Participant number 31 – Female, 24, Tower Hamlets

Part 1:

Interviewee: How long is the interviewee gonna be?

Interviewer: Well the whole process is one hour and a half.

Interviewee: Okay but I mean the recording.

Interviewer: I don’t know. It depends um [interviewee: okay] how much we talk and- and things like that. Is that okay?

Interviewee: That’s fine. But I’m just saying, if I need to go and get her-

Interviewer: Yeah no problem.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Thank you. So um can we start by talking about what you’ve put first please?

Interviewee: The first one?

Interviewer: Yeah yeah.

Interviewee: Well sometimes I feel lonely and when I’m constantly- like when my partner’s at work, and I’m like constantly cooking- it’s like an everyday thing, cooking and cleaning. Um sometimes I just feel a bit low. Like- I just feel like I don’t have a life. I think oh my god, it’s like everything I have to do by myself, I’ve gotta look after the kids, feed them, clean the house, clean after my husband, clean- you know, clean his clothes. I just think I wish someone was there to help me. Like my partner- if he could like help me. So that’s when I feel really lonely and low. Yeah.

Interviewer: So it sounds like what you’re saying is… you find it lonely at home, having to do all the house chores and-

Interviewee: Yeah, lonely like low kind of feeling. You know that- the feeling like oh, your life is like a waste kind of thing? Do you know what I mean?

Interviewer: When you say your life is a waste, can you tell me more about that?

Interviewee: It’s more like- it’s nothing like a waste, but it’s- it just- I just say that to myself. Like ugh I don’t wanna cook, I don’t wanna clean every day after my partner like- you have to clean after someone, it’s not a nice thing. And that’s when I feel a bit lonely. And I have to do it all alone. [Interviewer: hmm] So yeah, that’s when I feel lonely.

Interviewer: And um… so it sounds like- like you feel like you’re on your own [interviewee: yeah] that you have to do the cleaning and the cooking.

Interviewee: Looking after the kids, school run, like drop them to school, getting them back, then bringing them back home, feeding them, help with homework… and all sorts of things. Looking after my uh partner’s mother. [Interviewer: mm] Alone. I don’t really like it- doing it. So that’s when I feel lonely.

Interviewer: And how does that make you feel?

Interviewee: [Unintelligible 2:28] like I can’t go out and meet my friends. Like because I have a lot of responsibilities. That makes me feel low. It doesn’t like- it doesn’t make me feel good. It makes me feel low.

Interviewer: So having that responsibility-

Interviewee: Makes me feel down.

Interviewer: Sorry?

Interviewee: Makes me feel down sometimes. ‘Cause I’m more of an outgoing person, before like um got married uh… I’m more of outgoing, like I would like to go out, do things, go [unintelligible 2:59], go out with my friends, go and eat, do stuff, activities. So like um after I got married and all these things… like doing the chores and everything… [interviewer: mm] looking after the kids. It’s like a new thing to me and sometimes I just feel like oh I wish I was at my mum’s and… you know life at your mum’s, with your siblings, you don’t have any responsibilities, your mum’s there to cook for you, do your washing, do the dishes, the laundry, tidy your room. And then all of a sudden you get married and you just have to do it all alone. And that doesn’t make you feel good. Like I dunno. And especially when you have to do it for someone. Like clean up other people’s mess. Like cleaning up your partner’s mess. I don’t like doing that. [Interviewer: mm] But I do tell my husband and he does sometimes- like very rarely he would help me. But obviously it’s like an everyday thing that I have to do. So sometimes when he wants to, he will help me. So sometimes when I’m doing all this stuff I just feel a bit lonely. Feel a bit low. [Interviewer: mm] Doing the same thing every single morning. Morning routine, evening routine… that’s… don’t like it. Sometimes. [Interviewer: mm] It depends on my mood as well. Sometimes I can do it happily. Sometimes I do feel happy. But most times, ‘cause it’s an everyday thing, I just feel - I just don’t like it sometimes. [Interviewer: mm] Yeah.

Interviewer: So it sounds like, you know, having- having a- your responsibility can- can cause some loneliness for you.

Interviewee: Yeah, if I didn’t have all that responsibility…. before… before I got married, when I was at my mum’s, it would’ve been better. But oh well. That’s life.

Interviewer: Mm. And how do you feel about it?

