virtually all learning phenomena resulting from direct experience occur on a vicarious basis by observing other people's behavior. **Vicarious learning** occurs when individuals exhibit certain behaviors because they have observed other people being positively reinforced for them. Much of social learning is fostered by observing the actual performances of others and the consequences for them. This implies that learning may include judgmental standards and rules for creating behaviors.

Ormrod (1999) outlines how the environment reinforces and punishes modeling. People are often reinforced for modeling the behavior of others. e.g. A student who changes to fit in with certain group of students has a strong likelihood of being accepted and thus reinforced by that group.

A self-regulatory process is when a person has his own ideas about what is appropriate behavior and inappropriate and acts accordingly (Smith & Berge, 2009). This is highly dependent on the society e.g. there are customs which are acceptable or practices which are appropriate when a death has occurred such as the dress code, how the bereaved should conduct themselves within the broader community, observation of the mourning period as stipulated by culture. Anything deviating from the culture is regarded as inappropriate and unacceptable such as throwing a party during mourning and not observing cultural rituals after the death of a loved one.

Behavior is regulated by its effects and actions that bring rewards will be repeated and those that bring punishment tend to be discarded. Individuals may refrain from certain behaviors as they observe their models being punished for exhibiting them. (Bandura, 1986). However, people do not enact everything that they learn. They may acquire certain behaviors but ever perform them especially when it has little functional value or carries high risk of punishment.

### **3.3 Social diffusion and innovation in Social Learning Theory**

The concept of social diffusion was introduced by Bandura (1986) to explain how new ideas and social practices spread within a society or from one society to another and this has important bearing on social change. Innovation has been described as any idea, practice or service that is perceived by people to be new (Bandura, 1986). Rogers (1983, in Bandura, 1986) examined the process of social diffusion and came up with a model of diffusion of innovation. This model illustrates how social systems function and change. According to Smith and Strand (2008) innovation, be it technology or a new behavior spread among different parts of the community beginning with 'early adopters'

who are people who will always try out new things and moving to 'late adopters' who are people resistant to change.

Bandura (1986) further explains that new ideas and practices are introduced by example. Initially the rate of adoption is slow because new ways are unfamiliar, customs resist change and results are uncertain. As early adopters convey more information about how to apply new practices and their potential benefits, the innovation is adopted at accelerating rate. The new practice will spread rapidly and there will be a period of deceleration where the rate of diffusion slows down for a number of reasons. One of them is that if the new practice proves disappointing or detrimental to some of the adopters. Another is that there can be alternative forms of innovation which might compete against the initial innovation and this might divert the attention of some adopters.

### **3.4 Socio-Cultural Diffusion**

Societies are continuously faced with pressures to change some of their traditional practices in efforts to improve quality of life. These benefits cannot be accomplished without displacing some entrenched customs and introducing new social organizations and technologies (Bandura, 1986).

King (1999) asserted that societal norms, religion criteria and gender power relations infuse meaning into behavior, enabling positive and negative change. Sociological theories assert that society is broken up into smaller subcultures and it is a member of one's immediate surrounding the peer group that one mostly identifies with, that has most significant influence on individual's behavior. Bandura (1986) explains this as **social incentives**. People will do things for approval and refrain from actions that arouse wrath from others. This suggests that the development of social incentives is crucial for successful human relationships.

Bandura (1986) also refers to **status and power incentives**. Social power provides a measure of control over the behavior of other. Thus through symbolic display and exercise of the power individuals possess, they wield jurisdiction over the group's life, enjoy material rewards, social recognition and privileges associated with high social ranks. Social changes are resisted when they arouse apprehension, conflict with entrenched customs and threaten the status and power structures.

### **3.5 Implications of the Social Learning Theory to the current study**

The definitions of mourning highlighted in the previous chapter by various authors (Sanders, 1995; Kastenbaum, 2004; Rosenblatt *et al.*, 1997) that it is a physiological and cognitive process demonstrated behaviorally and it is mostly influenced by the socio-cultural context within which the person lives. Mourning is not a singular process but a series of reactions within an individual as influenced by his interaction with his environment.

People learn by simply observing what others do (Bandura, 1986). Thus, performance of death rituals are behaviours observable from the primary groups that that person interacts with and one identifies. Observational learning is one of the most powerful methods of transmitting values, attitudes and patterns of thought and behavior.

Here the person is exposed to models and through direct observation of behaviours a person will consider the reinforcements for enacting certain behaviours. If the reinforcement is positive, then the behavior will be copied and if the reinforcement is negative, the behavior will be modified or avoided.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The current chapter reviewed social learning theory and its concepts, also its application to the current study. The next chapter outlines the research methodology.

## CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology applied in the current study. The research paradigm followed in this study is qualitative. According to Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006) paradigms are all encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define for researchers the nature of their inquiry. This is done along three dimensions: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology. Ontology refers to the nature of the reality that is to be studied and what can be known about it. Epistemology specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known. Methodology specifies the practical application of what is to be studied, how the researcher intends to practically go about phenomena to be studied.

A phenomenological approach was selected to explore the experiences and the meaning that the participants attach to particular social phenomena, in this case, the 'after tears' party. Neuman (1997) argues that research methodology is what makes social science scientific. The methodology used in this study which includes the population, how the sampling was conducted, methods of data collection and data analysis will also be outlined in detail. The researcher will also discuss ethical issues considered when the study was conducted.

### 4.2 Research Design

A research design is a plan or a blue print that guides and informs how the study will be conducted (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). This implies the procedures by which we approach problems and arrive at answers. It also provides control over those factors that could influence the outcome of the study. In this study, the researcher used qualitative, descriptive, explorative and contextual design to explore and describe the experiences

of the people who have attended the 'after tears' celebrations in the townships in South Africa.

According to Valle and Halling (1989) a general format of a phenomenological investigation of consciousness follows a three step procedure. The first is gathering of naïve descriptions from people who are having or have had the experience under investigation. The second procedure is engaging in a process of analyzing these descriptions so the researcher comes to a grasp of the constituents or common elements of what makes the experience what it is. Lastly, produce a research report that gives an accurate, clear and articulate description of an experience.

#### **4.2.1 Qualitative Research**

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) define qualitative research as a multi-method that involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This implies that qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to interpret them in terms of the meanings people make out of them. Qualitative research also involves the use of a variety of materials, case studies, personal experience, introspective, life story interviews, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts that describe experiences and meaning in individuals' lives.

According to Creswell (1994), qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social human problem. The researcher builds a complex, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. The themes of a qualitative research are naturalistic (studying the real world situations as they unfold naturally), holistic (the whole phenomena under study is understood as a complex system that is more than the sum of its parts) and inductive, which means immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover important categories, dimensions and inter-relationships (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006).

Qualitative research is also defined as the interpretive study of a specified issue or problem in which the researcher is central to the sense that is made. Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall (1994) argue that a definition can be viewed on three different levels i.e. It should have a sense that lies within, and that structure what we say about what we do. It is also an exploration, elaboration and systematization of the significance of an identified phenomenon. Finally, it is an illuminative representation of the meaning of a delimited issue or problem.

This study embraces a qualitative method of inquiry. The rationale for using a qualitative approach in this study is the nature of the phenomena that is under investigation which is the people's experiences and descriptions of the 'after tears' party. The intention of this study is to gain a rich and complex understanding of specific social phenomena. The researcher used the phenomenological approach to qualitative descriptions of the people about the after tears parties and the meaning they make out of them. This was done by allowing them to 'tell their stories'.

### **4.3 Phenomenology as a Methodology**

Phenomenology is a qualitative research method originally developed by the philosopher Edmund Husserl (Wertz, 2006; Giorgi, 1985). Accordingly, Husserl was mainly concerned with the discovery of meaning and essences in knowledge. Phenomenology describes the structure and experience as they present themselves into consciousness (Wertz, 2006). Husserl discovered the complexity of the horizontal nature of consciousness. The term 'phenomenon' comes from the Greek word 'phaenesthai' which means to 'appear' or to 'flare up' or 'show up', constructed from the word 'phiano' which means to bring to light or place in brightness (Heidegger, 1962). From a philosophical viewpoint, Spinelli (1989) explained the term 'phenomenology' as having partly derived from the Greek word phainomenon (plural: phainomena) which literally means 'appearance' which means that which shows itself. Philosophers generally define 'phenomena' to mean 'the appearance of things themselves as they really are'. The world as we experience it is a phenomenal world.

Phenomenological research focuses on the meaning that an individual gives to the experience rather than a concern with causality or the frequency of certain actions, behavior patterns or occurrences. Within the context of the current study, the phenomenon to be studied which is the people's experiences of the 'after tears' party, has to be described exactly as it presents itself neither adding nor subtracting from what is given.

Phenomenologists argue that all human beings are engaged in the process of making sense of their life worlds. As such phenomenology describes phenomena experienced individually or by many individuals at one time and it explores everyday experiences which may not have clarity, precision or systematization (Giorgi, 1985). Phenomenology studies conscious experience ranging from perception, memory, imagination, thought, emotion, and desire to bodily awareness, social activity, as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view. According to Fischer (2006), making conscious experience accessible to investigation is the hallmark of the phenomenological method.

Phenomenological research also relies on a variety of methods including participant observation, discussion and interviews as methods of data collection (Creswell, 1994). At this point the objective is to gain rich experience being studied and the meaning attributed to the experience by the participants. This means that in contrast to mainstream research which is essentially deductive, empirical that usually starts with a hypothesis and attempts to accept or refute the phenomena studied, phenomenological approach is inductive and discovery orientated. According to Groenewald (2004) and Moustakas (1994), the aim of phenomenology is to return to the concrete as captured by the slogan 'back to the things themselves.'

One of the aims of phenomenology is to attempt to make the implicit explicit, what is already known or presuppositions or issues in our daily lives. Phenomenologists as opposed to positivists believe that the researcher cannot be detached from his/her own presuppositions and that the researcher should not pretend otherwise. In this regard the

individual researchers hold explicit beliefs. According to Husserl's methodology, the beginning of a phenomenological study involves what is called a phenomenological reduction or 'epoche' which means an attempt to put all of one's assumptions about the matter being studied into abeyance. The suspension or reduction is called 'bracketing' (Polkinghorne, in Valle & Halling, 1989). According to Stewart and Mickunas (1990) phenomenological research rejects quantitative methods of science and insists that these methods are inadequate to treat the nature of consciousness for the following two reasons 1. Consciousness itself is perceived as not an object like most objects in nature. 2. There are conscious phenomena which cannot be dealt with in science.

As a result, phenomenology does not limit its investigation to only those realities which are objective in a materialistic or naturalistic sense. This means that phenomenology is therefore considered to offer a considerable broadening of the range of philosophical inquiry. This approach makes no assumptions of what is or not real, it rather begins with the content of consciousness as valid data.

#### **4.3.1 Rationale for using phenomenology**

The aim of using the phenomenological approach is to determine the meanings of experiences of the people who have acquired the experience and are able to provide their descriptions. In this case, the people who have the experience of the 'after tears' party have shared lived experiences and the meaning that they make out of it. Human beings attempt to make sense of all their experiences. Through the approach the researcher strives to understand the meaning upon the phenomenon as understood by the respondents.

Phenomenology studies require participants to express what they experienced regarding the phenomena. Hence, no objective reality is assumed. The operative word in the phenomenological method is 'describe' rather than explain. This approach also does not aim to draw inferences from a sample and apply them to a population. Rather, it seeks to describe subjective meanings instead of just behaviours.

### 4.3.2 Strengths and limitations of phenomenology

Caelli (2001) has the following as its strengths. Valle (1998) highlighted some of the weaknesses or limitations.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
Enables the researcher to gain first-hand, holistic understanding of the phenomenon of interest.	Biographical presence of the researcher, his previous disposition to the topic, cultural background
Provides rich and complete description of human experiences and the meanings attributed to these experiences	It is difficult to replicate a descriptive study of experience
Delves into in-depth complexities and processes that seeks to explore wisdom and practice and the where and why policy to do work.	Its language is fluid and vague and may be imprecise and failing to provide the researcher with rich descriptions
Its findings emerge naturally and are not imposed by the research methods used	It depends heavily on the articulation skill of the respondents in order to ensure rich description
The techniques used ensure the faithful handling of the data	The distinction between validity and reliability is said to become blurred in qualitative research,
It reveals the units of meanings extracted from the research	

### 4.4 Study Validity

Some confusion exists in the literature about how to apply the notion of validity to phenomenological research. In traditional approaches the concept of validity refers to confidence in the measuring instruments (Kvale, 1989). That is, it determines the extent to which measuring instruments measure what they are supposed to measure.

Phenomenological research approaches validity from a more general perspective as a conclusion that instigates confidence because the argument that supports it is credible (Valle & Halling, 1989). Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006) highlighted that qualitative researchers suggest that research can be evaluated according to its credibility. Credible research produces findings that are convincing and believable. The credibility of qualitative research is established while the research is being undertaken because the researcher looks for discrepant evidence to the hypothesis she or he is developing (Creswell, 1998). One way of doing this is to use triangulation to find out if these provide discrepant findings, where triangulation refers to the use of multiple perspectives against which to check one's own position (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006) further explain the different forms of triangulation. These are:

- Data triangulation which refers to the use of a variety of data sources in a study
- Investigator triangulation which refers to the use of several different researchers or evaluators
- Theory triangulation which means that multiple perspectives will be used to interpret a single set of data and this also means finding that the research findings can be incorporated into a more macro-analytical level of inference.
- Methodological triangulation which refers to the use of multiple methods to study a single problem, looking for convergent evidence from different sources such as interviewing, surveying, observation, review of documentary sources.

In this study, the researcher conducted interviews with the people who have had an experience of the after tears party either being part of the party or watching what happened at such a party. The aim was to allow the participants to describe their experiences during the interview. The participants' personal individual interviews and focus groups were conducted. Their experiences could not be generalized. The researcher triangulated by conducting focus groups on the same phenomenon to gather the people's experiences and by recording first hand information gathered from the participant's experiences and relating them with the findings from the literature. The researcher also used a theory to interpret the research findings.

## 4.5 Sampling

A study population may be too big to be investigated in its entirety, or may be costly or impossible to be studied because of various reasons. When this becomes the case, a smaller subset of the entire research population is selected to be studied in the place of the study population. The selected subset of the study population is called a sample (Babbie, 2005). This selection of a subset needed for investigating the research question is known as sampling. In this study, sampling is the selection of research participants from an entire population, and involves decisions about which people, settings, behaviours, and social processes to observe. In this study the units of analysis were the experiences of the people about the 'after tears' party (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). In gathering the data the researcher used information-rich cases, which in this case are the people who had been to after tears parties or witnessed the after tears party celebrations. These people were selected to describe their own experiences.

Valle and Halling (1989) assert that subjects chosen must be people who are able to function as informants by providing rich descriptions of the experience being investigated. The subject also has to have the experience of the topic of the research, has the capacity to provide a full and sensitive descriptions of the experience under examination. Van Kam (in Valle & Halling, 1989) stipulates six important skills that the participants must possess, which are: the ability to express themselves linguistically with ease, to sense and express inner feelings and emotions without shame and inhibition, to be able to sense and express organic experiences that accompany these feelings, the experience of the situation under investigation at a relatively recent date, have spontaneous interest in their experience and lastly, the ability to report what was going on with themselves.

Non-probability purposive sampling was applied in the current study. Non-probability sampling is a sampling method that depends firstly only on availability and willingness to participate, and secondly on those cases that are typical of the population in terms of the characteristics being studied (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). In the current study, the

sample was selected from the closest townships that the researcher could access. Snowball sampling was also employed. Snowball sampling is based on social networks, those who participated assisted the researcher by identifying someone they know might participate and contribute to the study. People from different work settings, community settings, a clinic, a hospital, and a church in Mamelodi, a township in Pretoria. The participants were approached and the study aims were explained and they were requested to participate. Those who agreed to participate also referred others whom they knew. With regard to focus groups, the researcher received assistance from professionals in settings such as clinics to organize groups.

The number of participants selected for phenomenologically based studies varied considerably. The first stage of data gathering consisted of individual interviews that were conducted with 10 people from different townships. The age groups of individuals ranged between 32 and 53 years, 3 males and 7 females. Since the study is explorative and the researcher aimed at obtaining rich experiences from a variety of members of the community because the 'after tears' party is a social phenomena that occurs within the community, the second stage of data gathering consisted of involving 4 focus groups that were conducted with heterogeneous groups from different urban environments. The sizes of focus groups ranged from 7 to 14 participants, also males and females. The age range in focus groups was between 21 and 60 years.

#### **4.5.1 Focus Groups**

According to Kelly (2007), focus groups are a qualitative research method and a way of listening to people and learning from them. They are guided group discussions to generate rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs. They also create a line of communication. Focus groups work best when what interests the research team is equally interesting to the participants in the groups. When the discussions are right on target there are even more benefits. Some of its strengths are:

- Exploration and discovery: Focus groups entail forms of research where one can learn a great deal without really knowing what questions you want to ask.
- The context and depth helps the researcher understand the background behind people's thoughts and feelings.
- Interpretation: giving an understanding of why things are the way they are and how they became that way.
- They create a process of sharing and comparing among the participants.

Kelly (2007) further points out that focus groups also have limitations that the researcher needs to prepare to offset in the research plan. Some limitations are that focus groups tend to require a highly skilled moderator, they are often difficult to assemble and the individual responses may not be independent on one another.

## **4.6 Research Procedure**

### **4.6.1 Data collection**

Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006), point out that interviewing is probably the most commonly used form of data gathering in qualitative research. This study used semi-structured interviews for data collection. However, the interview questions were not used rigidly as they followed one another. They were used as a guide to have an in-depth understanding of the experiences of the people about the after tears party.

Before the commencement of all the interviews, administrative issues were clarified and completed. These included explanation of the purpose of the research, filling in the brief biographical data, signing of participant consent form and the consent form for audio-taping the interview.

At the beginning of the process, the researcher introduced herself to the respondents and allowing sufficient time for rapport building. The participants were informed about the aims of the study, the benefits of the study and how their participation could make a

valuable contribution in the process of understanding how the after tears phenomenon unfolds. They were also informed about their right not to participate in the study, and also that if they felt uncomfortable at any stage of the study they had the right to withdraw their participation without feeling obliged to supply reasons.

The interviews took place at the times when each respondent had indicated that they were comfortable. All participants were community members who had volunteered their participation in the study. All the interviews were conducted in the languages that the respondents were comfortable with, which is Setswana, Sepedi and Sesotho. The interviews were audio recorded verbatim, which was agreed to by each respondent. In addition to the voice recording, the respondents also filled in a brief biographical data sheet. (See attached Appendix 1.)

The researcher had a set of brief guiding questions. The initial question was a general open-ended question:

Can you tell me about your experiences of the 'after tears' parties?

This was followed by (not necessarily systematically following one another):

What is your experience of the 'after tears' party

What does the 'after tears' party mean to you personally?

What are your feelings towards the 'after tears' party?

These questions were asked to all participants and follow-up and clarification questions were also used when a new idea came out from the respondent. In addition, the same questions were asked to members of the focus groups. Individual respondents were not included in the formation of focus groups. According to Morgan (in Babbie & Mouton, 2008) if one chooses to use focus groups, one needs to bear in mind the size of the groups one will interview. Several criteria apply i.e. Choosing enough participants so that the focus group does not fall flat if some members choose to remain silent, being aware of group dynamics, clearing friendship pairs, 'experts' or uncooperative participants, breaking into smaller groups within a bigger group that could interfere with

the smooth running of the group meeting, the moderator needs to be highly skilled and highly involved, over recruiting by 20% to compensate for members not showing up, having between three to five groups and ensuring groups heterogeneous. The researcher aligned herself with the above criteria in conducting focus group interviews. She personally facilitated the groups herself, and for every focus group interview conducted, she, in consultation with the group members, set the context and the ground rules for the group members. Group dynamics and group processes were observed. The researcher took notes during the interviews, which had also been agreed with the respondents. In addition to facilitating the groups, interviews were audio-taped and each member of the group was assigned an alphabet card to be identifiable and this was recorded on the field notes exercise.

The respondents were giving subjective accounts of their own experiences which is the hallmark of phenomenology. The interviews were in-depth, with open-ended questions. In addition to the interviews were the observations on the expressions and body language. Collected data were transcribed and translated verbatim from Sesotho, Setswana and Sepedi, to English. The researcher was cautious not to distort meanings in the process of translating, hence, assistance with translations was obtained from a member of the Department of African Languages at the University of South Africa in Pretoria.

#### **4.6.2 Data analysis**

The movement from a collection of protocols to an accurate, clear and informative structural description can be a complex and difficult process (Valle & Halling, 1989). The collection of protocols cannot be analyzed simultaneously, so they had to be broken down into manageable units.

There are several qualitative analytical traditions that come under the umbrella of interpretative analysis. The familiar ones in the human sciences are phenomenology, grounded theory and thematic content analysis. Miller and Crabtree (in Terre Blanche

*et al.*, 2006) argue that interpretive analytical styles vary along a continuum from quasi-statistical styles to immersion/crystallization styles. Quasi styles involve using predetermined categories and codes that are applied to the data in a quantifiable way to yield quantifiable indices. Immersion/crystallization styles on the other hand involve becoming thoroughly familiar with a phenomenon, carefully reflecting on it and then writing an interpretation by relying on one's intuitive grasp of what is going on rather than on any particular analytic techniques.

Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006) outline the steps in interpretive data analysis

### ***Step 1: Familiarization and immersion***

- All texts where the data was recorded were read more than once. The researcher listened to tapes and read all recorded material. By reading the texts again and again (immersion) the researcher became familiar with what was to be found in the texts as well as the kinds of interpretations that were likely to be supported by the data.

### ***Step 2: Inducing themes***

- Inducing means inferring general rules or classes from specific instances, and is also called a bottom-up approach. It is the converse of a top-down approach where one would use readily made categories and simply look for instances fitting the categories. It deals with working out the 'what', which are the organizing principles are that 'naturally' underlie the material.

### ***Step 3: Coding***

- During the activity of developing themes, data was also coded. This entails marking different sections of the data as being instances of, or relevant to, one or more of the themes. Breaking down a body of data into labeled, meaningful pieces, with a view to alter clustering the bits of coded material together under the code heading and further analyzing them both as a cluster and in relation to other clusters. Developing themes and coding blend into each other because themes widen an understanding

and enlighten on the way themes relate to one another. Themes should not be regarded as final and unchanging.

#### ***Step 4: Elaboration***

- When collecting material for interpretive analysis, one may experience events or the things people say in linear, chronological order. Steps 1 and 2 are necessary to divide this sequence so that events or remarks that were far away from one another are brought close together.

#### ***Step 5: Interpretation and checking***

- The final step is when the researcher puts together the interpretations in a written account of the phenomenon studied. At this stage the researcher fine tunes the findings from the interpretations and finds out if he/she can find examples that contradict some point or another in the interpretation. The researcher looks for parts of the interpretation that are just summaries and nothing more, instances of over-interpretation or any instances where the researcher made a great deal out of a trivial matter or instances where the researcher got carried away by prejudices. This final part was also an opportunity for the researcher to make her own reflections on her role in collecting data and creating the interpretation.

### **4.7 Ethical Considerations**

Research ethics deals primarily with the interaction between researchers and the people they study. The essential purpose of research ethics is to protect the welfare of the research participants. Ethical review is increasingly becoming mandatory for social science research globally. In South Africa, most leading universities require that all social science research involving human participants be reviewed by independent research ethics committee (REC) (Wassenaar, 2007, in Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). A list of ethical guidelines that this research adhered to is provided below:

- Respect for the participant's rights was observed.
- The participants were informed of their right to participate in the study and to withdraw from the study at any time.
- A written informed consent was prepared which outlined the researcher's name, the institution where the researcher is studying and the purpose of the study (a PhD community psychology requirement), title of the study, the aims and objectives and their right to participate which the participants read and when they agreed to participate in the study, they signed it.
- The participants were also requested to be audio-taped, to allow the researcher to take notes during the discussions/interviews, and the researcher explained the purpose to them.
- Confidentiality: The researcher informed the participants that their names were not going to appear anywhere in the report.
- Participants were also informed that they have the right to access the study findings once it is integrated and readable.
- The researcher also clarified her role as a researcher and informed the participants that should any issue arise as a result of the interview that impacted negatively on the participants, they were free to contact the researcher who would refer them for further assistance to the relevant service provider, such as a psychologist or social worker.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter the methodology that was followed in this study was outlined. The next logical step is to present the findings of the study from the narratives of the respondents. The narratives are presented in Appendix IV.

