

to the doctor's office. When the doctor asks how she feels, her response is always 'fine.' She never admits to feeling poorly." This is an example of an elderly Jewish Holocaust survivor, who still preferred hiding illness.

## Theme 2 - Self Care

In their attempt to hide illness and avoid the health care system, as described in Theme 1, the participants needed to rely on self care measures. In the concentration camps, self care meant meager attempts to cover up illness with whatever means they had at their disposal. Self care measures today, are more sophisticated means of staying well and avoiding the health care system.

### Significant statements

All of the significant statements related to self care were described by female participants only. In the two following significant statements Eve and Barbara described self care attempts while in the concentration camps.

I looked sick. I had typhus or typhoid there in Auschwitz. I had a very high fever and I was like delirious. I remember that I couldn't stand up straight during this period when they made us stand for hours and hours to be counted. I remember I couldn't stand so my sisters like propped me up. They used to pinch my face and stuff me with paper so I would look a little bit more alive.

The only way out of Auschwitz was death. We were hoping some miracle would take us out of there. They came to look for able bodied people to work in German factories. We were standing erect and we were pinching our cheeks to look healthy, you know, and I was chosen, we were 20 girls and we were taken to a factory.

In the period immediately following the liberation of the prisoners from the concentration camps, many survivors died from the richness and abundance of food to which their bodies were no longer accustomed (Williams, 1993). In the following passage Barbara described her self care instincts during this period.