Interviewee: I’m kind of used to it now. But I do like drive my- I do tell him like- my partner to help me. So when he’s- when it’s his day off and he doesn’t really have much things to do outside, he would like do his laundry. He would bath the kids, which is a great help. So that- that- these- things like that make me happy. Like phew, ugh. One thing out of the way. [Laughs] Yeah. But they’re- they’re- everyone’s like these are like lady’s- like woman jobs. [Interviewer: mm] You know, like kitchen, chores, everyone says it’s a woman thing. Like you have to do it, us don’t have to do it. My mum says that to me. And even my friends- like most women, we all have the same problem. Like our husbands not doing enough. And we have to do more. But… I guess that’s just… [interviewer: mm] yeah.

Interviewer: It also- uh… it also sounds like- you said um… having a routine, so doing things over and over, can make you feel lonely.

Interviewee: Yeah, it’s like- doing the same thing every day I think- I think psychologically- you know in your mind like oh I have to do that again in the morning. Like hoovering- it’s like ugh, done it yesterday, doing it now. It just- I don’t know. [Interviewer: mm] But when I’m in someone’s house- like my friend’s house, if there’s a- even there’s a party, we go for gatherings, like I wouldn’t mind helping them do the dishes. Like we can all talk, laugh and do the dishes. But when it’s at home, you think- I think it’s a change of atmosphere. Do you get it? Like it- in the same house, you do- you’re looking at the same sink, you’re looking at the same sofa. And when it’s in someone’s house it’s- it’s a change of atmosphere and you don’t feel like that. [Interviewer: mm] You don’t feel like oh, doing the same thing every day. So it’s different. It’s a change of atmosphere. [Interviewer: mm] It’s uh in a different- different place I guess. If you’re looking at the same thing every single day… looking at the same kitchen, looking at the same sofa, the same hoover. But when you’re somewhere else, like my friend’s house, or sometimes at my mum’s, sometimes at my brother’s, I wouldn’t mind helping out.

Interviewer: How does that make you feel? Seeing the same house, the same furniture and the same kind of stuff?

Interviewee: Yeah it’s like… not good. I- I feel bored. [Interviewer: mm] Looking at the same furniture, same house. It’s been a year. Like with the same furniture. And I’m already bored of the theme. The theme in our house is like grey and white. And now I would- I wanna put more colours into it. Change the sofas around and stuff. Chuck the sofa away. [Interviewer: mm] I think looking at the same thing every day like just makes you feel bored. Yeah.

Interruption

Interviewer: And when you say bored, can you tell me more about that?

Interviewee: Um… bored of looking at the same thing every day. That’s why I feel a bit bored. [Interviewer: mm] And wh- when you change things around, like a different colour sofa, different cushions, different- like get a plant in the house, [interviewer: mm] makes me feel a bit better. [Unintelligible 8:38]

Interviewer: Is there anything else you wanted o say about that box?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Okay we’ll move onto the next one… I’ll put that a bit closer.

Interruption

Interviewer: So we- we’re now box two so um can we start by talking about what you’ve put in box two please?

Interviewee: [Unintelligible 0:08] … sometimes like um, when my partner’s at home and he’s too busy like with his phone or his football, cricket, too much of TV, and like not giving me enough attention, I feel a bit lonely. I feel like- I feel as if like I’m not important. When he’s um too busy like with his phone or… with his friends, I feel a bit jealous and lonely.

Interviewer: So that sounds like sometimes, if your husband is busy doing his own thing, [interviewee: mhm] um you might feel kind of left out and [interviewee: yeah] … and um… and ho- how do you feel about that? When he’s at home and watching his own stuff, doing his own thing, watching his own things.

Interviewee: Feel lonely. I just- I would want him to talk to me, look at me, talk to me, laugh with me. Instead of laughing with his friends or um instead of watching too much football and cricket. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause I don’t really like sports. [Interviewer: mm] Want him to like [interviewer: mm] talk to me or have a laugh with me.

Interviewer: Sounds like your- your husband doesn’t give you as much attention. [Interviewee: um… it’s quite a-] And it makes you feel lonely.

Interviewee: Yeah. He’s like more busy with work life. So like um during the weekend- like today um… he’s just gonna- spend- he’s coming back I think um in the afternoon. Um… yeah, so we’re gonna go out in the afternoon. So only during the weekends we go out. [Interviewer: mm] Like take the kids out, um… do like kids activities, go bowling and eat, like take her swimming and stuff. [Interviewer: mm] So that makes me feel better and like going out as a family, doing things as a family. That makes me feel a bit better. [Interviewer: mm] While my partner’s out doing other stuff, I don’t know, I just get jealous. I feel lonely. I feel like I- we’re not important. [Interviewer: mm] But it’s also- sometimes I think I- I- I would want a bit too much. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause he has stuff that he has to do. Like he’s got- his um work. He actually needs to go to work to provide and stuff.

Interviewer: So it sounds like when you’re together with him and- and your family- bowling and dinner- that makes you feel good-

Interviewee: Yeah, really good. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause- makes me feel really really good and happy.