## **CHAPTER 5      FINDINGS**

### **5.1      Introduction**

The current chapter illustrates the findings of the collected data. This is presented in terms of the themes that emerged from the individuals and focus group respondents reflection on the meaning they attach to the 'after tears' parties. This is in line with the phenomenological method used in this research. The chapter will commence with a description of the participants background.

### **5.2      Description of Participants**

Ten individual participants were interviewed for this study. The participants are described in terms of age, gender, home language religious/church affiliation and place of residence. Of the ten participants, the majority were females (7 females and 3 males). The age range was between 32 and 53. All of them were residing in townships around Pretoria and East Rand in Gauteng. In terms of ethnicity and language, the majority were SeTswana speaking followed by the IsiZulu, SePedi, TshiVenda, XiTsonga and SeSotho. With regard to religious affiliation, participants belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, Assemblies of God, Presbyterian, African Initiated Churches (Zion Christian Church and Zion Apostolic Church), Methodist and the Roman Catholic Church.

Focus groups were also conducted and a total of 40 respondents (who made the sizes of the groups ranging from 7 – 14 members) participated in the interviews. The ages of the members ranged from 21 to 60 with the majority falling within the ages of 25-35. The group members also affiliated to different religious denominations with the highest being the Baptists, followed by the African Initiated Churches (Zion Christian Church and the Apostolic Churches) and the other members belonged to the Methodists, Lutheran and

Dutch Reformed Churches. The focus group members resided in the townships of Pretoria and Hammanskraal.

Pseudonyms were used to conceal the identities of the respondents. Pseudonyms for the 10 individuals are A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I and J. For the four focus groups the pseudonyms are K, L, M, N. The narratives are used to form themes, and the themes are indicated by numbers (A1, A2, . . . , K1, . . . etc). A note to the reader is that the words 'after tears' and 'wie sien ons' are used synonymously to refer to the 'after tears' parties because the jargon used by participants varies according to the location of the township.

The respondents (individual and focus groups) were requested to reflect on the questions:

- Please share with me your experiences about the 'after tears' parties.
- What does the 'after tears' personally mean to you.
- What is your understanding of the 'after tears' party and how do you feel about them.

### **5.3 Interpretation of the Themes**

#### **5.3.1 Participants experiences of the 'after tears' party**

After the burial of a loved one, a group of mourners go together as a group to sit in the house nearby and there is a 'party' or a celebration at the home of the deceased (A7, A8, B16, B17, F20, F49, F50, F51,F52, F53). The 'wie sien ons' people come prepared in advance to attend the 'wie sien ons', such as dresses to change and drinks in cooler bags (A21, A24, A25, A54. A55, A56, C120, I136, J14). But they can also end up being chaotic and disorderly (B234,D58, D59, E4, E49, E120, E129, H84, H 208).

A mixture of noise, loud music and drinking assortments of alcoholic beverages is said to be characterizing 'wie sien ons' (A48, A51, A79, A333, B23, B32, B202, B203, C109, D71, D73, E80, E84, E131, F46, F48, F66, F79, F74, F81, F170, F208, F286, F315, F323, G66, G103, H13, H82, H83, H101, H108, H124, H203, H206, H226, I59, I60, J38,

J66, J67, J82). In their first experiences many respondents were shocked (A42, A62, A170, A171, G24, G65) or surprised (A166, A198, C106, C115, E124, F4, H224, I35, I78) at what was happening after a funeral, which, according to them, was unexpected at funerals.

### **5.3.2 The perceptions of the ‘after tears’ parties**

Both the individual and group respondents attached similar perceptions on the ‘after tears’, however, the vast number of respondents perceived it as a party and a celebration.

#### **5.3.2.1 Gangsters and taxi drivers initiated the ‘after tears’ parties**

Most of the respondents were uncertain of how the ‘after tears’ parties evolved, however the majority had a general perception that gangsters were the first to be seen having ‘wie sien ons’ parties freely among their funerals of their dead colleagues. Apparently, gangsters acted in a scary way partying right at the graveyards boozing, playing loud music and even shooting at the coffin with the dead body inside (K356, L98, L100, L209, L211, L313, L448, L494, M52). Gangsters were the first groups seen performing some violent and scary forms of ‘wie sien ons’ (K131, K905, L99, L109, L210, L307, L354, L477, L532, M61, C172, I23, I38, I123). Then the taxi drivers also took over, even though theirs lacked the intensity of violence shown by gangsters (B231, B235, B252), but they encouraged it to a point where ordinary people copied some of these behaviors and started practicing them among themselves.

#### **5.3.2.2 ‘After tears’ is a celebration of someone’s death**

There is an overwhelming acceptance among respondents that ‘wie sien ons’ is a kind of a party, but only that it is held after someone’s funeral and it is more about the people remaining behind rather than for the deceased (A5, A49, A85, A109, B5, B6, B47, B50, B59, B69, B82, B86, B110, B118, B142, B156, B165, B170, B172, B200, B256, C48,

C84, C107, C112, E75, E92, F13, F20, F22, F44, F45, F53, F55, F63, F73, F115, F120, F266, F292, F294, F341, G1, G9, G25, G29, G60, G84, G138, G145, G256, H25, H48, H212, I28, J21, J33, J79). The way 'wie sien ons' is viewed is that it is a celebration (A153, A209, A216, B6, C3, C12, H16, H22, H219, I41). People go there to jive and party (L115, L144, L145, L146, M127, N56).

Some of the respondents perceived the 'after tears party' as a case of two extremes that would never reconcile. (A151, A152, A153, D45, D46, G204, G206, G214, H63, F71). Here the extremes are described as a funeral which is very painful for the bereaved and on that same day, a party immediately after the funeral. A funeral ends up being a party (A5, B59, B60, E2, E3,). The controversy arises because it occurs after a funeral and is associated with celebrating when there is a loss of human life. At one extreme the people were mourning and immediately after the people are in a celebratory mood. The general feeling among the respondents is that people who attend funerals in the recent times do not mourn but they celebrate (A153, A325, A326, B5, B95 C2,) although some of the respondents felt that they celebrate the life of someone that had just gone (B5, D22, D24).

### **5.3.2.3 Young people and the 'after tears' parties**

Many respondents (A3, A65, B39, B41, B42, B108, B110, B221, B237, E14, E63, E64, F30, F97, F293, F316, G72, G73, G984, H80, H82, H100, H104, H209, H211, I90, I106, I191) had the belief that 'wie sien ons' were started by the youth (i.e. young people of ages 14, 15, in the 20s and below 30s years of age). The young generation seems to be the ones who mostly love to attend the 'wie sien ons' parties (K558, K890, N40, C19, C20, C21, C22, C23). Even when the elderly groups hold these parties, there are claims that the events taking place in these parties are immature or youthful (N13).

#### **5.3.2.4 The elderly and the ‘after tears’ parties**

Indications are that many old people feel that ‘wie sien ons’ are a disgrace to culture and tradition and they are hurt by what they see occurring at these parties (A64, A66, A68, C24, C138). Elders do not believe that ‘wie sien ons’ parties are a proper way to support the families to cope or to support them (B38, I188, I189). They disapprove of the ‘wie sien ons’ practice completely.

#### **5.3.2.5 The high incidence of death in urban areas**

The high incidence of death in the present days is reported as the main reason for the changing attitudes towards death and the funerals. Few respondents indicated that nowadays death is rife and common and people seem don’t seem to be hurt anymore. People die in large numbers as compared to the past and as a result, death is no longer a scary thing (G121, G122, G123, G146, G147, G148). Funerals these days are a daily occurrence in the townships (L192, L193, L194, L195, L196, L198, L220, L241).

#### **5.3.2.6 Past and present funerals compared**

The respondents compared the way funerals were conducted in the past with what is done in the present and they indicated that they were aware that in the past, funerals were conducted with respect and there were also rules relating to how people must behave at the funerals (A272, A 273, A274, A275 A314, C28 C30,, H125, H216, I112, I206, G44, G45, H125, H126, I112, I 206) while the new era does not indicate that. The respondents also confirmed that things have changed (A2, A272, A273, A274, A314, (N5, N6, N7, N21, L233, L234, L236). According to the respondents, people are no longer afraid of funerals these days and when there is one, people behave like it is a normal and they continue to do whatever they want (C35, C36, C37, C70). What was done in the past is not practiced anymore and unlike in the past when people would go home after the funeral, they stick around at the funeral, for alcoholic drinks.

Respondents feel that death changes with fashion if you compare it in the past and in the present.

### **5.3.2.7 Rural and Urban funerals compared**

The 'wie sien ons' parties are very common in townships as compared to funerals held in the rural areas or the villages. This means that there is still a lot of respect for the dead and their bereaved in the villages, respect for the culture of funerals and the funeral rituals (B146, B147, B154, D99, D110, E125, G101, H145, J44). There are clear indications of respect for the dead, for the funerals and for the families involved (B146, B147, B154, D99, D110, E125, G101, H145, J44). The funerals are also characterized by order (B153) and strictness and as a result the 'wie sien ons' parties are rare. On the other hand, some of the respondents have highlighted that they have experienced the 'after tears' parties at the rural villages however, they were conducted quietly and with respect unlike in the townships (C77, C78, D95, E122, E123, H135, and H136).

### **5.3.2.8 The 'after tears' party as an old practice**

Some respondents in the groups have highlighted that the practice of the 'after tears' party has been there but done differently in the past (K142, K143, K144, K145, L2, L3, L4, L38, L40, M64, M66, M67, M68, M69, M70, M71,). Initially they were conducted differently; however, as time went on when things changed (A2), they evolved and somehow lost shape (L33, L34, L85, L173, L175, and L176). The modern trends of 'wie sien ons' are argued to be having no basis from culture or history as 'wie sien ons' is held in modern people's own ways (C50), or as a party (B59), on the same day (G90), which was not the case in the past. Also people dance and do all sorts of activities that do not relate to mourning when viewed in the context of old practices (G46, G93). Current trends are not the old after tears functions that were held a few days when the family of the deceased has settled (1275, B56, D28, G116, G121, L62, L78, L87, L389, M135, M211, C29). The current form, which is 'wie sien ons', is held immediately and

people have fun (I53). The 'after tears' parties have existed for a long time with different names and different formats (C100, C101, C102).

### **5.3.3 The meaning attached to the 'after tears' parties**

Some respondents feel that people have different agendas for attending the 'wie sien ons' parties (C93, C96). Both the individual respondents and the focus groups highlighted various reasons why they think the 'after tears' parties exist in the townships (K3, K4, K5, K13, K14, K937, L4, L6, L27).

#### **5.3.3.1 A coping strategy**

The meaning attached to 'after tears' parties are that they are a way of helping the bereaved families to cope with the loss of their loved ones (B87, B191, B197, C99, C125, C158, C159, C160, C164, D51, E5, H231, H232). For the focus groups, it meant a way of helping the bereaved cope with the impact of loss (K111, K302, K530, K547, K945, L421, L516), especially when it is done jointly between the family and the friends and colleagues.

#### **5.3.3.2 Social Support and comforting the bereaved families**

The respondents indicated that 'wie sien ons' was introduced with the reason of comforting the family that has lost a loved one through death (A229, A240, B1, B25, B90, B91, B180, D79, E117, F263, G197, G209, G223, I53). The 'wie sien ons' are also believed to be some kind of support to the families that were mourning their loved ones (A106, B105, B164, F262).

On the other hand the focus group respondents feel that the party reduces emotional pain (K64, K65, K243, K246, K532, K554, K714, K927, K942, K944, K996, K1004, L422, L427, M27, K82, K86, K168, K426, K715, K937, K348, M28, M174). This is especially effective when it is done immediately after the deceased has been laid to rest

(K54, K105, K423, K974, L217, L386, L414, L558, M176). The 'wie sien ons' are a form of support to the family that has just lost a loved one, and doing it immediately after the funeral is to continue with the process of offering support (K405, K582, K886, K892, K896, K897, K958, K983, L58, M131, M162, M172).

### **5.3.3.3 A social gathering**

'Wie sien ons' is seen as a form of socializing (A129, A141, B119, B120, K27, K37, K206, K458, K936, L149, L288, L365, M2, M5, M10, M13, M16, M29, M186, M191) because it happens often that people may attend these parties even when they did not attend the funerals. There people who had not seen one another for a very long time meet to catch up and new friendships or associations are formed at these parties. Some members felt that 'wie sien ons' is also done since relatives live far apart and a funeral is a chance to see each other as they do not visit each other (F26, G157, K1, L1, L31, L60, L74, L201, L238, M169, K3, K8, K12, K15, K29, K34, K36, K42, K202, K531, K534, L82, M6).

### **5.3.3.4 Showing off social status and social identity**

'Wie sien ons' parties may be held or organized in the home for those who have money (A278, C52). Some people use 'wie sien ons' parties as an opportunity to show off, for example showing off to people one went to school with that you have progressed in life (K194, K199, K203) and sometimes even showing off that you have lot of money (M108, M109, M110, M111, M112, M113, M219). The 'wie sien ons' parties also means showing off who you really are. If the person that has died used to attend 'after tears' party and used to dress up it would differ from ordinary ones. If the funeral is for someone with a certain identity even the 'after tears' party will follow that identity (L296, L 297, L 298, L299 L300, L301, L302, L303). The dress code is also important (M212, M213, M214, M215, M217, M219). People go all out if it is someone who is famous and occupying a certain status in the community (L310, L 311, L312, L313). An example was used in the following manner:

*'If they do different 'after tears' at different funerals there may be an 'after tears' at the granny's funeral but there you don't go all out. The gangsters one will be very hot everyone going all out.'*

### **5.3.4 Feelings towards the 'after tears' parties**

There seemed to be mixed feelings towards the experience of the 'after tears' party. Some felt it is fine (D1) whereas others felt that they don't like them (A1). Most of the group respondents felt that the initial intention of the 'after tears' parties was good (K3, K4, K936, K937, K938, K939, L4, L6,). However, some feel that with 'wie sien ons' the people suppress whatever emotions you are going through. Instead of mourning, people hold social gatherings and they forget to mourn or remember the person (L359, L360, L371, L372, and L373). Others feel that the 'wie sien ons' parties are not good and they are shameful and insulting (N12, N14, N15).

#### **5.3.4.1 The 'after tears' parties are inappropriate**

The celebration part of 'wie sien ons' and the party mood were identified as making 'wie sien ons' inappropriate (I141, F321). The respondents also indicated that it is unacceptable to be in a party mood while other people are in pain (I81, I82). Others indicated that the concept is 'wrong' (A1, I198) which indicates that some people disapprove of the 'wie sien ons' parties. The indications show that in the past there would never be a celebration after a funeral or when someone died, and any functions involved mature age groups and not young ones (A274, B54, B274, E65, E69, E102, G44, G98, H21, H27, I18, I109, I117, J75). There is also time for fun and time for pain (I224, I225, I226, I227).

#### **5.3.4.2 The 'after tears' parties show lack of respect**

Lack of respect for the dead and the funeral characterizes the 'wie sien ons' (A15, A16, B37, B109, B259, C41, D111, E54, E58, E70, E72, G236, H121, H130 I201, J81). In

particular, the youth of today were singled out as lacking respect for bereaved families, funerals and the dead (B40, E71, E107, H113, E192). This lack of respect, accordingly, was the reason the youth started 'wie sien ons'. The way the 'wie sien ons' parties are held suggests lack of respect (K345, L232, L234, L520, M124, M129, N19, N30), which is perceived as an indication of not feeling the pain the family of the deceased is feeling (A98, J71, J81, J83). An indication of respect is a sign that they feel pain as well (A314).

On the other hand, some respondents felt that by holding the party three houses away from the deceased's home, is a sign of showing that they respect the mourners (B17, B18, B27, B28, B30, A6, A7, A26, A27, A49, A225, B17,B28, B156, C114, D57, F52, G55, I7, J56). The old ways which show respect and comforting the family is more acceptable than the current trend of 'wie sien ons' (A59, E55, E56, F216). Many respondents indicated that they desired to see restoration of respect in funerals, in the dead and the rituals following them (A93, A95, A192, B27, B298, E83, E119, F123). In the past they were taught how they should show respect of death and the deceased by wearing appropriately, covering their heads and shoulders (A92, A96, A97, A98, A99).

#### **5.3.4.3 The 'after tears' parties hurt the bereaved families**

Some of the people who enjoy holding 'wie sien ons' get hurt when 'wie sien ons' parties are held in their own homes (B155, B158, D59, E108, F108, F109, F217, F225, F226, G240, I43, I52, I5, F2,). Respondents also felt that the people who hold 'wie sien ons' parties are insensitive (E73, F243) to those who lost the loved ones.

The respondents feel that the 'after tears' parties are a painful thing and the experiences about them at their homes were hurtful and sad (A9, B158, I155, F3, F105, G69). The respondents feel that they still didn't understand how can people be in such a happy and joyful mood when you are still in mourning and hurting (F7, F11,G2, G3, G10, G37). One of the respondents was quoted to say:

*'After my sister's funeral... I watched them leave to hold it somewhere. I saw that they were going to the pub to drink, after my sister's funeral...'* The respondent also indicated that she was very angry. Another respondent highlighted that:

*'It is more painful when you are the one who has lost someone very close to you then the next thing people are celebrating...'*

Another highlighted:

*'I will be hurt. It's a norm that 'wie sien ons' are conducted after the funeral but what will hurt most is that I know that my friends will also be attending the party. I will ask myself a question why can't they come and stay with me to offer me support instead they party when I need them most' (B158-B166).*

#### **5.3.4.4 'After tears' parties defy teachings from home**

The teachings during the formative years of African youth are that a funeral is respected, and 'wie sien ons' is seen as a way to undermine those teachings (A75, A83, A94, J48, J73).

#### **5.3.4.5 Some people feel there is nothing wrong with 'after tears' parties**

Few respondents, however, expressed that 'wie sien ons' is not wrong because it is just chilling (F318, H54, H55, H57, H58) and it is also a way of relaxing after a painful week of the loss of a loved one. The mood is usually a relaxing one with your friends over drinks.

### 5.3.5 The 'after tears' party and culture

Some members contrasted the church culture and the sub-culture of taxi drivers and gangsters (K316, k317, K327, K328, K329, K331, K332, K952, K954, K955, K956, K961). The other type of culture mentioned is the traditional practices of ethnic groups e.g in the Zulu culture...(L93, L94, L97, L98, L99, L101, L102). One of the respondents in the focus groups highlighted the following:

*'Where I grew up, my family culture taught me to see death and the funeral as something sensitive, to be treated with respect.'*

The gangster culture has been referred to as having been the reason for the development of 'after tears' parties and this culture became slowly accepted in the society. The 'after tears' parties were initially characterizing a subculture but with time they were adopted to be part of the main culture. According to one of the respondents migration, generally has made people to adapt to the township culture (C75, C76). Rural people do 'after tears party in a very quiet manner that other people will not notice. In townships it is already known, when there is a funeral it is known that the 'after tears' will follow (C77, C78, C79, C80, C81, C82, C83).

## 5.4 Conclusion

The current chapter highlights mixed feelings about 'wie sien ons' parties/ 'after tears' parties among individual and focus group respondents. Most of the respondents however agree on the changes that have taken place in urban funerals. The central theme that comes out among the respondents is constantly the 'after tears' party as a form of a celebration and entertainment, which seems to be disturbing for the people who attend township funerals and hurting for the bereaved. The next chapter integrates these findings with the literature and the theoretical framework of this study.

## **CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the discussion of the main themes that emerged during data analysis. Insights were generated from in the experiences, perceptions, the meaning attached and the feelings about the emergence of the 'after tears' parties in South African urban township environments. The aims and objectives of the current study were to explore the needs of the people living in South African urban townships during the process of mourning the death of their loved ones by:

- Exploring their experiences of the 'after tears' party
- Understanding their perceived reasons and the meaning they attach to the 'after tears' party
- Understanding the effect it has on them

### **6.2 Discussion**

#### **6.2.1 Experiences of the 'after tears' party**

One of the significant themes extracted was how the respondents described their experiences of the 'after tears' parties. They explained that immediately after the burial of a loved one, a group of mourners go together, to sit somewhere and there is a party (loud noise, loud music, alcohol) and sometimes the party end up being chaotic. They also explained that the dress code for the funeral has changed from dressing modestly, covering heads and shoulders to dressing up with short miniskirts and latest models for the funeral. After the funeral, some have an extra pair of clothes to change for the 'after tears' party. This confirms observations by Posel (2002) and Maluleke (1995). The expression of 'shock' and 'surprise' by some respondents when they attended the 'after tears' party for the first time seems to resonate with Mndende, in Van Rooyen (2009) that South Africa seems to be experiencing a 'culture shock'. Social learning view

explains this phenomenon as socio-cultural diffusion (Bandura, 1986) that societies are continuously faced with pressures to change some of their traditional practices in efforts to improve the quality of life.

In line with the concept of modeling in social learning theory, the respondents described the behaviors that they have observed that were modeled by certain subcultures (gangsters and taxi drivers) and were later imitated by other people, observing others behaviors and doing what they do or a person using another person's behavior as a stimulus for an imitative response (Flett, 2007). Modeling has always been acknowledged as one of the most powerful means of transmitting values, attitudes and patterns of thought and behavior. According to Bandura (1986), not all behaviors observed will be imitated. Observing the actual performances of others also involves the consequences that those behaviors have for them, which could also involve judgmental standards.

Beyond the psychological understanding of the meaning of mourning and performance of mourning rituals as explained by the majority of cultures and also psychological approaches, the phenomenon in the current study, the 'after tears' party, is the strongly emerging culture which seems to be gradually wiping away and replacing the past old practices that have existed for centuries. People seem to be quite dissatisfied about the manner in which grief over the loss of a loved one is handled, however, there seems to be very little done to prevent the practice of the 'after tears' parties. Future research on the mourning rituals could focus on the factors motivating the drivers of this newly emerged phenomenon and also on how societies could preserve and sustain the values of traditional mourning practices.

From the literature reviewed, the understanding of mourning in African culture as expressed by Mbiti (1969), Ngubane (1977), Gumede (1990), and Mkhize (2008) is that mourning does not end with the funeral, there are traditional customs and rituals that need to be performed even after the burial and there is a stipulated mourning period. The period of strict mourning begins immediately after the burial with cultural

prescriptions on how the bereaved should behave. When a death has occurred, everything needs to be done in moderation. Talking loud is not allowed, eating too much, laughing or even being angry. From the review of literature, Radzilani (2010) points out that social, economic and political change have transformed the face of death rituals in modern industrialized societies. As a result, some rituals appear to have diminished in South African contemporary townships. The findings of Kilonzo and Hogan (1999) study on the traditional African mourning practices abridged in response to HIV/AIDS pandemic, there has been observed increase in psychiatric and psychological problems associated with incomplete mourning and unresolved grief and this could be associated with the psychosocial inadequacies of these abridged mourning processes. The social learning view of Bandura (1986) explains these changes according to the social diffusion theory and innovation model.

### **6.2.2 The perceptions of the 'after tears' party**

Valuable insights were generated from the respondent's interpretation of the 'after tears' parties. One of the perceptions is that the parties in the townships emerged from the culture of gangster groups and taxi drivers and the younger generation could be the ones to have initiated the 'after tears' parties. The other members of the community followed and copied these behaviors. This is in line with the social diffusion and innovation model described by Bandura (1986) in explaining how new ideas and practices are introduced by example or modeling through observational learning. Bandura further explained the concept of innovation as any new idea that is brought into the society, which could explain the concept of the 'after tears' party. Social diffusion explains the people who adopt a new innovation as 'early adopters' or those members in the society who would like to try out new things. The 'late developers' are those who will wait to see the reinforcements from the behaviors modeled by 'early adopters' first and then they can adopt a new innovation.

The findings also seem to be consistent with Bozzoli's (2000), Maluleke (1995) and Dlamini's (2005) assertions about the features of townships of the time, that they

generated a variety of sub cultural forms which included youth subcultures, gangsterism, truancy and crime which were later perceived as threatening to the social fabric. More so, some of the criminals became role models for the young.

Other significant perceptions highlighted is that the 'after tears' party is a celebration of previous life. This is also consistent with Maluleke (1995) who outlined the purpose of modern township funerals as 'celebrating the life' more than 'mourning the dead'. There is more talk of 'moving on' and 'letting go' than of remaining stuck in the sorrow of those who died. This also seems to support Dlukulu's (2010) assertion that the practicalities of transitional societies (which in this case would be urban black communities) demand that bereavement should be brief and intense. Mourning should be resolved as quickly as possible so that the person should go back to normal life as soon as possible, which is something that could be perceived as un-African.

Maluleke (1995) highlighted that township environments were not really 'home' no one cared to respect the premises and they could not even perform rituals in a place that was a temporary space for them (Maluleke,1995). In support of Maluleke (1995), Parkes *et al.* (1997) confirmed that millions of people no longer live in their original homelands for a number of reasons to live in multicultural cities. Amongst them are economic forces, government terrorism, actions of colonial powers etc. Proper grieving sometimes may not be possible because grieving involves engaging in a lot of rituals and if the social and the physical environment do not support those it can be very difficult for the bereaved.

Posel (2002) highlighted the contradiction of life and death in the new rituals of mourning and celebration which have recently been documented in urban African townships, particularly among the affluent communities. According to the Social Learning view, the environment shapes, maintains and constraint and maintain behaviors but people are not passive in the process; they can create and change their environments. This could explain the emergence of new practices in urban environments such as 'after tears' parties.

The high incidence of death in urban areas seems to be confirmed by Snyder *et al.* (2006) highlighting that in South Africa, it is not unusual for a person to attend several funerals in a single day. Maluleke (1995) asserted that the oldest and most common form of crime in South African townships has been 'murder' with people dying like flies especially over the weekends (Maluleke, 1995). The findings also seem to support Kilonzo and Hogan's (1999) findings of the high death rate among African communities as a result of HIV/AIDS. This has been reported to have resulted in the changing attitudes towards death, the practice being commonly found in urban townships and the respect that seems to have diminished in modern funerals seems to diminish as Kilonzo and Hogan (1999) pointed out that because of the escalating death rate, some African communities are forced to forgo traditional mourning rituals.

The findings highlighted that in the rural areas still have a lot of respect for funerals as compared to urban areas. Their funerals are characterized by strictness and order and as a result there are no 'after tears' parties. However, on the other hand, some respondents mentioned that they have attended the 'after tears' parties at rural areas but they were conducted quietly and with respect unlike in the urban areas. From the review of literature, Ngubane (2004) and Magudu (2004) highlighted that practice of 'ukuzila' which was defined as showing respect for the deceased by avoiding certain behaviors and places and this should last until the end of the prescribed mourning period. The perception that people in rural areas have a lot of respect compared to the people in the urban areas was also highlighted by Dlamini (2005) that disrespectful practices or 'ukungahloniphi' in Zulu customs have been associated with behaviors of the people living in urban areas.

### **6.2.3 The meaning attached to the 'after tears' party**

The respondents highlighted significant insights into what the 'after tears' parties mean to them. Insights generated from the findings highlighted the therapeutic role of 'after tears' party. It could be used to provide social support and comfort to the bereaved. The findings concur with the study of Selepe and Edwards (2008) on the grief rituals of

African indigenous churches highlighted the supportive role of the community in the event of death of a family member from a religious perspective. Upon knowing that a member has died, community members flock to the family to offer different kinds of support. According to Bopape (1995), the Bapedi traditional religion does not permit a mourner to be alone in his or her sorrow.

There seems to be contrasting findings on the meaning of social support to the respondents. Some disagreed that 'after tears' gathering is a form of social support to the bereaved. The nature of the gathering, that it is held far away from the home of the bereaved contradicts with the reported intended purpose of the 'after tears' party. This concurs with Shange's (2009) argument that social support from friends and family is important during bereavement; however, it is the quality of social support that is important and not merely being there.

The 'after tears' party is also used as a coping strategy for the bereaved. It was also highlighted as a social gathering for relatives and friends who have lost contact with each other and need to reconnect and used as a platform for people to 'show off' their social status and social identity. This confirms Maluleke's (1995) opinion that township funerals have become cultural events where everyone attends a funeral. Dlukulu (2010) also highlighted that the size of the crowd seems to reflect the person's social status and social class that the deceased belonged to and the lifestyle reflected by friends at the funeral. One of the respondents remarked by saying:

*'Funerals go according to levels, your status. If he was a guy that used to attend the 'after tears' parties, who used to dress up, it would differ from ordinary ones. If the funeral is for someone with certain identity, even 'wie sien ons' will follow that identity somehow ... Generally, if you compare a funeral of an old woman and a funeral of a gangster and the people who attend the two funerals.... There may be 'after tears' at a granny funeral .... But the gangster one will be very hot ....'* (L296 – L314)

Functions of some traditional mourning rituals in various studies conducted within the South African perspective could be compared to the findings of the current study regarding the perceived functions of the ritual of the 'after tears' party.

The findings of the study conducted by Manyedi *et al.* (2003), on the widow's experiences of performance of traditional rituals, highlighted that the mourning customs prescribed by the society were very stressful for them and the mourning process as isolating and discriminating against women. Similar findings were recorded on the study conducted by Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007) about Zulu widows and performance of death rituals. Magudu's (2004) study on the Amahlubi's women experiences of 'ukuzila' highlighted that whereas tradition on its own is not bad, it can be used as a tool to oppress women. Magudu (2004) further recommended that there should be flexibility on how people would want to express their grief in order to allow for the heterogeneity of individuals. Some of Radzilani's (2010) findings about the VhaVenda widows indicated that whereas some women found the performance of the mourning rituals therapeutic, others performed them because they feared that misfortune will befall them. From the social learning perspective, performance of certain behaviors can occur because these behaviors are imposed on them and people want to avoid negative reinforcement and not necessarily because they accept and understand the reasons for the performance of those behaviors.

#### **6.2.4 Feelings towards the 'after tears' parties**

Insights gained from the respondents own reflections of how they feel about the 'after tears' parties suggest both positive and negative feelings towards the 'after tears' party. The significant feelings highlighted by the respondents is that whereas some feel there is nothing wrong with the 'after tears' party, as they see it as a way of relaxing after a stressful event, it can also be seen as a way of suppressing painful feelings and not dealing with them. Instead of mourning, people hold social gatherings and suppress whatever emotions they have and it is unacceptable to be in a party mood when other people are in mourning. A significant highlight was the lack of respect for the mourning

period, for death and for the dead. The lack of respect was expressed as resulting in many forms of social misfortunes. This was expressed by one of the respondents by saying:

*'Let us just respect the mourning period – in the way of our own culture. That is why we are such a depressed society. We don't mourn anymore, we don't mourn, we celebrate as if nothing has happened'* (A321-A322)

The opposite feeling is that by holding a party far away from the home of the deceased shows respect and sensitivity to the family. Some respondents acknowledged that it was more painful for them to watch people in a party mood at a funeral of their loved ones. One of them responded this way:

*'My younger sister's was more painful because I watched them leave to hold it somewhere. I saw that they were going to the pub to drink, after my sister's funeral...'* (F174-F180). The respondent also indicated that she was very angry.

Another respondent highlighted that:

*'My son's friends held an 'after tears' party for my son without asking me first. How shocking! They even played loud music, I could hear it from my house. I was very deeply hurt. They drank liquor, they danced, boys and girls .....'*(G62-G73)

The general feelings expressed by the respondents is that they are insulting of culture and traditional practices and this seems to concur with Posel's (2002) assertions that this practice seems to offend African 'traditions' and make many church and community leaders angry. This also seem to concur with Mndende, in van Rooyen (2009) who expressed that although culture is not static or cast in stone, it seems not acceptable to be enjoying a party while people are in mourning.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

The current study was an attempt to explore the people's experiences of the 'after tears' parties as a 'new ritual of mourning' which is believed to have its roots from South African urban townships. Phenomenology was followed as a research method which its aim was to explore the meaning, perceptions and the feelings of the people about the practice of the 'after tears' parties. The results indicated that the 'after tears' parties is mostly perceived as a celebration and a party, which contrasts sharply with the mood of death and a funeral in the South African traditional context. The results also indicated that the aim of the people was to offer support and comfort to the deceased's family and also assist them to cope with the impact of death. However, the respondents felt that from their personal experiences, the 'after tears' parties were very painful when the death occurred in their own families. Thus, the 'after tears' parties were experienced as hurting the bereaved families, hurtful and insulting and showing insensitivity towards the bereaved. The 'after tears' parties also suggested lack of respect for the bereaved families and the deceased unlike in the past where funerals were conducted with respect. The 'after tears' party can be a source of valuable support when conducted properly, respecting the deceased and the bereaved and helping them to cope with the impact of death.

### **6.4 Evaluation of the Study**

This section evaluates the current study by explaining the research methods and design used and the procedures followed to gather data and analyze it. It also explains the extent to which the objectives were obtained. The study will then be evaluated in terms of its limitations and suggestions for further research.

#### **6.4.1 Methods**

The study used phenomenology and thematic content analysis in analyzing the narratives of individual respondents and focus groups. Thematic content analysis was

used to explore issues presented while phenomenology was used to find the meanings from the respondents' point of view. New themes were derived. The themes were also interpreted in relation to the available literature and the Social Learning Theory as a theoretical approach used in the study.

The research instrument was a questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions to enable the respondents to mention any related issues that were believed to be relevant to the current study.

#### **6.4.2 Limitations of the study**

- **Sample size**

The sample size that has been used according to qualitative research does not easily allow for generalization. The respondents in the current study are from townships in the Gauteng province. It would be interesting to explore the trends in townships from other urban areas across the country.

- **Literature**

The available literature that specifically focuses on issues of mourning and bereavement in South African urban areas seems to be limited, thus there were not enough studies to compare with the findings of the current study. Some parts of the literature were based on the researcher's own observations of some of the practices in the townships which very little has been documented in the literature.

- **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework used in this study is the social learning theory to describe how the 'phenomenon' of the 'after tears' party was adopted and gained popularity in the urban areas of South Africa. Even though some concepts such as social diffusion

and innovation were highlighted in the study, concepts such as positive and negative reinforcement in the theory that influence learning could not be clearly accounted for in the study as to the reasons for the continuation of the practice.

- **Data Collection Instrument**

The instrument used to collect data could have also focused on the urban people's experiences of and the meaning they attached to strict adherence to traditional mourning and bereavement rituals in an urban environment.

The study could not also uncover the relationship between coping on a long term basis and the 'after tears' party. As this practice is a 'once off' occasion that occurs immediately after the funeral, it is still questionable if the intended effects are long lasting.

## **6.5 Recommendations for further research**

A follow-up study is recommended on the effectiveness of the 'after tears' party if used as a coping mechanism for the people in the townships on the longer term.

A follow-up study on the experiences of the township people of the traditional mourning rituals and the meaning they attach to them with their current experiences of the 'after tears' parties.

A comparative study between the people who live in South African townships and those who still live in the rural villages on their perceptions of the 'after tears' parties and adherence to traditional bereavement practices

Other population groups such as older members of the society who have lived in the urban townships. It would be interesting to hear their experiences of the new emerging practices after the funerals in the townships.

A study that would highlight the relationship between the 'after tears' parties and increased reported psychological problems or unresolved grief due to abridged mourning practices (Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999).

Based on the findings of the current study on the description of the respondents on the use of alcohol at the 'after tears' parties, a follow up study could explore the relationship between the use of alcohol as a possible defense mechanism in dealing with the grief reactions after the loss of a loved one.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

The mourning rituals currently practiced in most South African contemporary townships highlight the needs of the bereaved people living in those environments. Adherence to strict traditional mourning practices may not always be possible because of the new ways of living that urban environments demand from the urban dwellers. The environment demands that mourning should be brief and intense so that people can go back to their normal lives as soon as possible (Dlukulu, 2010). The practice of the 'after tears' party seems to reflect this. The nature of the urban environment may also not completely allow and accommodate strict adherence to some of the traditional mourning practices. This confirms Parkes *et al.* (1997) assertion that adherence to traditional bereavement practices may not always be possible in strange environments that people currently find themselves. There may not be enough time, relevant resources and also familiar people to offer support in carrying out traditional mourning practices.

Even though performance of traditional mourning practices may seem to have been adapted, the people are aware of issues such as respect which Magudu (2004) highlighted as 'ukuzila' which is avoidance of certain practices to show respect. There was a general wish that the people could go back to original practices which would restore order in South African township funerals.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT**

**STUDY TITLE:** Mourning rituals and practices in contemporary South African townships: A Phenomenological Study.

**RESEARCHER:** Mrs. Happy Setsiba

Dear Participant

I am a PhD Community Psychology student at the University of Zululand. I want to undertake a research study to explore the experiences and perceptions of people regarding the 'after tears' parties, which are held immediately after a funeral. The benefit of the study is to make a contribution to the needs of the people living in urban townships regarding grief and mourning over the lost loved one. The study is aimed at developing guidelines to equip community psychologists with the necessary competence to render counselling and therapy to clients who experience bereavement and mourning in the townships. This study is also a requirement to complete my course of study.

You are one of the selected participants. I therefore seek permission from you to participate in this study; information will be gathered from you through an in-depth unstructured interview. There is no right or wrong answers; you will be giving your experiences and your opinions. Your name will not be used or appear anywhere in the reports that I will write and the information will be handled with confidentiality. Your participation in this study is voluntary. I appreciate your willingness to participate in this study.

**Participant's signature:** ----- **Date:** -----

**Investigator's signature:** ----- **Date:** -----

## APPENDIX 2

### CONSENT FOR AUDIO TAPING THE INTERVIEWS

**STUDY TITLE:** Mourning rituals and practices in contemporary South African townships: A Phenomenological Study.

**RESEARCHER:** Mrs. Happy Setsiba

Dear Participant

I am Happy Setsiba, a PhD Community Psychology student at the University of Zululand. In my research I need to talk to people about their experiences and perceptions regarding after tears' party celebrations, which are held immediately after a funeral. I shall tape their stories on an audio tape and transcribe these stories on paper. Information will be gathered from you through an in-depth unstructured interview. I therefore ask your permission to audiotape the interview.

The tape cassettes and the transcripts of the interviews will be stored in a safe place. Your name will not appear in any of the reports that I will write and the information will be treated in confidentiality. The information will be shared with the University of the Zululand.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research. I appreciate your willingness to participate.

**Participant's signature:** - -----

**Date**-----

**Researcher's signature:** -----

**Date** -----

## APPENDIX 3

### RESEARCH INSTRUMENT: MOURNING RITUALS AND PRACTICES IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN TOWNSHIPS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

#### PART A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Home Language \_\_\_\_\_

Residential area \_\_\_\_\_

Religious orientation \_\_\_\_\_

#### PART B: INTERVIEW GUIDE (FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS)

I am Happy Setsiba who is a registered PhD Community Psychology student at the University of Zululand.

The purpose of the interview is to hear your experiences, thoughts, feelings and perceptions of what happens at funerals these days in Black townships. The focus will be on the 'after tears' party/ 'wie sien ons' as some call it, as a current practice in urban black townships.

1. What is your understanding of the 'after tears' party according to you?
2. Can you tell me about your own experience of the 'after tears' party?
3. What is the meaning of the 'after tears' party to you?
4. How do you personally feel about the 'after tears' party?
5. Please comment on anything else that you feel is important to know about the 'after tears' party which could have been left out in this meeting.

Thank you for your time!

HAPPY SETSIBA

## APPENDIX 4

### 5.2.1 Individual narratives

#### 5.2.1.1 A's story

Gender: Female  
Age: 40 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Motswana  
Residential area: Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Dutch Reformed church

#### Narration

Personally I don't like after tears (A1) at all, because they have changed (A2) the way they were done. They are not done for younger people only (A3) these days. They do them for elderly people (A4) as well then it ends up being a party (A5). They either do them at the house of the deceased (A6) or the following street (A7) not far from where the funeral was held (A8).

It's more painful (A9) when you are the one who has lost someone (A10) very close to you then the next thing people are celebrating (A11). Let's say you've lost your mom (A12) and your mom was not a drunkard (A13), she was a church goer (A14), I don't think there is any respect (A15) in the whole thing. To tell the honest truth it shows lack of respect (A16), because they bring along bags (A17) with clothes to change (A18) after the funeral. They go to the funeral wearing skirts (A19), after the funeral they change (A20) and wear jeans (A20). They bring drinks (A21) with, so they come fully prepared for it. When there is a funeral (A22) somewhere people know (A23) that they have to come prepared for 'wie sien ons' (A24), and they come prepared they even

prepare for the venue (A25). Let's say there is funeral closer to my house (A26), they will come to ask me to hold the 'wie sien ons' at my house (A27).

I don't know how they started (A28), I don't have the exact answer (A29), but what I know is that even before (A30) whenever there was a funeral (A31) in the family those who drink beer will go out and buy some beers (A32). So I think that's how they started thinking that 'wie sien ons' meaning 'no one sees us' (A33). In the olden days (A34) they used to hide (A35) when they drink (A36). The family would be looking for the uncle (A37), only to find out that the needed uncle is hiding somewhere (A38) drinking beer (A39).

So it's not a big deal (A40) anymore (A41). Last year I lost my cousin and we buried her during the March holidays it was somewhere in Soweto at Tladi, It was shocking!! (A42) She was 46. Her life style was too fast (A43). It's those people on the fast lane (A44), the type of friends (A45) and everything. Their yard is small so the funeral tent was out on the street.

When we were in the house just after we returned (A46) from the graveside (A47), we heard music (A48) so we thought maybe there is a party (A49) somewhere (A50), only to find out that someone is playing music from the car (A51). Right there! (A52). Under the tent (A53) people would take out cooler boxes (A54), I'm talking big big ones (A55). There were beers (A56) in them, so what would you do? (A57) They said that's how they lived with her (A58).

In this case it was an acceptable culture (A59) because even the neighbours come with their drinks (A60) as well and joined (A61). And it wasn't a shocking thing (A62) for them (A63). But for older people (A64), hmm, imagine. Principally it's young people (A65) who start this. This hurts old people (A66) very much (A67). Old people think (A68) that we don't have respect (A69) for the death, (A70) for the dead (A71) and for the funeral at all (A72).

I can never say that this is how I want people to behave (A73) at the funeral (A74), but I can tell you how I was taught (A75) about the funeral (A76), that people should be calm (A77). There must be complete silence (A78), you can never shout someone's name (A79) out loud (A80). You can never say 'Hey Maria!!!' (A81) No way! (A82). Okay that's how we were taught (A83). Let's say there is a funeral around your area (A84). You can never throw a party (A85) during that whole period of the funeral (A86).

You have to postpone (A87). Even if there were supposed to be a wedding, (A88) you have to wait after the funeral (A89) and you have to inform the people (A90) beforehand (A91). Even the way we dress at the funeral (A92) it must show respect (A93). That's how we were taught (A94) that you must show respect (A95), you can never go to a funeral showing off (A96) your shoulders or thighs as a woman (A97). Showing respect (A98) at the funeral (A99) is also a way to show the family (A100) of the deceased (A101) that we are feeling the pain (A102) as well (A103). Then we don't have to look happy (A104) whereas the family is in pain (A105). It's giving support (A106) more than anything else.

Some people may say that now that we have buried the person (A107), it's over and done with (A108), now we can have 'wie sien ons', the after party (A109). Okay, in my opinion they can be done (A110), but only to the people who attend them (A111). I never attend 'wie sien ons' (A112) so they mustn't do them (A113) when I die (A114), I don't even get involved (A115) whenever they are organized (A116). So I don't want them (A117), they can do them for someone who attends them (A118).

Let's say a granny (A119) has passed away (A120). Why (A121) do they throw her the 'wie sien ons' (A122)? They do them for grannies (A123) as well (A124). It means then that this people are actually doing 'wie sien ons' for themselves (A125) not for the dead (A126). The main thing is people do not want to go home (A127) after the funeral (A128), they just want to socialize (A129). If some people couldn't attend the funeral (A130) due to genuine commitments (A131) they still want to attend the 'wie sien ons' (A132) after such commitments (A132). They even phone friends (A133) to find out

where 'wie sien ons' (A134) are being held (A135). Of course 'wie sien ons' have everything to do with the funeral (A136) because they just don't happen without a funeral (A137). If there is no funeral (A138) there can't be 'wie sien ons' (A139).

I think in a way that these people are hijacking (A140) the funeral. It's more to socialize (A141) with old friends (A142) who became part of the mourners (A143) than anything else. Honestly speaking I don't know the big reason behind it (A144) but I think it is just a useful excuse (A145) for people to get drunk (A146). It doesn't matter (A147) how painful (A148) it is, even if you try to stop them (A149) they still do them (A150). I see the extremes (A151), it's very painful (A152) at the same time it's a celebration (A153), that's how it is and even if you wish them away (A154) they are there (A155) whether you like it or not (A156) and even whether you are there or not! (A156)

Sometimes you find that death was too traumatic (A157) and you feel (A158) that people can just go home after the funeral (A159) and give the mourning family some space (A160) to mourn (A161) because the death was very traumatic (A162). It doesn't matter (A163) to them if it was a traumatic death or not (A164), you can't just wish them away (A165). On Monday you will hear them saying 'eish' 'wie sien ons' were at your place".

About my late cousin's funeral, they told us not to be surprised (A166), it was her lifestyle (A167), that's how they lived (A168) with her (A169). I was shocked (A170), really shocked (A171). And it was her sister (A172) who said so (A173). She didn't care (A174). She even had her own drinks (A175) that she had bought (A176). There are those people (A177) who don't care (A178), they don't have a problem (A179) with 'wie sien ons'. They say to us that the person who is dead (A180) used to attend them (A181) so that's how it's going to be for him/her (A182) as well. For them (A183) it's just a way of saying their last goodbyes (A184), you see!

Even though I had a chance (A185) to find a common ground (A186) to its meaning (A187), to the elders (A188) it's not how (A189) it's supposed (A190) to be done. To

them (A191) they expect to see respect (A192) at a funeral (A193). My family is from Botswana (A194), whenever there is a funeral (A195) they come over (A196) to Pretoria to attend (A197) our funerals. So they were surprised (A198) at Soweto (A199) to see how things (A200) are done in South Africa. They said that they will never go (A201) to Soweto and they said that that's the reason (A202) why they don't want to come (A203) whenever there is something (A204).

In Botswana (A205) a funeral stays a funeral (A206). If it's on a Saturday it stays like that the whole day (A207) until late (A208). There is no celebration (A209), and if you may feel tired (A210) you just go to sleep (A211). In our culture (A212) after the burial (A213) we are offered meals (A214) to eat. That it is our culture (A215), not a celebration (A216). African culture (A217).

Let's say the person who had died (A218) was an Apostolic or a Zionist (A218) of a certain religion after the burial (A219) people sing and playing drums (A220). That's not away they do after tears (A221). They say that death is being taken out (A222) of the house. By doing 'wie sien ons', it's not the same thing (A223) because the church ones do it in the house (A224) not three house away or elsewhere (A225).