Interviewer: And when he’s not around or being- working too much or being out with friends or doing stuff- stuff on his own, that can make you feel lonely.

Interviewee: Yeah. Very lonely.

Interviewer: And um… what- so what did you actually write here? Sorry I can’t read very well.

Interviewee: Oh sorry. I also feel lonely when someone or my partner won’t give me attention. [Interviewer: mm] Like same as my mum. When- when I was at my mum’s, like um when she would give attention my brothers more than me. She like- I would get jealous and I would feel lonely. For example, when my mum’s buying gifts for my brothers um, you know, I feel left out and lonely.

Interviewer: Mm. Sounds like your mum gave more attention to your brothers [interviewee: yeah] at times. How’s- tell me about your relationship with your mum.

Interviewee: Sorry?

Interviewer: Tell me about your relationship with your mum.

Interviewee: Um we’re like friends now. [Interviewer: mm] After I got married I [unintelligible 5:16]. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause a mother and a daughter, they have like the same kind of responsibilities as a married woman. [Interviewer: mhm] so yeah, I would ask her kind of thing how to cook this, if my mother in law- when I eat something, I would ask my mum [interviewer mm] how to do it, she would tell me, she would help me with a lot of things. Well that makes me feel a lot happier now. [Interviewer: mm] Yeah.

Interviewer: And how is your life now with having a child?

Interviewee: Sometimes I feel like I’m the most blessed woman in the world. Like definitely my child is my world. Like I feel- but um when she plays at- at night time, I feel oh my days no way. Can’t deal with that. [Interviewer: mm] Like and when I- when I have to do all her responsibilities sometimes all day, I feel… yeah it can make- make you feel- it can make you go mad. [Interviewer: mm] And you know, feeding the kids. And feeding my child is such a big, big responsibility. She is so hard. [Interviewer: mm] So sometimes it can be headache- like it is hard, but then again I am um happy that I have a child. I am blessed to have a child. You know. [Interviewer: mm] And when my partner is home, I just- can’t wait to give her to her dad and just take a rest. [Both laugh] It’s like the best time when my partner’s home and I can just give her to her dad. [Interviewer: mm] And I can just do my own thing. Like go to my neighbour’s and go shopping or just go for a walk. It’s not that I don’t love my baby, but it’s that- you know all day I’ve been looking after her and I just want a break from that. But of course she’s my child and I love her to bits.

Interviewer: Mm. So it sounds like you- sometimes you feel overwhelmed with all the responsibilities-

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah that’s the word. Overwhelmed, yeah. [Interviewer: mm] That’s how I feel. And it can make me feel lonely. [Interviewer: mm] Like I think of- my partner was- ‘cause some people have really good partners that do- um… um like break the chores down. And partners- their partners can do half of the house chores. But some partners, like my partner, he would- he doesn’t really know how to do anything. [Interviewer: mm] [Unintelligible 7:55]

Interviewer: Um is there anything else you want to say about this box?

Interviewee: No um it’s just- I think I’ve said everything.

Interviewer: Um can we start by talking about what you’ve put in the third box please?

Interviewee: Yeah I have experienced um loneliness when my partner uh was on holiday… and that was a really really… not a good feeling. [Interviewer: mm] When he went for three weeks and I was with like his mum, his mother. I had to look after his mother. Had to look after the kids. Had to do the house. Like shopping- it’s like everything for three weeks I had to do. ‘Cause normally my husband, he does all the grocery shoppings and everything. Um… and obviously he would like give the kids a bath. And even after the whole day he would come home [interviewer: mhm] and he can like look after the kids. [Interviewer: mhm] But when he went holiday, that was a very lonely feeling for me. I was all alone for like… felt like three years. [Interviewer: mm] Three weeks, even four, but I felt like it was three years. I felt a lot lonely. Like even in the weekends I couldn’t go out. I [unintelligible 9:21] go out, especially with the kids. Like her and my older kid. She was like um- missing their dad. [Interviewer: mm] And this one… kept calling her dad. Especially like bed time, my husband would do the bedtime routines, and they would go sleep with their dad. When he was on holiday it was a really tough time for me. [Interviewer: mm] Especially putting them to bed. It made me feel so lonely. Sometimes we would read like bedtime stories together, like me and my partner would read it to my daughters. But um… when he was away, I felt like, you know, a part of me is… you know broke- it feels broke down and lonely. ‘Cause my partner’s always there. Like even after the whole day after his job like he would come home. I would see him every day. Now all of a sudden- like when he went holiday for three weeks to see his father, I was- felt really lonely.