According to religion (A226) when they beat the drums and sing (A227) they take the funeral out of the house (A228). They are comforting (A229) the family (A230). When you have lost someone (A231) through death (A232) sometimes you find yourself singing (A233). By singing (A234) you make peace (A235) with the loss (A236). After the funeral (A237) they say that death is gone (A238) out of the house (A239), it means that these people are here to comfort (A240) the family (241) and they are here also to chase away (A242) bad spirits (A243) out of the house (A244). They bring happiness (A245) to the family (A246).

In our culture (A246) death is associated (A247) with bad spirits (A248) especially if a person dies due to unnatural causes (A249). If person dies due to sickness (A250), they don't complain (A251) though. But if the person was killed (A252) they say that its bad

spirits (A253), 'sefifi' (A254), a bad omen (A255) to the family (A256). It is believed (A257) that there must be a mourning period (A258), it means that we have to respect ourselves (A259), we don't walk the streets at night (A260), we do not make noise (A261) until such a period passes (A262), there will be a cleansing ceremony (A263). It is believed (A264) that evil is gone (A265), goodwill (A266) is coming to the family (A267). Then it is said the family is been restored (A268) back to society (A269). The cleansing ceremony (A270) is when rituals are done (A271).

When you compare to the way we dealt with (A272) with death (A273) in the past years (A274) and now (A275), it almost feels like (A276) death changes (A277) with fashion (A278), just as much as our culture (A279). It has changed (A280). It has completely (A281) changed. The only thing that hasn't changed (A281) it's the fact that we still have to go to the grave yard, but all the rest (A282) has been changed. The food, the way people dress.

Everything has changed (A283) because people don't have to sing (A284) anymore, they play a cd (A285). The undertakers put juice (A285), not water (A286) to drink. They even put up a photo (A287) of the deceased. 'Wie sien ons' is something that we can't control (A288) but the rest (A289) we can control (A290). You can tell the undertaker what you want and what you do not want (A291). And the food (A292) that will be served you can decide (A293).

It's rare (A294) that before one dies (A295) that he/she stated his wishes (A296) about things that shouldn't be done (A297) at their funeral (A298). But it can still happen (A299).

In the olden days (A300) people used to drink the African beer (A301) and they do 'tlhoboso' (meaning 'last respect') (A302). They tell the people (A303) about the person (A304) who was just buried (A305), where the person comes from (A306), her blood chain (A307), over drinks. It wasn't 'wie sien ons' (A308). That was a way to appease (A309) the ancestors (A310). It's a ritual (A311). In that case and the case of 'wie sien

ons' there is beer (A312). The difference (A313) is that the old ways had respect (A314) while with 'wie sien ons' people get drunk (A315) and end-up getting hurt (A316).It's because (A317) we have adopted other peoples cultures (A318), I'm not saying that we have to behave as if we are sick (A319) whenever we have a funeral (A320). I'm just saying that let us respect (A321) the mourning period – in the way of our own culture (A322) and not using a borrowed culture (A323). That is why we are such a depressed society (A324), it is because we don't mourn (A325) anymore (A325). We don't mourn (A326) we celebrate (A327) as if nothing (A328) has happened (A329).

There are people, when they have a funeral they organize the 'wie sien ons' (A330), and these people, when they do grocery, they buy expensive brandies (A331) for the occasion. Some of them, by doing that, indicate their financial standing (A332) – by buying alcohol! (A333) Some hire taverns (A334) for 'wie sien ons', this is serious business (A335). People make money (A336) out of this, especially those who sell liquor. A beer vendor staying in the same street where the funeral is, will stock more beers (A337) for the business. Because people will be buying from as Friday (A338) and the 'wie sien ons' will be held at the place (A339), so you don't want to run out of stock (A340).

#### **5.2.1.2 B's story**

Gender: Female  
Age: 32 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Motswana  
Residential area: Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Zion Christian Church

#### **Narration**

In my opinion after tears it means it's a way of comforting (B1) the family of the deceased (B2), but sometimes it's difficult (B3) as people are still mourning (B4) after

the funeral of their loved one. It is 'after tears' party (B5), a party in a celebration of the life (B6) of the one just gone. With the after tears party, we want to help (B7) them to forget (B8) what they have been through (B9).

From the graveside, we are offered food (B10) at the deceased's home (B11). As we will be eating we talk about contributing money (B12) for drinks (B13), then drinks are bought (B14) and we decide where (B15) we will be sitting to 'chill' (B16). Maybe three houses (B17) from where the funeral was (B18). Then we organize (B19) that we will be staying for some time (B20) there where those who drink liquor (B21) will continue to do so, those for cool drinks (B22) will also have them. Then there will also be music (B23) and we stay and become happy (B24).

Through the 'after tears' party, we aim to comfort (B25) the bereaved family (B26). We show respect (B27) by holding this party three houses away (B28) because sometimes elders in the yard (B29) who still adhere to tradition (B30) are given space to do their rituals or hold a meeting, or anything (B31). They shouldn't hear loud noise (B32) while the death is still fresh. There are some (B33) who have no problem (B34) with the practice (B35) and some think (B36) it is disrespectful (B37). The elders (B38) think that young people (B39) are disrespectful (B40) with after tears parties, because in most cases (B41) they are being conducted by young people (B42). I think (B43) they started during the time when South Africa celebrated liberation (B44) and freedom from apartheid. A lot of things changed (B45) since democracy.

There is a saying that 'motho o tsamaya le diketso tsa gage' (meaning 'a person is remembered by his works') (B46). If the deceased used to like liquor and partying (B47), so by doing that we are remembering him through his works (B48). Well, it's not always (B49) that 'wie sien ons' is conducted for people who used to drink liquor and partying (B50). We do it for everyone (B52) including old women (bokoko) and old men (bontatemogolo). We go to their 'wie sien ons' (B53). In the past (B54) we used to do the party for those who were under 50 years of age (B55) but now we do it for everybody (B56) including infants and toddlers.

'Wie sien ons' is not comforting (B57) any longer (B58), now it's a party (B59). A party immediately after the funeral (B60), when we can still do it the following week (B61) after the burial or even the next day on a Sunday (B62)! This is sometimes it's caused by a lot of things. In our culture (B63) there is what we call the washing of the hoes (digarafo), or '10 days' (B64). Those '10 days', some do it immediately (B65) after the funeral. During that time, traditional African beer (B66) is brewed. It's a beer for the hoes (Byala ba digarafo).

At the 'wie sien ons' people drink western beer (B67). In most cases when the people decide to conduct the 'washing of the hoes' immediately there will be beers (B68) and then it becomes a party (B69). The 'wie sien ons' practice developed (B70) from there, from a ceremony (B71) of washing of the hoes. Usually, there is also a ceremony of spreading of the deceased's clothes (B72). Some do it same day (B73) and others conduct the ceremony after a month (B74), people do it differently (B75). After a month has passed, it is no longer (B76) 'wie sien ons' anymore. What happens is that African traditional beer (B77) is brewed, food is cooked. But some people don't drink African beer (B78), and if they don't drink this African beer, they will then be given ordinary Western beer (B79).

There are people who like 'wie sien ons' (B80). I feel (B81) that those are the ones who like fun and partying (B82) and nothing else. I don't think (B83) there is any importance. So we just do it because people do it (B84), I don't think it's important. What happens there is that people drink booze, they dance, things like those (B85). It's a typical party (B86).

People cope (B87) in many ways (B88). We can come and stay with you (B89) during the time of mourning and comfort (B90) you as much as we can, 'wie sien ons' is not a way of comforting (B91) the bereaved, it's just a way of having fun and entertaining (B92) ourselves at the funeral.

At the funeral 'wie sien ons' people wish (B93) to see the funeral end (B94) so that they can enjoy (B95). But people prefer (B96) to drink immediately after the funeral (B97). Their excuse (B98) is that if you can drink beer (B99), the pain will subside (B100), but the truth is that it doesn't go away (B101) because the next day when you are sober (B102) the pain is still there (B103). You will be sober (B104); perhaps these people want to show you their support (B105) even though they end up dispersing to their homes (B106) and you will be left alone (B106) to feel the pain (B107).

Mostly it's the youth (B108) who conduct the 'wie sien ons', adults think it is disrespectful (B109) for the youth to conduct the after tears party (B110) especially after the funeral (B111). These days (B112) the way we perceive funerals has changed (B113). A lot has changed (B114), including the dress code (B115), women do not cover their heads (B116) anymore when they attend funerals. Funerals are used (B117) as a way of throwing a party (B118), so that they can socialize (B119). 'Wie sien ons' is to socialize (B120), it has to be (B121) on the day of the burial (B122), it's because at the funeral, you see people (B123) that you haven't seen in a long time (B124). One thing about a funeral is that, it's different (B125) from a party or a wedding (B126) because you do not get an invite (B127).

On the meaning of the word 'wie sien ons' or the 'after tears'! I think (B128) it's all about being famous (B129). Death has somehow lost meaning (B130). Many of us (B131) no longer see it the way older people (B132) used to handle it (B133). The way this trend is so rife (B134) in the townships, some people go to 'wie sien ons' even if they did not attend the funeral (B136), those who came to the funeral and those who did not attend the funeral are most welcome (B137) to the 'wie sien ons' party. No one will be turned away (B138), you can just join in (B139) and have your drink (B140) and that's it.

There are lots of issues (B141) that people who are at that party talk about (B142). A lot of things! Among them is reminiscing about the deceased (B143). Another thing, the 'wie sien ons' trend is in the townships (B144) and never heard of 'wie sien ons' in the villages (B145). You never find that at the villages (B146) because people at the villages

still have respect (B147), their funerals are characterized by silence (B148) at the grave side; only the priest (B149) is allowed to speak. Everything goes according to order (B150). From this angle (B151), I prefer (B152) the village style because it shows proper order (B153) and respect (B154) for the funeral. If there was a funeral at my home (B155), and people and friends organize a party (B156), even if it were three houses away (B156) from my home (B157), I will be hurt (B158). It's a norm that 'wie sien ons' are conducted after the funeral (B159), but what will hurt most is that I will know that my friends (B160) will also be attending (B161) the party. I will ask myself a question why (B162) can't they come and stay with me (B163) to offer me support (B164); instead they party (B165) when I need them most (B166).

I will be wondering (B167) why (B168) they are not staying with me (B169) instead of going for the 'wie sien ons' party (B170). What this would mean to me is that they don't understand my pain (B171), as such they party (B172) while I am hurting (B173), meaning my grief does not mean anything (B174) to them (B175). I guess that after the funeral (B176) you still need a company of friends (B177) of your age (B178), not older people (B179). Older people will be comforting you (B180) but you will always miss your friends and peers (B181) and hope (B182) that they will stay over (B183) for a chat (B184). And of course not in the environment of 'wie sien ons' (B185). You need a quiet space (B185) where you can sit and reflect (B186) because the death is still fresh (B187), you are still in pain (B188).

There are people who go to the 'wie sien ons' when they are still mourning (B189) on the same day (B190) of the funeral. Perhaps they just try to cope (B191) with their pain; they just tell themselves that aag! (B192) We have buried our loved one, let life continue (B193), this person will never come back or be replaced (B194), so why can't I also go and relieve my pain (B195), perhaps if I go I will feel differently (B196). Yaah! We cope differently (B197). Someone may feel that to end the pain (B198) is to sit with friends (B199) in the yard and not go anywhere (B200), another may feel that perhaps to party (B200) with friends (B201) where there is loud noise (B202) and booze (B203) I will be able (B204) to forget about my pain (B205). 'Wie sien ons' can be helpful (B206) and

may be unhelpful (B207). There's the other side (B208) of it (B209). It may be helpful (B210) to some people (B211) and not to others (B212).

There may be people (B213) who benefit (B214) from the 'wie sien ons'. Compared to the '10 days' (B215), I can see it as another version (B216) of 'wie sien ons', however, the difference (B217) is that the 10 days ceremony is held in the home (B218) of the deceased. With 'wie sien ons', there are lots of things (B218) happening they last for as long as people are able to drink (B219), they even find partners (B220) there. These days you even find very young children about 14 or 15 years old (B221) who are not supposed (B222) to go to parties there (B223), some start to drink liquor (B224) there (B225) without their parents (B226) knowing. They drink (B227), and their dress code is totally out (B228). Some of these people take their clothes off (B229) at the graveside (B230). Like taxi drivers (B231), you wouldn't like (B232) to attend the funeral of one of them (B233), it's just chaos (B234).

Often at the taxi driver funerals (B235), the fellow taxi drivers would take off (B236) their clothes, young boys (B237) take off their clothes, at the graveyard (B238), they take off everything (B239), their trousers, bums out (B240). My opinion is that the 'wie sien ons' must be banned! (B241) These people bring booze (B242) to the graveside (B243), they drink (B244) and pitch their car radios (B245) at a very high sound (B246). Often (B247), the 'wie sien ons' begins (B248) at the graveside (B249). 'Wie sien ons' developed (B250) as a subculture (B251) of taxi drivers (B252), they did it (B253) when one of them (B254) has died (B255), they start the party (B256) at the graveside (B257). I feel (B258) it's not helping (B259) as they even drive with their car doors open (B260) on their way back from the graveside and this is bad (B261) because they end up getting hurt (B262).

The culture (B263) of death has changed (B264), many people have different perspectives (B265) about death (B266). It's very sad (B267) because people have lost meaning (B268) to the death (B269) of their loved ones (B270). I think something that needs to be done (B271) about the situation is to return (B272) the strictness (B273)

that was there in the past (B274) at funerals, the order (B275) that are there at the villages (B276), things that really show respect (B277) like, old men wearing jackets (B278) and old women covering their heads (B279). Perhaps (B280) it can be better (B281). About 'wie sien ons', there must be a strict instruction (B282) at the funerals (B283) that there won't be any noises (B284) allowed (B285), if you want (B286) to make noise (B287), go very far away (B288) from the home (B289) of the deceased. Perhaps (B290) it can be better that way (B291). Maybe (B292) we may not be able (B293) to do away (B294) with the 'wie sien ons' completely (B295), but there must somehow be some way (B296) to demonstrate to people (B297) to respect (B298) death and funerals.

### **5.2.1.3 C's story**

Gender: Male  
Age: 37 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Mopedi  
Residential area: Phillip Nel Park, Pretoria West  
Church affiliation: International Assemblies of God

#### **Narration**

I don't think (C1) that after parties is something the community should follow (C2), I see it as a celebration (C3) of somebody's death (C4), people are hurt (C5) and it's done at the time (C6) when people are still hurt (C7). Culturally (C8) we have it (C9) in the Pedi culture. They call it 'ditlhobolo' (C10), it's the after tears. On the day (C11) of 'ditlhobolo' it's like a celebration (C12) still it's a type of a ritual (C13). It's a form of accepting (C14) that what is gone is gone (C15). They are trying to show people that life goes on (C16). They are trying to make people to accept (C17) the situation. People who do the after party say that 'hey don't be stuck in someone's death' (C18), life goes on (C19). They are trying to say that we don't have to stop our lives (C10) just because someone has

died (C11). We buried the person so life goes on (C12), that's why it's done on the day of the funeral (C13) it shows that they mustn't come the following day (C14).

Things have changed (C15) because these days (C16) everybody is allowed (C17) to go to a funeral. The new age group (C19) has redefined (C20) the meaning (C21) of mourning. This new age group (C22) has changed things (C23). The old generation (C24) handled funerals (C25) their own way (C26). The after tears is an exaggerated form of after the funeral (C27), how people must behave (C28). The old trend (C29) used to make people respect (C30) the house (C31) where there is a funeral. Children (C32) would stay away from the funeral house (C33). However, lately (C34), people are no more afraid (C35) of funerals. When there is a funeral nearby (C36), people just do whatever they want (C37). If they, for example, have a wedding (C38) they continue (C39) with it without any problem (C40). Funerals are no more respected (C41). Even the kids (C42) are no more afraid (C43) of the hearse (C44). It's a complete change of mood (C45). People don't feel pain (C46) anymore (C47), that's why people hold the after tears party (C48) even if they didn't attend the funeral (C49).

Nowadays (C50) people just want to do things their own way (C51). After tears is just part of fashion (C52) because it's not done always (C53). In some areas (C54) not everyone in the community (C55) do the after party. In townships (C56) it's very common, especially where there is a pub nearby (C57). They would order enough drinks (C58) because they know that people from the funeral (C59) would come for drinks (C60), and the chances of hosting (C61) the after tears are high (C62). In the rural areas (C63) it's very rare (C64) because there is a possibility that the chief of the village (C65) might complain (C66) and then give them a fine (C67). These are places (C68) where they are not done (C69), where there is still strict rules (C70) that people have to adhere to (C71) without questioning (C72), where there is a protocol (C73), a clear structure of leadership (C74).

Migration (C75), generally, has made people to adapt to the township culture (C76). Some rural people (C77) do them in a very quiet manner (C78) that other people won't

notice (C79) that it's the after party. It's done secretly (C80). In townships it's already known (C81). When there is a funeral (C82) it's known (C83) that an after tears party will be done (C84). Other areas (C85) are very secretive (C86), it will only look like (C87) people are still hanging (C88) around because they haven't seen each other for long (C89).

I know that it didn't just come up (C90), there is reason behind it or meaning (C91). Like 'wie sien ons' I know that it is an Afrikaans word to means 'who sees us' (C92). I think that men can make appointments with women (C93) that they can meet at the 'wie sien ons' (C94). It can also be a meeting place (C95). There could be hidden agendas (C96) since 'wie sien ons' serves lots of purposes (C97). For some (C98), it might be a way of coping (C99) with someone's death. 'Wie sien ons' has existed for a long time (C100) with different names (C101) and different formats (C102). My first experience (C103) with this party was not at my own home (C104) but it was one of my colleague home (C105). I was surprised (C106) when they called us, only to find out that it was a party (C107). Camp chairs and cooler bags (C108) were taken out, music was playing out loud (C109), people started to drink (C110) and they made 'braai' meat (C111) as well.

We were at a party now (C112). I personally didn't feel good (C113) about it as it was very close to the house (C114) where the funeral was. What surprised (C115) me the most was that the sister to the deceased (C116) was there (C117) as well helping out (C118). It showed (C119) that it was a well prepared 'wie sien ons' (C120). I still didn't feel good (C121) about it because some people were hurt (C122) and it was like (C123) we did not help (C124) them to cope (C125) with the pain. But it's there (C126) and there is nothing (C127) anyone can do about it (C128). People still do it (C129) and no one can say 'don't do it' (C130). It's one subculture (C131) that developed (C132) to become a culture (C133) in the long run. These days (C134) it's so rife (135) that even people don't mind (C136) if that it's a child (C137) or an older person (C138) that has died there has to be (C139) 'wie sien ons'.

People want to change (C140) the central character of death (C141). Several behaviours (C142) from different people (C143) add up (C144) and combine to become a culture (C145). With 'wie sien ons' they are saying life goes on (C146) immediately (C147) after the funeral unlike 'ditlhobolo' (C148) which they do it after three months (C149). I think (C150) 'wie sien ons' is a direct challenge (C151) that says if you thought that you will recover after six months what if you recover today (C152). I think (C153) to cope (C154) and to accept (C155) that's where the after tears comes in (C156). I think (C157) after tears deals with acceptance and to cope is a process (C158) where other things may take you back. But that acceptance can help you cope (C159).

'Wie sien ons' helps to mourn and accept the death and that the person is gone forever and I have to cope (C160). Acceptance helps (C161) because the minute you accept it shows that you are ready (C162) to move on and all other small things will come along. I think it deals with acceptance (C163) because coping is a process (C164). 'Wie sien ons' is acceptable (C165) to other people (C166). With them people could move on (C167) with their lives. Further, bereaved families don't feel the full impact of death (C168), it's superficial for them. With 'wie sien ons' people justify the bad things (C169) they do (C170). These 'wie sien ons' are also about power (C171). Let me make an example with gangsters (C172), as they have power (C173), even the bad things (C174) that they do (C175), no one (C176) will ever reprimand (C177) them, their family members would never (C178) reprimand them.

#### **5.2.1.4 D's story**

Gender: Male  
Age: 38 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Motswana  
Residential area: Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Zion Christian Church

## Narration

For me, 'after tears' are fine (D1), however they also have effects (D2) that are not right (D3). At that occasion people get drunk (D4), they enjoy and the atmosphere becomes nice (D5) and sometimes the party end up with undesirable effects (D6) because there are different people from different places. In most ones (D7) that I attended (D8) people drink liquor endlessly (D9). Some people from the deceased's family (D10) are give people liquor. Some buy beers for themselves (D11) and they get drunk (D12) and the situation can end up being ugly (D13).

It is simply impossible (D14) to have after tears party without liquor (D15). That would never (D16) happen. These parties are held (D17) for drinking liquor (D18), which is the thing that defines (D19) the after tears party. People who attend (D20) the after tears party are those who want to enjoy (D21) themselves. Drinking liquor at 'wie sien ons' is a way (D22) to say goodbye (D23) to the person that they just laid to rest/buried. They celebrate (D24) the end of the relationship with the person (D25) that just passed away. In the past (D26), there were no after tears parties (D27). Now (D28) after party is a custom (D29) where, just after the funeral (D30), certain customs (D31) and rituals (D32) are observed. I disapprove (D33) of the after tears because I have attended quite a few, I think they are useless (D34).

The 'wie sien ons' time is the time you need friends (D35) to help you with some chores. Instead, they are a burden (D36), they want you to look after them (D37). You are tired, still mourning (D38), and they want you to buy them liquor (D39). I do not know (D40) the real reason (D41) for the after party and how they started (D42). The deceased's family is involved (D43) as they buy liquor for the mourners (D44). 'Wie sien ons' is a case of two extremes (D45) that would never reconcile (D46), a funeral (D47) which is a painful time (D48) for the bereaved and on that same day, a party immediately after the funeral. I don't understand (D49), perhaps (D50) that's the way of coping (D51) with the pain of loss. Friends are entertained (D52), but liquor can't make you forget (D53) the pain.

At my home we had my sister's funeral (D54) and there was also after tears (D55). It was not held at my home (D56). It was held four houses away (D57) from my home, at a friend's house. I noticed that such occasions end up with disorder (D58); it was hurting (D59) for me as I heard my uncles and my brothers (D60) running around looking for more money (D61) to provide liquor (D62) for their friends while they should still be at home (D63) with the elders and performing rituals (D64) and still mourning (D65). I felt lonely (D66) that they forget my sister (D67) so quickly (D68) and moved on (D69) with their lives (D70) like that. They knew that they were not supposed to make loud noise (D71) at the deceased's house, it's supposed to be quiet (D72) and they shouldn't play loud music (D73). They will always look for an alternative place to hold the after tears. If there was a bit of sensitivity (D74) and order (D75) in the way they hold (D76) the 'after tears' party/'wie sien ons', that would have been a better way (D77) of saying goodbye (D78) to the deceased and comforting (D79) the family. I am actually not against them (D89), just the way they do them (D90) is not right (D91). If there was respect (D92) and order (D93) to the family of the deceased, then this after tears would be more meaningful (D94).

I have seen the 'wie sien ons' at villages (D95), however, it was not by the people from the villages (D96). People there (D97) still observe rules (D98) and respect (D99) their dead. There is order (D100), but people from the cities (D101) who attend funerals at the villages (D102) are the ones (D103) that normally bring 'wie sien ons' to the villages (D104). But that happens very rarely (D105) because there are strict rules (D106) in the villages (D107) and there are people who guard (D108) against any act that would compromise the order (D109) and respect (D110) that they still uphold. People do not have respect (D111) for death anymore (D112), death does not affect them, they do not grieve or mourn death or loss of their loved (D113) ones anymore. Hence they celebrate deaths with parties (D114) these days (D115). The basic meaning about after tears (D116) is that it depends on the lifestyle one lives (D117). If you were attending church (D118) they do it the church way (D119).

### 5.2.1.5 E's story

Gender: Female  
Age: 44 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Mopedi  
Residential area: Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Methodist Church

#### Narration

After tears are not right (E1), the thing is you are still mourning (E2), but people around you are happy having beers (E3). At the end they start fighting (E4) that you can't even cope (E5) with the situation because you have just lost someone (E6) meaningful (E7) in your life (E8). The after tears are a waste of money (E9). They waste money (E10) buying beers (E11) instead of giving it to you since you have spend a lot on the funeral arrangements and you could do something useful (E12) with it. I can't really tell how the 'wie sien ons' started (E13), but I think they were started by the youth (E14). By doing that the youth were saying that 'Eish we have cried, so now we going to wipe our tears off' (E15), that's why they call them the after tears (E16). They are trying to forget (E17) what happened.

It's difficult (E18) to explain why they are done the very same day (E19) of the funeral since you are still in mourning (E20). I wish (E21) that it wasn't done on the same day (E22), but if they were done at least not close (E23) to the where the funeral was. Mourners who were also hurting (E24), immediately (E25) after the burial they forget (E26) so quickly (E27) and all of a sudden it's over they are celebrating (E28).

People differ (E29) in the way they handle pain (E30). Even some of the immediate family members (E31) of the deceased also attend the after tears (E32). My cousin died, neh! While alive, he would usually want to go out for drinks (E33) whenever we have a funeral (E34) in the family. Some people (E35) can't handle pain well (E36). I

saw that with my aunt's child when my aunt died. She didn't see anything (E37) that whole week because she stayed in bed sleeping (E38), they end-up taking her to see a doctor (E39).

On why (E40) they are held immediately (E41) after the funeral, I don't know (E42). In our tradition (E43) we wait for a week (E44), then we hold a ceremony, the '10 days', 'byala ba digarafo' (beer for the hoes) (E45). It is the after tears (E46), they are better (E47) because then they have waited for a week (E48) before they can be done. Our culture (E49) defines it this way. The difference (E50) with 'wie sien ons' is, they had to wait (E51) for a week. Those days are being respected (E52), not when it's still fresh (E53), it shows some disrespect (E54). Our culture (E55) accepts (E56) that you can have a drink (E56) after a week (E57). It shows respect (E58), unlike when it's still fresh. Yes, I think it's better (E59) that way, unlike immediately (E60) after the funeral you see people coming with cooler bags saying that it's a an after tears party.

I think (E61) this kind of after tears parties were started (E62) by the youth (E63). The reason is, the youth think (E64) that the way things were done in the past (E65) don't apply (E66) to them, so they do as it pleases them (E67), their own way (E68). In the past (E69) people showed a lot of respect (E70). Today's youth have no respect (E71). It's lack of respect (E72) in a way, they are insensitive (E73). We have just had a funeral (E74) then they come and throw a party (E75).

I have no experience (E76) of the 'wie sien ons', I have never attended (E77) them before. After the funeral it's either I go home (E78) or stay put at the funeral. But what I hear is that in these parties they relax (E79), they play loud music (E80). At the same time someone is in pain (E81). It's sad (E82) because death should be respected (E83), loud noise (E84) is not allowed (E85) until after a few days (E86). But things have changed (E87), people don't wait (E88) anymore (E89). I was at Zone 16 the other time, there was a funeral (E90) and in the next street (E91) was a party (E92), it was hectic (E93).

Normally, friends of the deceased (E94) would organize the after tears parties (E95). People at the after tears drink beer (E96), or juice. About 'wie sien ons', why (E97) are they done, I don't know (E98). It's not about the funeral (E99) anymore (E100) because they buy beers and just sit around. They are happy (E101) to see each other.

In the past (E102) there were funerals and people who had seen each other after a long time (E103) but they didn't do the after tears (E104). Thus, after tears is a way people (E105) try to forget what happened (E106). The youth lack respect (E107). With the funeral at my home (E108), I was in pain (E109), I didn't see (E110) what was happening. I don't think (E111) the 'wie sien ons' has a purpose (E112). It doesn't comfort (E113) or heal (E114) the pain, so it has nothing to do with that (E115). People go for 'wie sien ons' even if they didn't know the deceased (E116). They go so they can comfort you (E117). I don't have a problem with the 'wie sien ons' (E118) but there must be some respect (E119). There are fights (E120) after some few drinks, those who had grudges (E121) start to fight.

At the rural areas (E122) there are usually no 'wie sien ons' (E123). At Dennilton, in the rural Ntoane, at my uncle's funeral, I was surprised (E124) at the respect (E125) they showed at the graveyard (E126). They are very strict (E127), women stand one side and men stand on another (E128). After the funeral they did the after tears (E129). There (E130) they were not playing music (E131) but they had the cooler bags and played music from their cars and I thought things have really changed.

That was my experience (E132) of the after tears (E133) in a rural area. But I have never seen them (E134) at my home in Makapanstad.

### 5.2.1.6 F's story

Gender: Female  
Age: 37 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Mosotho  
Residential area: Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Roman Catholic Church

#### Narration

After tears depends on who the funeral is for (F1). At my home (F2) there was a funeral of my sister in 2008. It was painful (F3) on my side. When it's done you are surprised (F4), you don't understand (F5) when a person takes out a drink and a camp chair (F6) just after you have buried (F7) your loved one (F8). It's like these people do not understand (F9) what I am going through (F10). How (F11) can people who came to the funeral do this! I go (F12) to after tears party with my friends (F13), we relax (F14) after the funeral. After my granny's funeral, also in year 2008, family members, grandchildren and cousins (F15), organized drinks (F16) and sat at home (F17) and gathered around (F18), I think (F19) it was an after tears party (F20).

Even when old people die (F21), there's after tears party. But it was not like a "party" (F22) in the true sense (F23) of the word. It's like chilling and chatting (F24). I think (F25) nowadays (F26) we don't find enough time to visit (F24) each other and see each other. So, after the funeral we have enough time (F25) to sit and catch up (F26).

With my granny (F27) it was not really a problem (F28) at all because we were cousins and family (F29). With my younger sister (F30), I was very very angry (F31). It's not the same (F32) as when your close family member (F33) died. I don't know why (F33), but I didn't really care (F34) when my granny passed (F35) away. She passed away just after my younger sister passed away, but with my younger sister, I became very angry (F36).

I don't know why (F37). With my granny I did not have a problem (F38). We sat there (F39) and it really didn't matter (F40). I took it (F41) just as a chilling time (F42) we were drinking liquor (F43). It was not really a party (F44), it was not like a party (F45) because there is not even music, no music (F46), but with the 'wie sien ons' in township (F47) there is music (F48).

For 'wie sien ons', after the funeral (F49), a group of mourners (F50) who attended the funeral go as a group (F51) to sit at a house nearby (F52) and there is a party (F53). They go and sit there (F54) and they party (F55). It depends on the area you are from (F56), how it's done (F57) depends on the location you come from (F58). I am originally from Wepenaar in the Free State (F59). In most cases (F60) where I come from (F61), which is also a township (F62), we don't do it as after tears party (F63), we just buy drinks (F64) and chill and relax (F65) without music (F66). My experience (F67) of how the after tears (F68) are held back at home (F69) there is no music (F70). Here in Mamelodi township (F71) in Pretoria (F72) it becomes a party (F73), they play music and everything (F74). It's held differently (F75).

It also depends (F76) on where you are (F77). Wepenaar is also a township, but you can't compare it (F78) to townships in Gauteng (F79). Mamelodi 'wie sien ons' are different (F80), they play music (F81) and at times the party group goes to a pub (F82) and sits till late (F83). At last weekend (F84) funeral, people of our age (F85) organized themselves (F86) and went to a pub nearby (F87) and went there (F88) while others remained behind (F89) to "chill" (F90).

The age group (F91) that I mostly find at the 'wie sien ons' (F92) I think (F93) is between 20s and 30s (F94). Even older people (F95) do it, but they drink in the house (F96), it depends. The young ones (F97) do as 'wie sien ons' (F98), but older ones (F99) can still drink (F100) with the aim of relaxing (go ntsha letsapa) (F101). I think (F102) people do it differently (F103), it depends (F104).

I think (F105) the purpose (F106) is to try to forget (F107). But if the funeral is in your own home (F108), you are hurt (F109), you lost your loved one (F110), you don't do it (F111). You can't (F112) do it. However, in someone else's (F113) you are familiar with (F114) you join the party (F115). I don't think (F116) it's about forgetting the pain (F117), because if it was about that, we wouldn't continue (F118) with the parties after the funerals. I saw it with my younger sister's funeral (F119), I really didn't see a need to party (F120), I felt (F121) it was necessary that I should mourn (F122) her death, and respect (F123), give her the last respect. I can't give a reason (F124) why after tears parties are held (F125), what the purpose of after tears is (F126) because if it is true (F127) that at the after tears we wipe tears (F128), I'd have done it (F129) with my younger sister (F130) and wiped my tears (F131) at her funeral, I could have proved it there (F132). At the last respect (F133) that I gave her! So I really do not have any idea (F134) why (F135) we do it, what is the purpose (F135).

Going back to the experience (F136) of my younger sister (F137), what exactly made me angry (F138)! What they did was, there is a pub in front (F139) of my home. They took out their camp chairs of their boots (F140) and went to chill (F141). You can think (F142) of what happens (F143) these days (F144)! A person attending funeral with a camp chair (F145) and a cooler bag (F146) full of liquor (F146), but he is going to a funeral (F147), and after the funerals they open their cars (F148) and take out their camp chairs. After the funeral (F149) it's 'wie sien ons'. At home, you know how messy (F150) it gets after the funeral, you will be in and out of home (F152), doing remaining errands (F153), cleaning up (F154) and attending to people (F155). I saw them at the pub (F156), they left (F157). No one (F158) from my family (F159) joined them. With granny (F160) we sat around (F161) as a family (F162) but with my sister (F163) no one (F164) went to the pub. Even with my granny (F165) we didn't leave the yard (F166), we bought liquor (F167) and drank in the yard (F168) while relaxing (F169). There was no music (F170) or anything, just us (F171), drinking and relaxing at home (F172).

In comparing (F173) the 'wie sien ons' of my younger sister and my grandmother, my younger sister's was painful (F174). My grandmother's was manageable (F175) since it

was at home (F176). My younger sister's was more painful (F177) because I watched (F178) them leave (F179), to hold it somewhere (F180), I saw that they are going to a pub (F181) to drink (F182), after my sister's funeral (F183).

I didn't learn anything (F184) because if there was something to learn (F185), I could have stopped attending (F186) the 'wie sien ons' after seeing them after my sister's funeral (F187). I don't know (F188). I have a friend whose friend died and I attended her 'wie sien ons' (F189). Is it because I didn't know (F190) this friend of my friend? I believe (F191) that if I learned something (F192) with my sister's funeral I should have stopped (F193) attending them. I don't know (F194) if I should attend the 'wie sien ons' (F195) of a person I do not know (F196).

'Wie sien ons' (F197), actually, are not right (F198), they are not right! They are not right as, I believe (F199) that any person who has lost (F200) a loved one (F201), doesn't do them (F202). I saw this young lady (F203) in Orchards, her child (F204) passed away (F205) and his cousins, they drank liquor (F206) but they did not do them (F207). They did not play music (F208). If the funeral is at your house (F209) you cannot attend them (F210). It's even easier (F211) to attend them if the funeral is at some place (F212) not yours (F213).

The reason for 'wie sien ons', I can't say (F214). I think, I don't know (F215). That lady from Orchards did not attend (F216) because the funeral was at her home (F217). The meaning is, if the funeral was elsewhere (F218), she would attend (F219), because, at my granny's funeral, the cooking ladies went to get drinks (F220). She was one of them. The societal groups (F221) also do them, at grandmother funeral, the society (F222) that my aunt belonged to, got drinks. She joined in (F223) with other ladies for 'wie sien ons'. She also had drinks (F224) herself, so she joined because it was not at her home (F225).

Therefore, if the funeral is in your home (F226), you shun 'wie sien ons' (F227). It is because you are still (F228) in pain (F229), they are still (F230) hurting (F231) and

mourning (F232) the death of their loved one (F233). You are giving the person the last respect (F234). Like I did with my younger sister! (F235) The experience (F236) is different (F237) with me going to other peoples (F238) after tears party and when my younger sister passed away (F239). What made me angry (F240) there, I just looked around and nothing made sense (F241). It made me think (F242) how people can be so insensitive (F243) and be so serious (F244) about the 'wie sien ons' (F245) while my sister (F246) has just been buried (F247). It made me imagine (F248) what other people (F249) go through (F250) as well (F251) when a family member (F252) has died. Perhaps (F253) they feel the same way (F254), the very same way (F255) I feel (F256).

I feel (F257) that during that time (F258) people simply don't understand (F259) how I feel (F260). I wonder (F261) how a person can support (F262) and comfort (F263) you and suddenly (F264) he/she is happy (F265) and throwing a party (F266). It is not nice (F267) at all if you (F268) are on the other side (F269). However, it is perhaps (F270) all right if you (F271) are not attached (F272) to the person. It's not okay (F273) but it has developed (F274) to become a norm (F275). Say you try to relax (F276) after the funeral, someone would ask if we could raise money (F277) to buy liquor. That's how (F278) it starts (F279). We would usually be sitting (F280) and someone just starts suggesting (F281) that we should "do something" (F282). People stay all day (F283) at 'wie sien ons', and most they drink (F284) like hell (F285). But some don't drink alcohol (F286). But, in most cases (F287) it's those who drink. I really don't know (F288) if the 'wie sien ons' is organized (F289) by the deceased' family (F290) or not. I don't know (F291) how it all started (F292). I just see it (F293) as it is here (F294). I don't really know (F295) who started it (F296), and how (F297). But some old people (F298) also do it (F299), but with them (F291) it doesn't become a party (F292). With the young ones (F293), it's a party (F294). Some people perceive (F295) 'wie sien ons' in one way (F296), and others perceive (F297) it in another way (F298). People see it differently (F299), some go to 'wie sien ons' even if they did not attend the funeral (F300). The last week funeral I told you about, I did not attend it (F301), my friends called me to join them (F302). I refused (F303). I said I can't go to 'wie sien ons' (F304) when I did not attend the funeral (F305). 'Wie sien ons' for me (F306) did not really make sense

(F307). I think it's better (F308) for me if I attended the funeral (F309) to continue (F310) with 'wie sien ons'. I think (F311), the way old people (F312) handle it is acceptable (F313), they just drink (F314), and they don't play loud music (F315). But young people! (F316) I think (F317) there is nothing wrong (F318) if people just chill (F319) over their drinks (F320). The wrong part (F321) is the party mood part (F322).

The reason for playing music (F323), I don't think (F324) they attend funerals (F325) with the mentality (F326) that they are attending a funeral (F327). They went to a funeral (F328), however, after that (F329) they seem (F330) to forget (F331) too quickly (F332) that they were at a funeral. For most of them (F333) it's not about the funeral! (F334) Maybe (F335) they attend (F336) a funeral knowing (F337) that they will be meeting (F338) so and so (F339), so the funeral is a meeting place (F340). Like at a party (F341), you see (F342) so and so! (F343). The funeral serves (F344) a lot of purposes (F345). I think (F346), it's not about the funeral (F347). It's where I see (F348) so and so (F349).

#### **5.2.1.7 G's story**

Gender: Female  
Age: 53 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Zulu  
Residential area: Tembisa, Kempton Park  
Church affiliation: Zion Apostolic Church

#### **Narration**

After tears party (G1), I wouldn't wish (G2) that people do them (G3), since it's a very painful thing (G4) for the people who just buried (G5) their loved one. The time (G6) after the burial is short (G7) before the people start (G8) of the after tears party (G9). These people will look so happy (F10), while you are still in mourning (F11). I had a child, a young boy who died (G12) recently. Ooh! It was so painful (G13), but

immediately (G13) after we came back, my daughter in law (G14) left a two month old baby with me to booze (G15). Imagine! (G16) The lady (G17) has just lost (G18) her husband! (G19) She was crying (G20) very badly (G21) at the graveside (G22), throwing herself on the ground (G23), so I became shocked (G24) as she left for the after tears party (G25) so hasty (G26). I was hurt (G27) and I was close (G28) to calling her to take her child with her to the after tears party (G29). This after tears thing is breaking my heart (G30) as you are still hurting (G31) and others (G32) show that they have moved on (G33), they are happy (G34).

My son who died was still very young (G35), 21 years old. Why (G36) people make after tears parties, the experience (G37) is not nice (G38). I don't even know (G39), I can't even tell (G40). A lot of things have changed (G41) about the funeral. The original essence (G42) of the funeral is lost (G43). In the past (G44), people used to treat the funeral with respect (G45). However, now (G46) that has changed (G47) a lot (G48). I experienced (G49) the after tears party for the first time (G50) when my son (G51) was buried. I had never (G52) been to one (G53). What I saw (G54) was, it was held at the fifth house (G55) from my house (G56) on the same block (G57), at my son's place (G58). The thing is (G59) they just do the party (G60) without even checking with you (G61).

My son's friends (G62) held an after tears party (G63) without asking me (G64) first. How shocking! (G65) They even played very loud music (G66). I could hear it (G67) from my house (G68). I was very deeply hurt (G69). They drank liquor (G70), they danced (G71), boys and girls (G72), young people (G73) and older people (G74). Even women (G75) of my age (G76) were there. They were drinking liquor (G77). The liquor was free (G78). I had heard (G79) about them on the streets (G80), and I never thought (G81) they'd happen at my house (G82). It was a nasty scene (G83) that I saw, women, young ones in the party mood (G84). I could never imagine (G85) those people earlier (G86) when they were at the graveside (G87), when it was so sad (G88) for me (G89) and now (G90) not even a day has passed (G91), we are still finding ourselves (G92), now these people are dancing (G93), drinking (G94) and doing all sort of things (G95).

I do not believe (G96) this. In the past (G97) things were not like this (G98), currently the rules (G99) are not observed. In Ga-Rankuwa (G99) people don't chat (G100) at the graveside, they still have a lot of respect (G101) for the funeral. In Soweto (G102), someone will just light a cigarette or play music (G103) at the funeral.

That means (G104) they could have forgotten (G105) they were burying (G106) their friend (G107). Imagine (G108) how you'd feel (G109) if it was your own son (G110). They just forgot (G111) so quickly (G112). I think (G113) a lot of things (G114) have changed (G115) now (G116) about the funerals (G117). Things to change (G118) like that perhaps (G119) a part of that (G120) could be because nowadays (G121) death is rife (G122) and common (G123) that people don't seem to be hurt (G124) anymore (G125) when someone dies (G126). Death is no longer (G127) a scary thing (G128). These days (G129), people die (G130) in large numbers (G131), that is why (G132) they are not scared (G133) anymore (G134). You here someone in midweek (G135) asking 'ziwakuphi!' (G136) The person wants to know (G137) where the after party (G138) is held (G139), but meaning who has died (G140). They just take over (G141) the mood (G142) of the funeral (G143) and change (G144) it to a party (G145) because funerals are held weekly (G146) and even a daily occurrence (G147) here in the townships (G148).

In our culture and tradition (G149), what we normally do (G150) when someone has died (G151), we first wait (G152) for ten days (G153) to pass (G154). Thereafter we hold (G155) a small party (G156) called 'digarafo' or the '10 days' gathering (G157). What I know (G158) and have also experienced (G159) is that the 10 days party is held that people (G160) who helped out (G161) before the funeral (G162), cooking, cleaning, digging the grave, setting up a tent and chairs etc. (G163), get to be thanked (G164) with a small festivity (G165) saying we are returning the hoes (re busetsa digarafo) (G166) that were borrowed (G167) from these people (G168).

My belated son's friends asked if I was planning (G169) a ceremony (G170) after a year (G171) that my son was buried. I said no (G172), I am not doing that (G173), I am not

doing (G174) 'after tears' (G175). What came (G176) to my mind (G177) then when they talked about the ceremony (G178), I think (G179), for the fact that they still talk (G180) about him (G181), that day they tried (G182) to forget him (G183) because their T shirts (G184) were written (G185) "life goes on" (G186), but after some time (G187) they remember him again (G188), so they can never (G189) really forget him (G190), it's for a short while (G191). But they do bad things (G192) on an inappropriate day (G193).

I think (G194) it would've been acceptable (G195) if they had spoken to me (G196) and comforted me (G197), and asked (G198) how I was feeling (G199). It would mean (G200) that my son was not only important to me (G201) but also to a lot of people (G202) like his friends, his wife and all others (G203). It's so funny (G204) that at the graveside (G205) people would be singing church songs (G206), the mood somber (G207) and the poor pastor preaches (G208) to comfort (G209) the mourners (G210), but soon thereafter (G211) it becomes (G212) a big party (G213). It's like (G214) you are living in two worlds (G215) and very fast (G216).

The church (G217), I think (G218), does it better (G219), because sometimes (G220) I see after funerals (G221), the church people would stay behind singing (G222) to comfort (G223) you. If the 'wie sien ons' was like that (G224), it would be better (G225), because with the liquor one (G226) you find that young people (G227) do not even dare to think (G228) of other people (G229). As long as they have liquor (G230) nothing else (G231) matters for them. I wish (G232) I had the power (G233) to stop the parties (G234). I think (G235) that is lack of respect (G236).

I think (G237) that people who hold after tears parties (G238) would not like it (G239) if there can be a funeral at their homes (G240). But once it is there (G241) they do not have a choice (G242) because they started it (G243), the process (G244) will just continue (G245). After tears parties will be held (G246) in their homes as well. They too (G247) will have to feel (G248) the pain (G249). They too (G250) may not be comforted (G251), or consoled (G252), they will be hurt (G253) like I was (G254) when my son

died (G255) and there was a party (G256). Many people who attend the after tears (G257) have probably never been confronted (G258) by death (G259) of a loved one (G260), that is, they have not lost (G261) someone (G262) they love dearly (G263). They may not have (G264) experienced death of a loved one (G265) as we have (G266).

#### **5.2.1.8 H's story**

Gender: Female  
Age: 52 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Zulu  
Residential area: Mamelodi, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Dutch Reformed church

#### **Narration**

'Wie sien ons' is held (H1) only because people had a painful week (H2) and now feel they need to relax (H3) and work through (H4) accepting the situation (H5). Some people (H6) don't like this after tears thing (H7) because they feel (H8) that it's a waste of money (H9). Some families (H10) can't afford them (H11). During (H12) the after tears there is alcohol (H13); people drink liquor (H14) at the after tears parties. It's a party as they drink and eat (H15). It's sort of a celebration (H16), that we have buried (H17) and we got over it (H18) and done with the funeral (H19). Funerals have been there (H20) for a long time in the past (H21), but they were never celebrations (H22). Some people (H23) feel (H24) that if there is no after party (H25) it's not nice (H26). In the past (H27) we would go home (H28) after the funeral. These days (H29) people don't leave (H30), they tend to hang around (H31) for drinks (H32). We don't practice (H33) what used to be done (H34) in the past (H35) simply because people find an excuse (H36) to celebrate (H37), I think (H38).

The way I feel (H39) about the after tears! Let me make an example. My mother-in-law (H40) passed away, my friends (H41) who came to the funeral (H42) brought along (H43) their own booze. Then after the funeral they went somewhere (H44) to drink. People are used (H45) to that even if you don't buy them drinks (H46) they can't go to a funeral (H47) and not have the after party (H48). And they would want to eat (H49) something salty (H50) like meat. But I (H51) didn't go (H52). When it's somewhere else (H53) I do go (H54) and join (H55) the party. I'm usually (H56) involved (H57) in the whole thing (H58).

Neighbours usually accommodate (H59) us so we can go for drinks there. Guests habitually bring their own drinks (H60) but are given chair and glasses. We will sit and drink (H61) and have fun (H62). That means the mood (H63) changes (H64) and people are no longer (H65) grieving (H66). I don't have a problem (H67) with the after tears (H68). At the after tears people talk about things (H69) in general. For example, during the world cup (H70), people talked about world cup (H71). And women (H72) would be talking about their husbands and kids (H73), especially about the kids and give one another advices (H74).