Interviewer: Mm. So it sounds like there was additional responsibility on your shoulder and- [interviewee: yeah] and you felt like you were all alone having to do [interviewee: yup] like shopping [interviewee: yeah] and kids and…

Interviewee: Everything. That made me feel a bit lonely.

Interviewer: Mm. And how did you feel, like not being able to, for example, um- [interviewee: sorry?] How did you feel, like not being able to do things over the weekend? Or in the evenings when you would go to [interviewee: made me fe-] your house?

Interviewee: Made me feel sad and um I was more anxious… that I couldn’t do things by myself [interviewer: mhm] like my partner. So yeah, made me feel sad and anxious… unhappy.

Interviewer: Mm. And what sort of feelings go through your head when- when you… when for example your husband is away on holidays or at work and you’re on your own? What sort of thoughts do you have?

Interviewee: Um… loneliness and… sometimes sad. Sometimes I don’t know what to do. These sort of thoughts. More loneliness and sadness [interviewer: mm] I feel.

Interviewer: You mentioned you’d go- you would go to your neighbour’s house. Could you tell me more about that?

Interviewee: My neighbours?

Interviewer: You said that [interviewee: yeah] you would go to your neighbour’s house in the evenings. Can you tell me more about that?

Interviewee: Yeah, just go to my neighbour’s. Like um… she’s my age. And we have like same responsibilities. She’s got a husband, she’s got kids. We sometimes talk about our problems, share our thoughts together. That makes me feel a lot better. Like sharing my feelings with someone makes me feel a lot better. Like um having a cup of tea or coffee with my neighbour and telling her the chores that I’ve done today. And she would tell me everything that she’s done, or she’ll tell me like oh I’ve got this to do in the evening, and I’m like oh don’t worry, just leave all them, let’s just have a chat. It’s so nice just to chat. So it is such a good feeling. Feels so good. [Interviewer: mm] When my partner’s home and… I would just leave her with her dad and just go for a coffee or tea at my neighbour’s. And share my thoughts and feelings. And sometimes she would give me tips and advice on how, you know, to break down the chores. How to make myself feel better. Like she will say something, just calm down with the chores and just, you know, in- in the evening, when your husband’s home, just go out. ‘Cause I’m more of a clean freak. Like I would just all day- I just love cleaning. I would just tidy up straight away. So yeah. We share like our feelings and thoughts and give tips to each other, [interviewer: mm] like have a laugh. It makes me feel so much better and lighter.

Interviewer: Mm. So it sounds like- sorry go ahead.

Interviewee: Hmm?

Interviewer: I didn’t mean to interrupt you if you wanted to say something.

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No I was just gonna say, so it sounds like, having the company or having someone to talk to about your feelings and about your problems and tips and stuff can actually make you feel [interviewee: yeah, a lot-] much better.

Interviewee: Yeah, a lot better and lighter. [Interviewer: mm] Sometimes like having a lot of, you know, those chores and- can make your body so heavy. But and then when you talk to someone about it, you can feel a bit- and when the person says oh don’t worry, I do that every day, it’s alright, it’s just normal, it- that makes me feel better as well. [Interviewer: mm] Like when I’m saying oh man, today I had to cook, I had to clean, I had to do the laundry and pick up the kids from school and then I’m… do this and that. And like with my friends- or my neighbour, she would say oh, I do that too. And that makes me feel better. Makes me feel like oh I’m not the only person doing it. Other people are doing the same thing. So that does make me feel a lot better as well. When someone else is doing the same thing as me. I don’t feel lonely. I don’t feel like oh, I’m the only one doing this. [Interviewer: mm] So yeah, that does make me feel better, when someone else is doing the same thing as me. Um… I can’t think of any more ideas.

Interviewer: So it sounds like knowing that other people or other women go through the same challenges as you do, [interviewee: mhm] that makes you in a way feel a lot better.

Interviewee: Yeah. It doesn’t make me feel lonely like oh I’m the only one doing it. Other people are doing it. That does make me feel better.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you want to say about that box?

Interviewee: Um… not really, no.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you want to say about anything else?

Interviewee: Um, can’t really think of any more actually.

Interviewer: It’s okay, don’t worry. Thank you very much.

Interviewee: It’s okay. I can’t really think of any more [interviewer: don’t worry] ideas about loneliness. Uh…

Interviewer: That’s- that’s good.

Interviewee: Maybe I- if I think later [interviewer: it’s okay] but…

Interviewer: No that is good. [Interviewee: at the moment] Thank you very much.

Interviewee: It’s okay.

Interviewer: Um are you okay if we move onto the next task?

Interviewee: Yeah yeah yeah sure, yeah yeah go ahead.