In our after tears (H75) we sit as adults (H76) and handle it (H77) as adults (H78). It's not the same (H79) as one of the youth (H80) between 20 and 25 years of age. In case of the youth after tears (H81), the youth play music (H82) too loud (H83), and then fight (H84). So adults sit in the house (H85) and talk (H86). We talk about important things (H87) like rents and stuff. If (H88) talking about the deceased occurs (H89), it is usually minimal (H90). Mostly, on Saturday at the after tears (H91) we will be talking about other things (H92) since during the whole week (H93) we spoke about the deceased (H94). Our (H95) after tears is the kind (H96) that we just sit and talk (H97), it differs slightly (H98) from others (H99) mostly the youth (H100), where they play music (H101) and get drunk (H102). I have never been (H103) one of such youths (H104) since at a young age (H105) I was at a different place (H106). I have seen one at Atteridgeville (H107), which, after the funeral they played loud music (H108) and drank (H109). How I felt (H110) about that one! Our kids (H111) these days (H112) don't have respect

(H113) for anything, you can just see (H114) by the way they misbehave (H115) at the graveyard (H116) and even the way they dress (H116) for the funeral. At the graveyard (H117) they stand at the back (H118) talking (H119), making noise (H120) without respect (H121), making jokes (H122) and also laughing out (H123) loud (H124). All they worry about (H125) is a place to chill at (H126) after the funeral. They start planning (H127) for the after tears (H128) from the graveyard (H129). They don't have respect (H130), more especially when they are drunk (H131).

The bereaved family would know in advance (H132) that people want to hold after tears (H133) after the burial. The after tears parties mostly (H134) happens in the townships (H135), but I have experienced one in a rural area (H136, in Tlaseng in Rustenburg (H137). There (H138) is this lady, a member of our social club who originates from Rustenburg in Tlaseng. Her mother (H139) had passed away (H140). Most people (H141) who were there (H142) were teachers. We thought (H143) that people there (H144) have respect (H145) and would not have 'wie sien ons' (H146), but 'wie sien ons' was organized (H147). When it is practiced in a rural area (H146) is because children grow up (H147) and move to the townships (H148), adopt the township culture (H149) and take it back home (H150) to the villages (H151) where they grew up (H152).

We do not know (H153) exactly where (H154) and how the 'wie sien ons' thing all started (H155) but someone told us (H156) that it all started because people now are living far apart (H157) and the only chance (H158) they get is during funerals (H159). When seeing each other (H160) after a long time (H161) they get a chance (H162) to catch up (H163), do all funny things (H164) thinking (H165) they are not seen (H166) by those who know them (H167) and that's why they call it 'wie sien ons' (H168). It's an Afrikaans expression, "wie sien ons", which means 'who sees us' (H169). People who see each other after a long time (H170) buy drinks (H171) and have fun (H172).

Another thing, some people might not go to the funeral (H173) but will attend 'wie sien ons' (H174). It is called 'after tears' (H175) as it happens immediately (H176) after the funeral (H177), where many people cried (H178). They don't do it (H179) at least after a

week or so (H180) because sometimes families live far apart (H181) from each other, so they would want to finish off (H182) all the family rituals. They do it the same day (H183) as they may never get a chance (H184) to see each other again (H185) in the near future (H186) because of the distance.

Another thing neh, people don't mourn (H187) anymore (H188). For example, should my husband die (H189) I feel the pain the first day (H190). I should mourn (H191) as there will be a part of me missing. Even after the funeral to 10 days (H192) I will still be hurting (H193). Some people do not do it (H194) because they say that they are Christians (H195) and they don't believe (H196) in it. Also, some people don't handle death (H197) the same way (H198). Things (H199) have changed (H200), people go to funerals with clothes to change (H201). They like bringing jeans to wear after the funeral (H202) and play very loud music (H203) in their cars and have drinks. It's what they call the modern life (H204), which has brought lots of illness (H205).

About 'wie sien ons'! I wish people wouldn't drink alcohol there (H206), as they get drunk (H207), they fight and kill each other (H208), especially the youth (H209). To today's (H210) youth (H211) 'wie sien ons' is more of a party to them (H212). It's not like (H213) the olden days (H214), we had after tears in the olden days (H215) but were done with respect (H215). If only there was respected (H216) in the whole thing it would have been better (H217). That's why (H218) I said a funeral is like a celebration (H219), because people celebrate (H220).

In 2007 we were at Phatudi, somewhere in the rural areas (H221), like I said we take things from the township (H222) and bring them to such areas (H223), I was surprised (H224) to see the after tears party happening in a village (H225) and people playing music (H226) from their cars (H227). People there (H228) are not used to that kind of a life style (H229). Things get bad bad bad (H230). 'Wie sien ons' is a coping method (H231). I think people cope (H232) by telling themselves (H233) that maybe tomorrow (H234) it is me (235), so let me have fun (H236).

### 5.2.1.9 I's story

Gender: Female  
Age: 45 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Tsonga  
Residential area: Atteridgeville, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Presbyterian Church

#### Narration

For me (I1), I see 'wie sien ons' as people enjoying someone's funeral (I2) while the family (I3) is in pain (I4). They sometimes (I5) hold these parties not far (I6) from the house of the funeral (I7). They are busy celebrating (I8) while the family (I9) of the deceased (I10) is in pain (I11). Sometimes (I12) the family has no say (I13), I just don't understand (I14) because after the funeral people become very happy (I15). They drink (I16) and get drunk (I17). But in the past (I18) this thing (I19) was not there (I20).

This thing (I21) was started (I22) by the gangsters (I23), at their funerals (I24) when one of them (I25) died (I26) they celebrated (I27). They throw a party (I28), they don't cry (I29) or feel the pain (I30) that's their culture (I31). They have fun (I32) and spin their cars (I33). It's surprising (I34) because now (I35) this is being done (I36) to all funerals (I37) even if you were not a gangster (I38). I think (I39) that to them (I40) it's a celebration (I41), but it's wrong (I42).

At my home (I43) we had a funeral (I44) at home in June 2008. My elder sister (I45) had passed away (I46). After the funeral we stayed put (I47) at home (I48). Other people who were at the funeral went to the after tears a street away (I49) from my house (I50). We couldn't go as we were still (I51) hurt (I52) and comforting (I53) each other at home (I54). It was not nice (I55) at all, I felt (I56) like people were happy (I57), were having fun (I58) as I could hear the music (I59) playing loud (I60). At the 'wie sien ons' people tend to gossip (I61). The thing is, these people are not in your shoes (I62), they are not (I63)

in the same position (I64) as you are (I65), they don't know (I66) how you feel (I67), they didn't experience (I68) what you experienced (I69), so that's why (I70) they do (I71) what they do (I72). They talk (I73) and drink (I74) and they don't even look hurt (I75).

To the family (I76) of the deceased it's painful (I77). However, surprisingly (I78), some family members (I79) also attend the after tears (I80) and it's wrong (I81). It's wrong (I82) because someone is in pain (I83) and they have fun (I84). It is very very sad (I85). They enjoy (I86), and even older people (I87) go there (I88) when they should be guiding (I89) the youth (I90). They tend to also have fun (I91) with their mistresses (I92) and drink (I93). They change (I94) the whole meaning (I95) of a funeral (I96).

The day 'wie sien ons' happens (I97) when I have a funeral (I98) at my house (I99), I will be very hurt (I100). If after the funeral they then insist (I101) on having the after tears (I102), they will do it elsewhere (I103), not in my house (I104). It's mainly (I105) the youth (I106), they buy beers (I107) and start organizing (I108).

In the past (I109) 'wie sien ons' were not there (I110). People did 'after tears' (I111) in a respectable manner (I112) as people like to meet (I113) and catch up (I114) after the funeral. We sit together (I115) and pay our condolences (I116). In the past (I117) after the funeral, (I118) people went home (I119). Then the following week (I120) it's 'digarafo', the '10 days' (I121). They eat, drink and getting drunk (I122) and all this things (I123). That's the after tears festivity (I124). The '10 days' (I125) is the 'after tears' (I126). The family respects (I127) that day as it's the day (I128) they cleanse family (I129), clean (I130) and return (I131) the tools (I132) that were used (I133) at the grave yard (I134). It's the day (I135) they prepare (I136) the African beer (I136) and cook lots of food (I137) then people who were at the funeral (I138) will once again (I139) come to eat and drink (I140) with family. The purpose (I141) of 'wie sien ons' is a way (I142) to thank the people (I143) who attended and helped out (I144) at the funeral. Doing the after tears means that there won't be 'digarafo' ('10 days') any longer (I145). It's no longer (I146) a must (I147) do the 'digarafo'. However, our culture (I148) has changed (I149), people attempt (I150) to do things (I151) differently (I152) and it's sad (I153).

Some places (I154) in the rural (I155) people still (I156) follow their culture (I157), they wait for the '10 days' (I158). People from townships (I159) have lost culture (I160). It will never be the same (I161) again. I've never been (I162) to the after tears (I163). After the meal I go home (I164), I don't attend (I165) the after tears. I asked (I166) them what happens (I167) there, they said it's men and women misbehaving (I168) doing funny things (I169), drinking and eating (I170). They finish very late (I171) as they are drinking (I172). It is possible (I173) for them to stay overnight (I174) until the next day. I hear (I175) that they would only leave when they have finished (I176) all their money (I177). The after tears are out of control (I178), the time (I179) they do them, the purpose (I180) they do them. I am not against them (I181) if only they would wait (I182) for 10 days (I183). 'Wie sien ons' is an Afrikaans word that means 'who sees us' (I184). But they don't hide (I185), they do them in public (I186), other people watching (I187). The elders (I188) are generally not happy (I189) about it, however they can do nothing (I190) as the youth (I191) lack respect (I192). In some rural areas (I193) it's very strict (I194). If you do 'wie sien ons' (I195) then the villagers report (I196) you and you will be punished (I197).

The after tears practice is completely wrong (I198), another problem (I199) is the people's misbehaviour (I200). They don't have respect (I201) anymore. I wish (I202) things can go back (I203) to the way they used to be (I204) and respect (I205) the funeral again. Even the family (I206) sometimes (I207) doesn't mind (I208), they say what's gone is gone (I209). They must show respect (I210) and mourn (I211) to show that they have lost someone (I212) close (I213), so they must mourn (I214) and show respect (I215). The new generation (I216) brought all changes (I217), in our generation (I218) we respected (I219) funerals. They must do the same (I220) and show respect (I221) despite the kind of person (I222) the deceased was (I223), and know (I224) that there is time (I225) for fun (I226) and time for pain (I227).

### 5.2.1.10 J's story

Gender: Male  
Age: 34 years  
Race/Ethnicity: African/Venda  
Residential area: Mamelodi, Pretoria  
Church affiliation: Roman Catholic Church

#### Narration

In my Venda culture (J1) it is the cleansing (J2). The cleansing (J3) of bad luck! (J4) It is the cleansing (J5) of bad luck (J6) from a dead person (J7). At the cleansing (J8) they make the African beer (J9). In the townships the after parties are called the '10 days' (J10). I have experienced (J11) that in the townships. At home (J12) in Venda there are no (J13) such things. In Venda after the funeral we prepare the African beer (J14) to thank (J15) the people who were digging the grave (J16) by giving them the beer (J17) on the same day (J18).

In Venda, from the graveyard people go back to eat and drink (J19), but not like people from the townships (J20), they do not party (J21), and no 'wie sien ons' (J22). On how I know (J23) of after tears, I saw it at my father's funeral (J24). After my father's funeral neighbours (J25) donated (J26) R5.00 of condolences. 'Wie sien ons' was then held (J27) in silence, and without booze (J28). On the people who drink and celebrate (J29) after the funeral, I saw that it at my aunt's funeral (J30). People stayed behind (J31) to drink (J32). It wasn't a party (J33). In our culture (J34) when there is a funeral (J35) around or nearby (J36) we are not allowed (J37) to play loud music (J38). If someone around dies (J39) when we have already set a date (J40) for party or a wedding (J41), the wedding will have to be postponed (J42) to the following week since there is a funeral.

In the rural area (J43) they still respect (J44) culture (J45). But if my wife or child dies now (J46), I won't allow 'wie sien ons' (J47), that's how I was taught (J48), my staying at Mamelodi (J49) won't change me (J50). I know (J51) though, that my permission or opinion (J52) on 'wie sien ons' does not matter (J53) as they just do it (J54) if they want (J55). I'd rather hear (J55) that there are 'wie sien ons' three houses (J56) from my house. I will be very sad (J57) and hurt (J58) because I will have just lost a loved one (J59). That will show me (J60) that they don't respect (J61) my feelings (J62) and they don't know (J63) how I feel (J64). It will hurt (J65) me if I were to hear music playing (J66) loud (J67) while I'm in pain (J68). It means that these people don't know (J69) how I feel (J70) and they don't respect (J71) my loved one (J72). We were taught (J73) to respect (J74) a dead person. In the past (J75) this after tears party was not there (J76). I think (J77) they were introduced as people these days have too much money (J78). One can never (J79) have a party (J79) when he/she doesn't have money (J80). About 'wie sien ons', people show no respect (J81) for the funeral. They should not play loud music (J82) when one is in pain (J83).

## 5.2.2 Group narratives

### 5.2.2.1 K's story

Number of participants: 8 (5 females and 3 males)

#### Deliberations

I think 'Di wie sien ons' emerged (K1) due the fact that people do not visit (K2) each other, a chance (K3) comes when there is something like a funeral (K4). We then wait (K5) for a long time (K6) before we meet (K7), it is a chance (K8) to meet (K9) as relatives (K10) including those staying far away (K11). During that time we get a chance (K12) to meet (K13). So after the funeral when everything clears out (K14), we get a chance (K15) to meet (K16) and catch up (K17). In the process (K18), as the day goes by (K19), you get hungry (K20) again, we eat again and drink (K21), finish off the leftovers (K22) from the funeral lunch, those who drink alcohol (K23) could do that (K24). This was created (K25) because people hardly have time to meet (K26) and socialize (K27) with friends and relatives (K28), so a funeral, and in fact the 'wie sien ons' is a chance (K29).

To add, 'wie sien ons' is not only (K30) for family, it's for friends and colleagues (K31). As we do not always find time (K32) to meet and get to know one another (K33), a funeral gives us a chance (K34), especially if it is of a colleague (K35), we get a chance (K36) to socialize (K37) as colleagues during 'after tears' (K38) otherwise at work (K39) we cannot see each other (K40) because of work dynamics (K41). A funeral is a chance (K42).

To define 'after tears', it is self-explanatory. 'Wie sien ons' means no one sees us or is seeing us (K43). At the 'wie sien ons', we do everything (K44) we can (K45), like drinking, unfaithfulness (K46) with regard to marriages (K47), everything at the 'wie sien ons'. What we try to do (K48) is to keep everyone together (K49), we have societal

clubs (K50), they come knowing (K51) that after the funeral there will be something like drinks (K52) for them. Through the 'wie sien ons' we strengthen (K53) and comfort (K54) the bereaved, those that have lost their loved ones. Now with the 'wie sien ons' (*who sees us*), or 'niemand sien ons' (*no one sees us*), it is the after tears (K55), meaning we wipe off our tears (K56), we even get boyfriends (K57) there, everything happens (K58) there. We wipe off tears (K59). Everything! (K60) Some (K61) I cannot even mention (K62).

'Wie sien ons' is an informal (K63) setting, it removes (K64) the emotional pain (K65). What happens (K66) at the 'wie sien ons', no one will ever say (K67) there was a funeral (K68). I remember one funeral at Tembisa (K69), the amount of liquor (K70) that was there (K71) you'd believe (K72) that the people who bought it (K73) don't have money anymore (K74). The brothers (K75) of the deceased had bought the liquor, very expensive liquor (K76). I think it is a situation (K77) whereby one would do anything (K78) to wipe off tears (K79) for having lost a sibling (K80). When stressed (K81) you get comforted (K82) by anything (K83) that could comfort you, not necessarily rational ones (K84). Perhaps (K85) those are the things that comfort us (K86) when we do them (K87).

Perhaps (K88) again, we don't want to force (K89) the bereaved family to buy us liquor or anything (K90). It mainly depends (K91) on the kind of family (K92). Some families (K93) don't approve of after tears (K94). However (K95), mourners can organize (K96) as friends (K97), look for a place on the side (K98), pop up some money (K99) and buy whatever we want (100). There will be something (K101) happening (K102). We will talk (K103) about the deceased, in a lighter mood (K104). It even helps to comfort (K105) the family members (K106) who are still (K107) worked up (K108). As we laugh about it (K109), we make it easy (K110) for him/her to cope (K111) with the loss, even for us (K112) who knew (K113) the deceased. We make him to pass (K114), we want him to pass (K115), a way we say 'pass' (K116) and we will accept that 'you are gone' (K117).

To add, sometimes (K118) we do the after party on the basis (K119) of the kind of lifestyle (K120) that the deceased was living. If he/she was a party animal (K121), then the 'after funeral party' will be like that (K122), there will be loud music, dancing etc. (K123). Sometimes (K124) at the graveside (K125), or even immediately after burial (K126), the 'after tears' party may start (K127) right there (K128). If it happens there (K129), sometimes (K130) when a person was a gangster (K131) who got killed (K132), other group members would pitch (K133) and shoot guns (K134) at the graveside (K135), play loud music (K136), spin cars (K137) and so on, which is their way (K138) of 'wie sien ons' (K139).

I think (K140) the 'wie sien ons' has in the past (K141) been different (K142), it's just that nowadays (K143) it has been turned around (K144) to suit the times (K145). It only depends (K146) on the kind of company (K147) you keep (K148), who you associate (K149) with. It depends (K150) on who you are with (K151). When you go for 'wie sien ons' (K152), you prepare properly (K153), pack drinks (K154) in a cooler bag etc. There will be drinks (K155), and we do everything (K156) there. At other funerals there are no 'wie sien ons' (K157). From the type of person (K158) who has passed away (K159) one can sometimes (K160) be able to predict (K161) the kind of people (K162) you'd meet (K163). You would usually know (K164) who would be there (K165). You know who will be at the 'wie sien ons' (K166). Sometimes you know there will be so and so (K167), you can be comfortable (K168) since if you don't have money (K169), the people you know (K170) can buy you drinks (K171). At other times you must be careful (K172) of who will be there (K173), that is, who will see you (K174) there.

If you have to attend a funeral at your hometown (K175), where you grew up (K176), you make sure (K177) that you keep the standard (K178). If you expect (K179) to meet (K180) people you grew up with (K181), you set the standard (K182) on presenting yourself (K183), you look smart (K184) because you know after it's 'wie sien ons' (K185). You can even buy new clothes (K186). When you don't have money (K187) you can use credit (K188), rather wear them with labels on (K189). This is to make sure (K190) you are making (K191) a good impression (K192) about yourself. That is the

time (K193) to show off (K194) to the people you went to school with (K195). You can even take extra money (K196) if you have (K197) to buy drinks for those who have no money to buy them (K198), just to show off (K199). If you have a better boyfriend (K200) who drives a nice car (K201), you have a chance (K202) to show off (K203).

'Wie sien ons' does not only focus on people (K204) who drink liquor (K205). It's also about socializing (K206). I go to a funeral knowing I will meet so and so (K207). I will have a cold drink (K208) while others drink their liquor (K209), no problem (K210). Everyone (K211) is welcome (K212) even those who don't drink liquor (K213). All are welcome (K214). Still, the 'wie sien ons' gets to be attended mostly (K215) by people who drink liquor (K216). But, all of us (K217) do attend 'wie sien ons'; it does not have to be (K218) only those who drink liquor (K219). Sometimes (K220) you may drink liquor sitting next the cold drinkers (K221). It can be boring (K222), but there is no problem (K223), you can go ahead and drink (K224) when you are with them. So all of us (K225) go to 'wie sien ons'. I don't have a problem (K226) at all. I go to 'wie sien ons' (K227) carrying my cooler bag with cold drinks (K228). We sit there for a very long time (K229), until we go hungry again (K230), and again (K231). The party goes on for a very long time (K232).

Another issue is, we spend good time (K233). It's also not nice (K234) to leave people who are mourning (K235) immediately (K236) after the funeral. It can be very lonely (K237) for them. We keep the mourning family (K238) company (K239). In that case they won't feel lonely (K240) after the funeral, is that why (K241) we have 'wie sien ons'.

'Wie sien ons' is important (K242). The extreme pain (K243) that the family felt (K244) during the funeral (K245) comes to an end at that moment (K246), just after the burial (K247). While there are people around (K248) it has to come to an end (K249). Those who are with the chief mourner will be chatting (K250) and laughing (K251). That itself (K252) could be defined as the 'wie sien ons'. When my husband (K254) passed away, I as chief mourner (K253) sat in the bedroom, people came in and went out (K254) of the bedroom for their condolences. I had my own beer (K255), with my friends (K256), but

they poured it in a kettle (K257) so as not to make it too obvious (K258) that I was drinking liquor (K259). In a tea pot was to disguise liquor for tea. It helped (K260) me to forget (K261). When with my friends (K262), we would be laughing (K263) and chatting (K264) and drinking alcohol (K265).

When my husband was still alive (K266), he used to tell me to get drunk (K267) the way I wanted (K268). But when he died (K269) people and relatives (K270) came and wanted to oppress me (K271). When he was still alive (K272) that was our lifestyle (K273), when something bothered me (K274) he bought me drinks (K275). We did that together (K276) and that was the way to soothe me (K277) when something troubled me (K278). Now he is no more (K279) to give me that (K280). During funeral preparations, in-laws and others who didn't know how we lived (K281) were there (K282). To respect them (K283), I poured my beer in the tea pot (K284). It was tea (K285) for them. I did that as a sign (K286) of respect (K287) for just that time (K288) until they go (K289). I have to respect them (K290), but once they leave my house (K291) I can go back (K292) to my lifestyle (K293). That is how (K294) we come about pouring liquor in the tea pot (K295). But if among them some smell the beer and say so (K296), he/she will get (K297) what he was looking for (K298). I'd have tried (K299) to show them some respect (K300), but now he/she would have moved the boundaries (K301).

'Wie sien ons' helps us to cope (K302). In some cultures (K303), after the funeral there is a case of beers (K304) for the in-laws, for the elderly, etc. (K305). This is part of the preparations for the funeral (K306). There are usually funds (K307) put aside for liquor (K308). It's part of the grocery preparations (K309). Every case of beer (K310) belongs to a clan or so (K311).

The 'wie sien ons'! People tend to differ (K312) in their attitudes (K313), some allow them (K314), and others don't (K315). It's important (K316) to acknowledge (K317) and respect (K318) other people's cultures (K319) and belief systems (K320). What one needs (K321) is to put this on a scale (K322) to accommodate others (K323) in order to

see what suits (K324) all. At one point, a taxi driver (K325), who was a member of the Zion Christian Church (K326), passed away. According to church culture (K327), people had to sing church songs (K328) and dance (K329) church rhythm (K330). The taxi drivers' culture (K331) is that, after burial, they usually undress (K332), drink (K333) and dance (K334). On the day of the burial, the taxi drivers started their 'wie sien ons' party (K335) at the graveside (K336) after the pastor and the church finished (K337) with the ceremony. They would also put on loud music (K338), became half-naked (K339), drunk (K340) and danced (K341) at the graveside. There was a huge conflict (K342) over what the taxi drivers (K343) did as the church accused (K344) taxi drivers of not respecting (K345) the funeral. The taxi drivers replied that as church people did what their culture (K346) expected from them, they should also leave them (K347) to perform their cultural ritual (K348) as taxi drivers (K349). They stated that the deceased, as part of the culture (K350) of taxi drivers (K351), also did that (K352) at other taxi drivers' funerals (K353), so they must also do the same for him (K354).

It may not necessarily (K355) start at the graveside. As they have already explained about the 'wie sien ons', if a gangster (K356) is buried, their culture (K357) requires that they shoot bullets (K357) at the graveside. They'd go and steal a car (K358) for the deceased; it will be brought to the graveside, spun and burnt at that time during the funeral. If the deceased got shot (K359), then they do the 21gun salute (K360), and thereafter they will go for the 'wie sien ons' (K361). For 'wie sien ons' differ (K362) due to differing beliefs (K363) and differing cultures (K364). Some people may not allow them (K364) due to religious orientation (K365). In a religious family (K366), they may not allow a party (K367), even if you (K368) may not have a problem (K369) with the 'wie sien ons', for the fact that your family has a religion (K370) as a culture (K371), it may not be possible (K372) to have 'wie sien ons' (K372). We will have to (K373) organize it (K374) somewhere out (K375) there in the streets (K376), not at your home (K377).

Differences (K378) in conducting 'wie sien ons' (K379) is the reason (K380) it can't be openly acceptable (K381). But, we won't feel good (K382) if we don't say our last

goodbyes (K383) in that manner (K384). If I attend such parties (K385), my kids always know that if I attend a funeral (K386) I might come back late (K387). Then when I am dead (K388), there will be such a party (K389) and they may not have a problem (K390) with that as they would know that it has been my lifestyle (K391). A person will be followed by his deeds (K392). However, if your family has a different culture (K393) like they are church people (K394) then I guess (K395) friends would not want to hold 'wie sien ons' in your parents' home (K396), they have to find a house or a place (K397) out there in order to respect (K398) them.

Different people (K399) with different belief systems (K400) have their ways (K401) of having 'wie sien ons'. If my mother goes to church (K402), the church members will have a way (K403) of holding their own 'wie sien ons' (K404) to support (K405) one another. If there is a church band (K406), the band will continue to sing (K407) and drum in and out of the house (K408) after the funeral. It's their own way (K409) of having 'wie sien ons'.

In each family (K410), it depends (K411) on the lifestyle (K412) that the deceased was living. If he/she was a 'wie sien ons' person (K413), there will be people (K414) doing the same (K415). If the deceased was a church person (K416), church people will usually hang around (K417) singing and drumming (K418) after the funeral. In the house (K419) too they will behave (K420) as their lifestyle (K421) calls. The thing is we have different ways (K422) of comforting (K423) our friends and families during bereavement (K424). Everyone (K425) will be comforted (K426) differently (K427).

The funeral party is not only about drinking (K428). It mainly depends (K429) on the kind of people (K430) you find at the funeral. If I attend, say a funeral in Jo'burg and I find people I know (K431) and have not seen for a long time (K432), I will obviously hang out (K433) with them (K435) because we don't usually meet (K436). So, I can also mingle (K437) with my friends (K438) who don't drink and who drink. Some drink liquor (K439), other drink cold drinks (K440), and so on, we are different (K441) with different believe systems (K442). You actually don't go there (K443) having 'wie sien ons' in

mind (K444). You can start being few (K445) and end up accommodating everyone (K445) who wants to be there (K446), the circle gradually grows (K447) with time as people meet and chat (K448). It's possible that you can all sit (K449) in one circle even if you do not all know one another (K450). It's thus possible to be one big group (K451) of people who do not know one another (K452). I know you (K453), someone knows the other (K453), and so on. And it's not like everybody that is there went there for liquor (K454).

As I understand it (K455), there are no specific people (K456) for the 'wie sien ons'. It depends (K457) on who you socialize with (K458). For instance, with people who drink alcohol (K459), the kind of people (K460) that will be at the 'wie sien ons' does not necessarily exclude (K461) those who are not their type (K462). On 'wie sien ons' in general, you can't all attend the 'wie sien ons' (K463). Anyone (K463) who feels like attending (K464) the 'wie sien ons' at that particular time is welcome (K465). You attend at a given time (K466), it's not something you have to do (K467) all the time (K468). You do not have to go (K469) all the time (K470). It also doesn't matter who passed away (K471).

You do not have to plan (K472) for 'wie sien ons'. Sometimes you get joined (K473) by people whom you have seen in a long time (K474), so the circle grows and grows (K475) as people get to join you (K476). You may not plan it (K477) beforehand. For instance, if it's your colleague (K478) who died (K479), you may gather there (K480) after the funeral, and there might be another group gathering (K481) of different people (K482) somewhere and another group and so forth. Sometimes it gets to be which company you prefer (K483) to be with at that time (K484), you see!

I for one have never had (K485), but I think I won't have a problem (K486) if the people felt after a funeral that they should have some time to chat (K487) over drinks. In addition to that, if you don't normally attend (K488) the 'wie sien ons', you may not have a problem (K489). It depends (K490) on who has died, where. Sometimes if it's your mother (K491) that has died, and you push (K492) for the 'wie sien ons', the family may

feel that whoever forced (K493) to have 'wie sien ons' was unfair (K494) since the other family members do not believe (K495) in the 'wie sien ons'! In families, some things happen (K496) without the parents having to approve (K497) or give permission (K498), you see something happening (K499). Even if I don't like them (K500) you end up accommodating them (K501) for peace sake (K502), as long as the people don't engage in stupid fights (K503). After, you just say thanks for going (K504). Family members have different perceptions (K505) of one another as of different belief systems (K506). If I don't drink alcohol (K507) then I may see the other member that drinks alcohol as dirty (K508).

After a funeral it's a nice way of getting to know people (K509) better. If it's in your home it's also an opportunity (K510) to thank (K511) them for coming. For me (K512) it will mean a lot (K513) if they can stay behind (K514). However, if they can leave too early (K515), it won't sit well with me (K516). I will ask myself questions (K517) like do they like me (K518), will we ever have a relationship (K519). I might also start to worry (K520) when I compare (K521) them with other funerals I went to (K522) where they were there (K523) and they stayed behind (K524). Am I the funny person? (K525)

In essence (K526), some mourners tend to feel worried (K527) if people disperse immediately (K528) after the funeral. I think (K529) it also helps you to cope (K530), gives you a chance (K531) to forget your pain (K532) for a while (K533), and a chance (K534) to relieve stress (K535). Even if the pain comes back (K536), it may not come back with the same intensity (K537). So if they can leave too early (K538), you may be lonely (K539) and think too much (K540) about the deceased (K541), be in your own sorrow (K542). So if they are there (K543), you may forget (K544) about the deceased and move on (K545).

In fact, people who stick around help (K546) to cope (K547). If they leave, the house will be all quiet (K548) and then you may go back to your sorrows (K549). If they stay around for some time (K550) you forget (K551) about your loss (K552). Even if they

leave after the 'wie sien ons' (K553) your pain (K554) may not be the same (K555) as before.

On 'wie sien ons' it doesn't matter (K556) whether it's an older person (K557) that has died or a young person (K558), there will be an after party (K559). If I give an example, say, the funeral is for a pastor (K560) who has died in the family. The pastor's kids are not pastors (K561), their friends will come over (K562) and they will have their 'wie sien ons' in the house next door (K563). They will be next door and not in their home (K564) if at all they want to respect (K565) church culture (K566) and the belief system (K567). And these things happen (K568) because every child has his own lifestyle (K569) and his own people whom he hangs out with (K570). So each of them (K571) will have a different group (K572) of friends who will be visiting.

In addition, the 'wie sien ons' also helps (K573) in this way. In your area where you live if there is no tavern (K574), once the tent (K575) is pitched for the funeral (K576), there will be a tavern immediately (K577). This will serve the purpose (K578) of putting people together (K579) in one place. For instance, if you have a club or society (K580) of people, you can always find them a special place (K581) where they can hang around in the process when they have come to support (K582) you.

At my mother's family, my aunts and uncles like liquor (K583), I know my mother's aunt is a born again Christian (K584) but she's the only one (K585), the rest drink liquor (K586). Although she's not into liquor (K587), she seems to enjoy their company a lot (K588) since, as they drink and dance (K589), she will always be around to watch and enjoy (K590) seeing them do those things (K591). They do their 'wie sien ons' in the house (K592), they use the same room (K593) where the coffin would usually be placed (K594) for the next day of burial. This aunt would be watching her children dancing (K595), old women dancing and drinking (K596). You would see she will have a good time (K597) with them (K598) because it will be very difficult (K599) if she has to go home (K600) after the funeral. She doesn't drink alcohol (K601) as she is born again, but she will be entertained (K602) by this group of relatives, old women who would be

all over the show (K603) with their drinks and their dancing (K604). They would talk (K605) about their past (K606) and laughing together (K607), they like jazz (K608), we will be watching and laughing (K609).

I recently gained 'wie sien ons' experience (K610) at the funeral of a guy from a nearby township (K611). This guy lived jazz (K612), always played jazz (K613) and attended jazz festivals (K614). He passed on (K615). At his funeral instead of singing church songs (K616), they played jazz all the way (K617), even at the graveside (K618). They did nothing relating to church (K619) because he was never in church (K620), he never believed in church (K621). Speeches and everything that was done (K622) there was accompanied by jazz music (K623). On our way to the graveside there were big hovers playing jazz throughout (K624).

There's also another funeral (K625) I attended recently, for a church (K626) I cannot mention (K627). The belief of the church (K628) is that people are not supposed to cook (K629) for a funeral. It's not our black culture (K630), so I don't understand (K631) why that church is like that. This woman cooked (K632) because she thought of the people who would be coming from far (K633) to attend the funeral. You know what happened, because people know that she attends that church (K634), they went to the graveside, after they went home (K635) and never ate her food (K636). They knew that she never eats at other people's funerals (K637) because of her religious belief (K638), they also thought that they were respecting (K639) her beliefs (K640) by not eating (K641) at her home (K642). She wouldn't have cooked (K643), I don't know what she was thinking (K644) because she knows (K645) she should not have cooked (K646). Neighbours assisted with the cooking (K647), thinking that perhaps (K648) she was preparing for those who will come from far away (K649). Returning home from the graveside, we washed our hands (K650) and we went home. Later on after everybody went home (K651), we went in as neighbours to check if things are still fine (K652), we found her sitting there disappointed (K652). She told us and we told her that people thought you were not preparing food for them (K653) because they know (K654) that your religion forbids (K655) that. Even the people from her church didn't eat (K656) the food.

If it was not due to the religious beliefs (K657), under those circumstances (K658), there would be 'wie sien ons' where the people will eat the food with peace (K659), and not waste them (K660). We wouldn't even care who cooked the food (K661), we will just eat the food. So her church restricts (K662) her in a lot of things (K663). Even her kids are not allowed to cry (K664), they don't go to after tears (K665). If they were part of the general group we would go eat and stay with them (K666).

Our religious beliefs (K667) sometimes (K668) restrict us (K669). I will tell you about my family (K670). My brother is a so-called born again Christian (K671), he does not believe (K672) in cultural practices (K673) like unveiling of tombstones (K674). Their culture (K675) is they don't believe (K676) in the unveiling of tombstones (K677). One time we planned an unveiling (K678) for our parents (K679). He refused (K680) to participate (K681). We put money aside (K682) as we were preparing (K683) and he was not involved (K684). Then a week before (K685) the unveiling (K686), perhaps (K687) he thought about it (K688) and felt guilty (K689). He offered to buy cattle (K690). To my amazement (K691), at the occasion (K692) most people (K693) who were there (K694) were people from his church (K695), and also included the pastor (K696). The unveiling was done as planned, and was followed but the 'wie sien ons' (K697). The unveilings had plenty of liquor (K698). There are those from church (K699) who drink (K700) but does that behind closed doors (K701). They will usually be put in separate rooms (K702). Everyone was wondering (K703) as to what they wanted (K704) at the unveiling because they were not supposed (K705) to be there (K706), let alone drinking! (K707).

After the funeral in Tembisa, we went to fetch our parents, you could see (K708) that the bereaved family was starting to feel lonely (K709) as everybody came to fetch their loved ones (K710), uncles, aunts leave. In most cases (K711) people who drink liquor (K713) can remove the emotional pain (K714). Attending the 'wie sien ons' comfort (K715) people even if they don't drink alcohol (K716), they just have to be there (K717) to watch and laugh (K718).

In March last year my sister (K719) passed away. She used to drink (K720) a lot, she even had the 'liquor' face (K721). Her death made a huge impact (K722) to a point that I got ill (K723). Her friends got very drunk (K724) before and after (K725) the funeral. It was such fun (K726), the funeral was turned into a joke (K727). These friends would sing (K728) different songs (K729) at the same time (K730). It was confusion (K731). The way her friends were dressed (K730) reminded me (K731) of her (K732), just the way she was (K733). There was simply no order (K734). The 'wie sien ons' basically lasted (K735) until the following week (K736) on Tuesday. My sister's friends stayed at home (K737) with us. We prepared 25 litres of traditional beer for them (K738); they also went to buy beers (K739). The traditional beer (K740) was finished on Saturday. The next morning (Sunday) (K741) they were still busy with the chores (K742), washing the pots, cleaning of the house, sweeping the floors and so on. We cooked (K743) with a very big pot (K744) to include them (K745). We could not tell them (K746) to go home (K747) because we were very tired (K748) and lonely (K749) while they brought fun (K750) and were very helpful (K751) with the chores (K752). We were too tired (K753), so the 'wie sien ons' went on and on and on . . . (K754), we bought them food (K755) and drinks (K756). For me (K756) when they were around (K757), I felt like (K758) my sister was still alive (K759), but at the same time thinking (K760), if she was here (K761) she would be joining (K762) them, she would also be wearing (K763) high-heeled shoes (K764) and make up (K765). I felt (K766) her in them (K767). For me (K768) it really felt nice (K769) to have them around (K770). I missed her (K771) much, I wished (K772) she did not die (K773) then (K774).

'Wie sien ons' are conducted differently (K775), by different people (K776), there's really no formula (K777), I feel (K778) that the way things are (K779) at present it's fine (K780). It mainly depends (K781) on the lifestyle (K782) you live (K783) as a family (K784). I feel (K785) that when we decide (K786) to do 'wie sien ons' we should not (K787) make the family to contribute (K788). Sometimes (K789) we do things that tend to tax (K790) the family (K791). If we do 'wie sien ons' (K792) it should not be a family burden (K793). You may find that there is death (K794) in a family, the relatives not willing to help financially (K795). However, you see the uncle buying liquor (K796) with

the money (K797) he is supposed (K798) to be helping (K799) the struggling family with (K800). He doesn't contribute (K801). We should start by helping (K802) our families before we think of 'wie sien ons' (K803). Some people have the budget (K804) for the 'wie sien ons' without thinking of helping (K805) out first.

We are saying let's take care (K806) of first things first (K807) before (K808) we can have fun (K809). Then (K810) we can have our own (K811). Let not expect (K812) too much from the bereaved family (K813). If we want to do a party (K814) after the funeral, let it be our own thing (K815) and let us not put pressure (K816) on the bereaved family. We do not have to demand (K817) that the family must provide liquor (K818). If I do have money (K819) I will buy my own drinks (K820). If I am with someone (K821) who has no money (K822) to buy drinks and I have (K823), I will buy for them (K824). So we should always (K825) make it a point (K826) that we do not create unnecessary burden (K827) to other people.

You see! It looks like (K828) as we continue (K829) to attend the 'wie sien ons' (K830), we also get educated (K831) to look after one another (K832), and not to become a burden (K833) to other people (K834). For instance if I know (K835) that I do not have the money (K836) to buy drinks, I should be able (K837) to tell a friend (K838) on time (K839) so that we can make a plan (K840) or else create an excuse (K841) not to attend (K842) the party, just a lousy one (K843) so that you may not become a burden (K844) to anyone. If you did not make preparations (K845) in advance (K846) for your drinks (K847), rather do not go (K848) for 'wie sien ons' (K849). And if you are lucky (K850) to find a boyfriend (K851) he can buy a few drinks (K852). But you should then give him wrong telephone numbers (K853) because you only want drinks and nothing else (K854). After the party, you are done with him (K855). It was just for convenience! (K856).

The other thing (K857) that I feel is important (K858); I don't know (K859) whether to call this 'wie sien ons' or what. In most cases (K860) when there is a funeral, if you have a local funeral club (K861), a group of people called a society (K862), who cook and

wash dishes and pots (K863). After a week or two (K864), that person will organize (K865) food and drinks and call the club (K866) to say thank you (K867) to them, there will be a party (K868). So I don't know (K869) whether that would be 'wie sien ons' (K870) and those who are close to you (K871) will be able to reflect on the funeral (K872), when others who are not that close (K873) will be getting drunk there (K874).

But I don't think (K875) 'wie sien ons' is something that will stop now (K876) or in the near future (K877). My experience (K878) is that my 18 year old (K879) went to a funeral at her friend's home when her mother's friend passed away. I do not really know (K880) if she drinks, but she went to the funeral and came back only at 6 o' clock in the evening (K881). When I asked her (K882) where she was (K883), she said that there was no after tears the funeral (K884) and they felt they should stay behind (K885) to support (K886) their friend (K887). So it goes from us (K888) to our children (K889), the younger generation (K890) are now aware (K891) that they have to support (K892) their friends in that way (K893) in the event of a funeral. They realize (K894) that it's important (K895) to offer support (K896) and that is the kind of support (K897) you can offer (K898).

Sometimes (K898) if you take a closer look (K899), it's not always (K900) about drinking liquor (K901) or doing funny things (K902). It depends (K903) on your lifestyle (K904). If you were a gangster (K905), when you die, group members will do 'wie sien ons' (K906) as per your lifestyle (K907). If you were a church person (K908), church members (K909) will do likewise (K910) at your funeral and if you drank liquor (K911), at your funeral they will also do likewise (K912). There is no fixed description or definition (K913) of what after funeral parties are. It is just an informal gathering (K914), sometimes planned (K915), and sometimes not (K916). I also thought (K917) that as a culture (K918) in urban areas (K919), I realized that it is also done (K920) in some rural areas (K921).

I also gathered (K922) that 'wie sien ons' have positive elements (K923). For example, it's not discriminating (K924) anyone and no one is forced (K925) to go. But it gives a

very relaxed atmosphere (K926). It also offers people including the bereaved a time out of pain (K927). It can be held in the family (K928) or if it's an inconvenience, outside (K929).

There is also respect (K930) where you draw a line between having fun (K931). In most cases (K932) people have a party away from the deceased's home (K933). We respect people's religious beliefs (K934). A common purpose (K935) is that it serves several socialization functions (K936) such as reuniting, socializing, networking, getting to know one another better and finding long lost relationships. It also serves to comfort (K937). If people are around (K938), it's easy to feel better (K939) at just knowing (K940) that the people sympathize (K941) with me, you think they know my pain (K942), for that time (K943), you forget about your pain (K944). It may help family and friends to cope (K945) with the pain of loss for that time (K946). This person had social relationships (K947), more than anything. For the family (K948), it helps them to pass time (K949). So it helps (K950) us to maintain strong ties (K951).

In other cultures (K952) we understand (K953) that after the funeral we have to leave family to give them space (K954). Black people (K955) are naturally communal people (K956), we do not know what space is (K957), we are very supportive (K958). We like to belong (K959) as black people (K960).

The 'wie sien ons' is a nice culture (K961), no one is shut out (K962). You are allowed to do anything (K963) there, you can cry (K964), you can swear (K965), do anything unlike other cultures (K966). In some churches when a member has died (K967) you are not allowed to cry (K968). What I like (K969) about the 'wie sien ons' is that, they allow a free atmosphere (K970). For those who attend churches that do not allow crying (K971) at funerals, the 'wie sien ons' is a useful alternative (K972) during the time of grief (K973). We will comfort you (K974), we will be with you (K975). You can do anything (K976) that feels right (K977) for you (K978). Thus, where environments forbid (K979) to do certain things (K980), 'wie sien ons' is a correct environment (K981), and no one judges you (K982), but we will support you (K983). There is something that I

also like (K984) about 'wie sien ons'. We can also sing hymns (K985) there. Say, maybe you are emotionally overwhelmed (K986) and you want to cry (K987) and at church (K988) they will tell you not to cry (K989) and you are overwhelmed (K990). At the 'wie sien ons' (K991) we will allow you to try (K992), sing (K993) and thereafter you should be okay (K994).

Some things are like that (K995), we can't feel the impact of emotional pain (K996) the same way (K997), so if you are restricted not to cry (K998), it's difficult (K999). We may not cry for the same reasons (K1000). If you don't cry (K1001) when you should (K1002) you may even have to go to a clinic (K1003) because of the emotional pain (K1004). So if you are at the 'wie sien ons' (K1005) you are free (K1006), even to speak about the deceased (K1007), cry (K1008) and laugh (K1009).

Another thing (K1010), in-laws (K1011) can also give you a lot of trouble (K1012). Having to put up with all (K1013) that makes you think (K1014) that what you need (K1015) is good company (K1016), the 'wie sien ons' company! (K1017)

### **5.2.2.2 L's story**

Number in group: 14 participants (8 females and 5 males)

Church members

#### **Deliberations**

I think (L1) that the after tears has always been around (L2) from the past (L3). The purpose (L4) was intended to be therapeutic (L5) particularly for the bereaved (L6). When everybody leaves after the funeral, there are usually those who remain (L7) to look after (L8) the bereaved. I think (L9) with time (L10) they lost focus (L11). In most cases (L12) it was a meeting (L13) of those who accompanied the bereaved (L14). It is not organized (L15) as an after tears for everybody. I'd have my after tears (L16) with my friends, the other family member also has (L17) with his friends (L18), but if there is

an agreement (L19) among the groups, they can sit together (L20) for after tears. People sit in groups (L21) not very far (L22) from the house (L23) of the bereaved, it all depends (L24) on the number of people (L25) attending the funeral and those accompanying them (L26). In the end, it is family orientated (L27), even those who remain behind (L28), are the closely related (L29) to the bereaved family like close relatives and friends (L30).

I think (L31) with time (L32) when things changed (L33) it lost shape (L34) to what it is now (L35). Now, the argument (L36) is that the name 'wie sien ons', also suggests what they are (L37). It was there (L38) in the past (L39) from long time ago (L40). In most cases (L41) if the mourner person was a woman (L42), older women (L43) would remain with her for some time (L44), if it was a male (L45), older men (L46) would remain behind him (L47). We shouldn't confuse 'wie sien ons' (L48) with the fact that after the funeral, just a few days after (L49), there will be a ceremony (L50) where people would gather again (L51) at the bereaved home (L52) and there'd be traditional beer ('*bojalwa ba digarafo*') (L53) and so on. After the funeral, the hoes that were used to dig and close the grave will be returned (L54) to their owners and depending (L55) on how families decide. Those who are able (L56) to make a ceremony of returning the hoes will do so (L57) at the bereaved house. 'Wie sien ons' people remaining after the funeral offer support (L58) and comfort (L59) to the bereaved. I think (L60) the after tears party as 'wie sien ons' (L61) is a new trend (L62) of the late 1990s (L63) after freedom.

Previously (L64) it might not have been there (L65) since families stayed closer (L66) to one another in one area. However, with time (L67) and as families grow (L68), families lost members (L69) as they moved to cities (L70). A funeral is a forced (L71) opportunity (L72) to see one another (L73). After tears might have started as family reunions (L74) in which, whenever families meet at a funeral (L75) they suggested they should find a place (L76) to see one another (L77) as a group. Thus, after tears parties developed as a new trend (L78) due to urbanization (L79). Families are far apart (L80) from one

another (L81), so they only get a chance (L82) to see each other (L83) during the family funerals (L84).

How after tears parties developed (L85), in my view (L86), it's a trend (L87) that is not even more than 15 years old (L88). I think (L89) it got out of hand (L90) because at first it would depend (L91) on who (L92) we make after tears for. I come from a Zulu culture (L93), at home it's a Zulu family when they mourn it ends there (L94). After burying it's over (L95), there will be other traditional rituals. Later (L96) there is this other culture (L97), the gangster culture (L98). When a gangster dies (L99), other gangsters would hold this big bash at a street bash type of thing (L100). This culture slowly became accepted (L101) in society. Now, when someone dies (L102) who is not in that type of a genre (L103), this is done as well (L104). I think (L105) it actually got out (L106) of hand then. To me (L107) it was usually done (L108) when a gangster member died (L109). Where I come from (L110), the after party thing it was for criminals (L111). When they died (L112), in that area (L113), the street will be temporarily closed (L114) as there is going to be a mega celebration (L115) characterized by gunshots (L116), and alcohol (L117). It slowly (L118) developed into a culture (L119). It has reached a level (L121) where even old women (L122) who die get after tears party or 'wie sien ons' (L123).

Where I grew up (L124), my family culture (L125) taught me to see death (L126) and the funeral (L127) as something sensitive (L128), to be treated with respect (L129). So with the passage of time (L130) when we grew up (L131), 'wie sien ons', according to me (L132), means that it's where everyone comes out in the open (L133), you see their true colours (L134), people dress up (L135). In 'wie sien ons' people actually celebrate (L136) those who died (L137). My experience (L138) with 'wie sien ons' has been that when you go there, you dress up (L139), people would get in their best suits (L140), what you drink (L141) is also important (L142).

'Wie sien ons' is a party (L143) like there was no death (L144). People would then go there to jive (L145) like nobody's business (L146) and there will be a celebration (L147). People even hope to get new relationships (L148), they socialize (L149).

I attended them (L150), went (L151) to watch them (L152), and see what they actually do (L153) there. I did not drink any alcohol (L154), I just hung around (L155). This time (L156) everybody (L157) takes out the last best of his/hers (L158), could be clothes, money, drinks etc. Immediately (L158) after the funeral, people throw a party (L158). It's different from the 10 days (L159) because the '10 days' is celebrated (L160) after some days had passed (L161), but the 'wie sien ons' party is immediate (L162), and it is not even held (L163) where the funeral is (L164), but next door (L165).

I think (L166) initially (L167) when 'wie sien ons' were introduced (L168) it was for therapeutic purposes (L169). Initially (L170), that was the case (L171) however as time went on (L172), it evolved (L173). Initially (L174), it wasn't open (L175) to everybody (L176), that was initially (L177), it was only for close friends (L178) and they would get around (L179) and we will sit and reflect (L180) on our life with the deceased (L181), all the good things we came to learn (L182) in our journey (L183) with the deceased (L184). Nevertheless, as times went by (L185) it changed. Previously (L186), 'wie sien ons' was a surprising event (L187). When someone passed away (L188), it became formal (L189), everybody respected that (L190), but as time went on (L191), death became common (L192), people die (L192) everyday (L193), to an extent (L194) that when you hear that someone has died (L195), you are not worried or scared (L196) anymore (L197). As a result (L198), death is not a frightening thing (L199) anymore (L200). I think (L201) that's where 'wie sien ons' developed (L202), evolved (L203) from what was only for close friends (L204) to reminisce (L205) about the deceased (L206) about our lives with the late (L207), to us celebrating a life (L208).

I've attended gangsters' 'after tears' parties (L209). After a gangster has died (L210), since gangsters die every week (L211), so it's no longer (L212) a surprise (L213), after this person dies (L214) we sit with the family (L215) and cry (L216) with them. But after comforting the family (L217), you can't cry (L218) as just recently (L219) you buried one of your members, that other week another one and so forth and so forth (L220). They slowly evolved (L221) but surely came to lose meaning (L222) which is unlike in the

past (L223). It moved towards that direction (L224) slowly but surely. In the past (L225), as kids (L226), we feared anything to do with death (L227) or funeral (L228) and we played far from the house having one of these (L229). We were even scared of the hearse (L230). Currently (L231), people no longer show that respect (L232) of funerals like in the past (L233). There is no respect (L234) for funerals anymore (L235) like the people used to show (L236) in the past (L237).

I think (L238) we moved (L239) from several cultures (L240). We die so much (L241) that we get used (L242) to it. On why 'wie sien ons' is held immediately (L243) after the funeral, to me (L244) I think (L245) it is as it doesn't happen (L246) at the bereaved home (L247), but next door (L249). It happens out of the context (L250) of the funeral. The fact (L251), you see people whom you haven't seen (L252) in a long time (L253). You came to mourn (L254), but in the process (L255) you meet someone you haven't seen in a long time (L256), you wanna catch up (L257) with that person (L258). I don't think (L259) that things occurring at the 'wie sien ons' are exclusive (L260) since not only bad things (L261) happen (L262) at after funeral parties. There are good things (L263) that the after funeral party can bring (L264). I think (L265) that it helps (L266) to build (L267) into something totally different (L268) from what it was like (L269) back in the days (L270). From where I grew up (L271), like the way (L272) funerals were conducted (L273), you wouldn't get women (L274) go to funerals with trousers (L275), now (L276) that happens (L277), so in the same way (L278) 'wie sien ons' has changed (L279) into something (L280), it's social (L281). Some girls go hoping to get a guy (L282) to buy her alcohol (L283). It's a social calendar (L284), people would just find out where the funeral is (L285). They go there (L286) knowing that after the funeral there's going to be a party (L287). It has become socializing (L288).

Some of those who come to 'wie sien ons' (L289) didn't even attend the funeral (L290). It's like (L291) they would plan (L292) their events around someone's funeral (L293). But it depends (L294) on who died (L295). Funerals go according to levels (L296), your status (L297). If he was a guy that used to attend (L298) after tears parties, who used to dress up (L299), it would differ from ordinary ones (L300). If the funeral is for someone

with a certain identity (L301), even the 'wie sien ons' (L302) will follow that identity (L303) somehow (L304).

Generally, if you compare (L305) a funeral of an old woman (L306) and a funeral of a gangster (L307), and the people who attend the two funerals (L308), they are different (L309). If they do after tears at different funerals (L310), there may be after tears at the granny's funeral (L311) but there you don't go all out (L312). The gangster one will be very hot (L313), everyone going all out (L314). They are being held differently (L315). Different groups (L316) organize different 'wie sien ons' (L317) in the same neighbourhood (L318) for the same funeral (L319), because we know this person (L320) from different angles (L321). It ends up (L322) not being a single party (L323), but several (L324). Everyone is in their own group (L325), we all know this person (L326) but we have different groups of people (L327). Usually (L328) you end up having something like five 'wie sien ons' (L329) for the same funeral. Another thing with this 'wie sien ons' thing is that is that most people (L330) that go to the 'wie sien ons' (L331) don't even know the deceased (L332).

Most attendees (L333) don't even know the person (L334). So what is the purpose? Some people go for 'wie sien ons' hoping to meet someone (L335) who would give them something (L336). They do not go to funerals for valid reasons (L337), it's a question of I am going to find someone there (L338). We meet (L339) mainly at funerals (L340) so what happens is that we need (L341) some time (L342), say even before (L343) the funeral, during the week of mourning (L344), we visit the chief mourner (L345), we make the situation as comfortable as possible (L346), try to ease the condition (L347). It brings comfort (L348) in the midst of tears (L349) that happens. With the passage of time (L350) what happens is that everybody (L351) does it differently (L352), friends do it differently (L353), and gangsters also do it differently (L354). When you check the cultures (L355), you find that the family culture (L356) does it completely (L357) differently (L358). The street culture (L359) suppresses (L360) whatever you are going through with gathering (L361), so we go gather (L362) there. It's no longer (L63) about remembering the dead person (L364), it's more about socializing (L365). Some

people come (L366) with others (L367) who knew the deceased (L368), and some who never knew him/her (L369) at all. When they get there it's time of remembrance (L370). Instead of mourning we hold social gatherings (L371) and we forget to mourn (L372) or remember the person (L373). We get know the beers (L374), the drinks (L375), the girls (L376) and any (L377) that is on display (L378). I think (L379) what happens with passing time (L380), the thought changed to become 'wie sien ons' (L381).

Cultures (L382) broaden with time (L383). I doubt (L384) if 'wie sien ons' serves its intended purpose (L385) of comforting (L386). Initially (L387), as said, 'wie sien ons' is supposed to be therapeutic (L388). Take an example of the trend (L389) of taxi drivers (L390), say in Mabopane (L390). They take off their clothes (L391) after the funeral of a colleague. They literally (L392) take off (L393) clothes. Imagine (L394) if the dead is a father of his family (L395). If this was a debriefing session (L396) it is thus not serving the purpose (L397). I am from a culture (L398) where when one has died (L399) in the area, the whole street (L400) would be mourning (L401). So, we suppress (L402) that feeling (L403) that we mourn (L404) with 'wie sien ons'. If there is a funeral we always (L405) want to celebrate (L406) these days.

These days (L407) we are scattered (L408) and no longer see each other (L409), one leaves home to work far away (L410). When there is a funeral, friends come over (L411). After the funeral they do not leave (L412), they stick around (L413) for some time. We make families feel comfortable (L414). 'Wie sien ons' is when we go and do whatever (L415) we do without people seeing us (L416). We mentioned the issue of our culture (L417). Our culture (L418) is intimidating (L419). 'Wie sien ons' is hiding away (L420) and coping (L421) with pain (L422), it was picked it up from our culture (L423) which promoted (L424) the behaviour (L425) of acting brave (L426) in the midst of pain (L427).

I think (L428) as well, your vocation (L429) somehow will evoke (L430) that kind of an event (L431) after your death (L432). If for instance you were a taxi driver (L433), you'd be buried (L434) the same way (L435). I think (L436) we have a lot of subcultures

(L437) that have developed (L438) within our society. Taxi drivers (L439) will do whatever they gonna do (L440). If you were a quiet (L441) taxi driver (L442), your funeral (L443) will be held that way (L444). By association (L445) of your vocation (L446) that will happen (L447). If a gangster (L448), they bury him (L449) the same way (L450). If it's an old person (L451), we will end quietly (L452) and buy cool drinks (L453) and end there (L454). During the after tears (L455), those who are reserved (L456) will stay at home. There are extroverts (L457) who drink (L458), smoke (L459), those who break the rules at home (L460) and are notorious (L461) with the parents and extroverted (L462) will mostly (L463) be the ones you find at the after tears parties (L464). They are mostly (L465) associated with all the guys who live carefree lives (L466).

With 'wie sien ons' you never really know (L467), there are different people (L468), different kinds (L469). There are those who drink (L470), those who smoke (L471), those who are loud (L472) and those who are quiet (L473). You can go even if you are not hyper (L474), and normal person (L475) and not the 'show-off' type' (L476). There is this guy, a member of gangster (L477), he died, but what scared me (L478) most (L479), actually, I was surprised (L480) at seeing this at his burial. When the coffin was lowered (L481) into the grave, the other group members fired shots (L482) at this coffin (L483) as it went down (L484), the ladies (L485) were dancing (L486) and loud music (L487) was played (L488). It happened (L489) in Eersterus. Real shooting (L490), like when we bury a soldier (L491). Where I grew up (L492) in Soshanguve (L493), they shoot when a fellow gangster member (L494) died and is buried (L495). Firing of shots at a funeral became a culture (L496) that a soldier has died. We give him that honour (L497). It is very painful (L498), but it's an acceptable part (L499) of that sub-culture (L500), just like a policeman (L501) or a soldier (L502) if he has died they shoot (L503). 'Wie sien ons' is more of wanting to celebrate (L504). People take over (L505) funerals just to strip it (L506) off its meaning. It makes me think (L507), is it difficult (L508) for us to deal with death (L509) as our society continues to evolve (L510). Something extreme (L511) like that from pain (L512) to pleasure (L513) within such a short space of time (L514). It is very difficult (L515) for us to cope (L516) and deal with death (L517).

In the past (L518), we respected death (L519), but now there's no respect (L520) anymore (L521). I have an experience with 'wie sien ons' (L522) but not in the real sense (L523) of the current understanding of the practice (L524). I had a funeral at home (L525) and after the funeral friends who stayed behind (L526) after the funeral, for me (L527) it has been very therapeutic (L528). I would not think little (L529) of the after tears parties because of what we tend to do (L530). 'Wie sien ons' carries a different meaning (L531) about this gangster culture (L532). It's a form of punishment (L533). Usually (L534), people close to the dead one (L535) remain behind (L536) and meet somewhere (L537). They contribute money (L538) to buy drinks (L539). Personally (L540), my strongest feeling (L541) is that put aside all the negative things (L542) reported (L543) to be happening (L544) at the after tears parties, I think the after tears is a necessary part (L545) which, when conducted properly (L546), would add value (L547) to our lives. Some families (L548) mind 'wie sien ons' (L549). The precedence set (L550) leads to how people think (L551) of the dead one (L552). People who work at the funeral (L553) are usually (L554) not the ones who will be going to the after tears (L555), it's those with sharp noses and white suits (L556) that would go to after parties (L557). 'Wie sien ons' are a way of comforting (L558) the family.

At 'wie sien ons' the good and the bad (L559) happen together. The 'wie sien ons' are not totally a bad thing (L560). They are therapeutic (L561). For the hours when your friends are sitting and drinking (L562), it helps (L563) the family to meet more people. I think (L564) that the 'wie sien ons' are not helpful (L565) when not held in the family (L566). My colleague recently died, and after her funeral others went to a pub far from the deceased's house (L567). I don't see it helping (L568) the family because you can separate the two (L569). If the family is to be helped (L670) the memorial service (L571) is there. I see a memorial service (L572) being of help to the family (L573). But the time frame becomes short (L574) because there is no alcohol (L575). When there is alcohol (L576), then they last longer (L577) until 12 o' clock.

It depends (L578) on who is dead, if the person is a pastor (L579), fellow pastors (L580) are the ones (L581) who will hold the 'wie sien ons' (L582). They will sit with cool drinks (L583) and cakes (L584). On the other side (L585) there will be a group (L586) drinking liquor, meaning, in 'wie sien ons', people sit in groups (L587). We all be attend the same funeral (L588) but we all know each from different backgrounds (L589).

### **5.2.2.3 M's story**

Number in group: 11 participants (10 females and 1 male)

#### **Deliberations**

'Wie sien ons' is a party after a funeral (M1). After the funeral people socialize (M2), the way you lived (M3) your life, it would be like that (M4) at your funeral. There, people socialize (M5). It's a chance (M6) to meet people (M7) you haven't seen (M8) in a long time (M9). When people hear of a funeral they look forward to socialize (M10). Instead (M11) of to disperse (M12) after the funeral it is better to socialize (M13) over drinks. It is a social gathering (M14). It's not like we are celebrating (M15), we are just socializing (M16).

We associate it with the funeral (M17) because it happens immediately (M18) after the burial, but it has nothing (M19) to do with the funeral. We bury and continue with their lives (M20). We even show (M21) that we continue with our lives (M22) by sitting to chill (M23) with a drink, but once the funeral is over we get in to another chapter (M24). It has nothing to do with the funeral (M25), and it's not even to celebrate (M26) the funeral. We are not even trying to take the pain out (M27) or anything. It is not like we going to comfort each other (M28), we are now going to socialize (M29). Some of us have lots of ladies (M30) from different places (M31), now it is time to catch up (M32) with them, and we enjoy (M33) and have fun (M34) after a long day (M35).

My understanding of 'wie sien ons' (M36), when they started (M37), I thought (M38), was that they were done only for certain type of people (M39). If the deceased was a person who liked to party (M40), then that's how that person will be buried (M41), that is, with a party (M42). But these days (M43) they do it for everyone (M44). Even if it is a granny (M45) who has passed away or anyone (M46) there would be an after tears party (M47). When the 'wie sien ons' started (M48) they were doing it only (M49) to those who liked to party (M50). That is how (M51) they started. They happened at the gangster's funerals (M52). Or if it was a taxi driver (M53) that is dead, taxi drivers played loud music (M54) in the taxis. However, lately (M55), even if it is a very old granny (M56) they still do the after tears. I think (M57) this new democracy (M58) has an influence (M59) because now people do whatever (M60) they want. With this thing of gangsters! (M61) People do as they wish (M62).

I think (M63) they have been there (M64) even in the past (M65), it is just that they were reserved (M66). After the funeral (M67) they would go either next door (M68) or one of the family member's place (M69) just to sit and drink (M70) indoors (M71). Others were doing them (M72) because they didn't want (M73) the 10 days. So people avoided (M74) the '10 days' ceremony. The '10 days' is a way to thank people (M74) at the funeral. They were normally done about ten days after the funeral (M75), that is why it's called '10 days'. There (M76) they will be sitting and drinking (M77) and also finishing up all the rituals (M78) relating to the bereaved family.

My understanding (M79) of 'wie sien ons' is that it is a way to welcome people (M80) from far places (M81). People define it in different ways (M82). In the past (M83) they were not called 'wie sien ons' (M84), they were called the after tears (M85), and done for people from far places (M86). Then they came up with the name (M87) 'wie sien ons', meaning 'who is seeing us' or 'who's watching us'? (M88) During these days (M89) we plan for them (M90) before the dead person is buried. We can book them (M91), we plan before (M92) we even bury you, that this is what we are going to do (M93) after the funeral. There should be a venue (M94) where we all going to gather (M95). It's even nicer (M96) when it is held at a neutral venue (M97), when we are all

gathered together (M98) in one place (M99) unlike when we divide into groups (M100), when others go to the park (M101), others to the next street (M102) and so on. When some go to sit at the park, while others choose to go sit in the next street then it spoils the whole fun (M103). It is simply not nice (M104). The whole idea (M105) of 'wie sien ons' is to sit together (M106) and have fun (M107). Others divide (M108) according to their status (M109), like those from town houses (M110) will sit together (M111), money talks (M112). It goes according to class (M113). The real reason (M114) for this is because these days (M115) many people attend funerals unlike in the past (M116), going to a funeral is an outing (M117). That is why people no longer sing (M118) at the graveyard they stand there and talk (M119). As a result people organize cd's to play music (M120) at the funerals, people don't sing (M121) anymore (M122). Funerals are no longer (M123) about mourning, death is no longer respected (M124) like in the past (M125).

Going to a funeral these days (M126) is like going to a party (M127). I think (M128) it is because we don't respect (M129) a funeral anymore (M130). We used to go there to offer emotional support (M131), but it's not like that (M132) anymore (M133), people go there to showcase fashion (M134). It is a new trend (M135) of the new millennium (M136), things have changed (M137), people are out of control (M138). It's the way things happen (M139) in this new millennium (M140), like the current generation (M141), many things (M142) have changed (M143).

People choose (M144) to have the after tears party or not (M145). They treat you the way you used to live (M146). It is not up the family (M147) since it is the people who decide (M148) to do the after tears. It is not for the family (M149) because they can't attend (M150) since they are still mourning. People who attend the funeral (M151) are the ones who organise the 'wie sien ons' (M152). It has nothing to do (M153) with the bereaved. In most cases (M154) the bereaved are not even there at the after tears, it will be relatives (M155) who have come from far places (M156) who would be at the after tears (M157).

I'm talking from experience (M158), I don't mind (M159) the 'wie sien ons', as people are trying to offer their support (M160). I was able (M161) to see who offered their support (M162) after the funeral. With after tears (M163) you sit with people (M164) and have a drink or two (M165) to ease your tension and relax (M166) after the funeral. I think there is nothing wrong with the 'wie sien ons' (M167). Personally (M168) I think (M169) there is nothing wrong (M170) with it, it's a good thing (M171).

People who come to support you (M172), do that at different levels. During the 'wie sien ons' you forget (M173) a little bit. 'Wie sien ons' indirectly comfort (M174) you. Indirectly! As you see that the people are still around (M175), it can be a form of a comfort (M176) for you while they are still hanging around (M177). They help you to relax a bit (M178) since when you are sitting with people they say things or make jokes (M179) to make you laugh. At the 'wie sien ons' people drink and jive (M180), it is like a party (M181) they talk about everything. It is like networking (M182), you make new friends (M183) and meet people (M184) you have been missing (M185). So it is socializing (M186). If you haven't seen a person in a long time (M187) then you can have an opportunity (M188) to catch up (M189). It's all about networking (M190), it's just socializing (M191).

Some people attend the 'wie sien ons' even if they were not at the funeral (M192). I can miss the funeral but still attend the 'wie sien ons' (M193), then people will see that at least I came. You don't go to the house where the funeral was (M194), you go to the after tears (M195), since usually the 'wie sien ons' are held at a neutral place (M196) like at a park (M197) or something, not where the funeral was held (M198). In the past (M199) we used to hold 'wie sien ons' in a tavern (M200), but now, even a street corner (M201) can be used for 'wie sien ons' (M202), people don't need music (M203) because they play music (M204) from their cars.

You can't put a time frame (M205) on how long the 'wie sien ons' will last (M206), some last longer (M207) while others just end quickly (M208). It depends (M209) on who the funeral was for. The last 'wie sien ons' (M210) that you attend, somehow sets the trend (M211). You look at how people are dressed (M212), in the next one (M213), you make

sure you match the standard (M214). Even the way you dress (M215), counts (M216). So it's clothes (M217) and also your taste in liquor (M218). You show off that you have lots of money (M219).

Some get new girlfriends (M220). There's differing opinions (M221) about the 'wie sien ons'. Older (M222) people would probably express differing opinions (M223) about the practice. But the old people don't care (M223) anymore (M224). When it all started (M225), they used to moan about it (M226), and be very negative (M227) about it. It's no longer (M228) an issue like in the past (M229).

#### **5.2.2.4 N's story**

Number in group: 7 participants (4 females and 3 males)

#### **Deliberations**

After the funeral nowadays (N1) there are parties (N2) called 'wie sien ons', or after tears (N3), meaning after they have mourned the deceased. It's very different (N4) from those years back (N5) from what our parents used to do (N6) in the past (N7). In the past (N8) after a funeral, the family would gather (N9) together to perform a number of rituals (N10) to respect (N11) the dead.

The 'wie sien ons' parties are not good (N12), they are youthful events (N13) and they are shameful (N14), they are insulting (N15). However, kids drink alcohol there (N16), that's where (N17) they drink liquor (N18). There is no respect for culture (N19) anymore (N20), we don't perform the death rituals (N21) anymore (N22). The after tears are painful (N23) as everybody would still be reflecting on the deceased (N24). People meet and drink (N25) in the midst of the pain (N26), they meet to do disgusting things (N27) like drinking, meeting to have sex (N29), all in the name of mourning. We have lost respect (N30). We never used to hear (N31) that a funeral at a particular house is

continuous (N32), but these days (N33) if there is a funeral, it continues non-stop (N34), because of after tears (N35).

The reason (N36) behind the after tears and 'wie sien ons' is that people wipe off (N37) their tears. After the funeral we form groups (N38), we travel together (N39). The young people (N40) say it's wiping off the tears (N41), they enjoy. Many would get drunk (N42), and everybody start to know everybody (N43). After getting drunk, people do whatever they want (N44) since they are under the influence (N45), you will just go (N46) and get drunk (N47). The after tears party is not about wiping off tears (N48). People don't wipe tears off (N49), they say what's gone's gone (N50), life continues (N51). They only cause trouble (N51).

It looks like (N52) there is no control (N53), they don't even ask (N54) if it's fine to throw such a party (N55). You see a party (N56), just after the funeral. It is moving away (N57) from culture (N58). These people come with their practices (N59) to our townships (N60), they have money (N61), are educated (N62) and so they can control everything (N63), they have the power (N64), since whether the people mourn the death of their loved ones (N65), for them (N66) it doesn't matter (N67) because they have control through money (N68). This started not as a serious practice (N69) as if it's a play (N70).

In the past (N71) after a funeral we would wait for a week (N72) and then have the '10 days' ceremony (N73), I think (N74) this was a kind of after tears (N75). In the past (N75) it was done but with respect (N76). We conducted ceremonies with total respect (N77) as we would bury and wait for a week (N78) and then conduct the '10 days' ceremony (N79). There was respect (N80) in the way older people (N81) used to go about it (N82), we wouldn't even see (N83), it was not obvious (N84) when they used to sit around for beer or other drinks (N85) after the funeral. We wouldn't see them (N86). They'd do it quietly (N87), and with respect (N88). Every ritual (N89) goes with a culture (N90).