

My name is Ilana, and I am one of the many children whose Mother/  
Father's spent many of their childhood years in various institutions.

My Mother, Charmaine ( Hughes), was one of 9 children. Her Father was a very abusive man, and was in and out of jail for a lot of his adult life. Her Mother did not want any of her children, and let them go to become Ward of the State.

I sometimes wonder how I would have dealt with not having my Mother in my life at such a young age. There is no way I could have done it

A feeling of rejection, loneliness, hurt, pain and betrayal. No- one should have to experience these emotions, let alone a young innocent child. My Mother did experience all of these emotions, as I am sure every other person in these institutions did.

I remember Mum telling me once, how she had run away from Lindwall Hall to be with her Mother. When she arrived, her Mum did not greet her with hugs and kisses or any sort of affection. She dismissed her, and sent her right back to the Home. The poor excuse for this was that her boyfriend did not want Mum there.

Well I am sorry, but there is no excuse for that! I can't begin to comprehend how any woman could turn her back on her own child. My Mum was not asking for money or anything materialistic. All she wanted was to be protected from the big wide world that she was not yet ready to experience alone.

When I was much younger, I could have never imagined life without my Mum. I am now 19 Years old, and still feel the same. I NEED my Mum in my life. She is the person that I run to when I have a problem. She is the one that listens to my whingeing! ☺ She is my best friend in this whole wide world! I just can't even begin to imagine how Mum got through without having what I have.

My Mum brought my Sister and myself up the best way she could. And I can honestly say that if I can be half the Mother that mum is to us, than I will be one happy woman.

I have made mistakes in my life, like everyone else, but Mum was always there to support me in every possible way. She never made me feel like a failure or a worthless human. She was there!

The question I ask, is how can someone be filled with so much love and compassion, when they never received it themselves???

I believe that in itself is a strong person. To be able to stop the cycle and start new.

It has not been smooth sailing for Mum. But being the strong and determined woman that she is, she got through it. I highly respect her for that!

There is one thing though that really makes me sad. Seeing my Mum cry and in pain. She was on of those ladies that opened up and shared her story with an ABC program, Stateline. This whole inquiry has brought back so many bad memories for Mum. Like many other women, she has never really talked about it before.

I know exactly why woman couldn't talk about it. It was because they were made to feel like scum!! They were treated as if they were nothing but dirt. There is this big stigma, on Girls that were in homes. A lot of these girls were in there for no fault of their own. Where were they suppose to have gone when no one wanted them???

These homes were suppose to shelter and protect these girls from their devastating home lives, not destroy the girls completely!

I think that it is really good that these women are taking a stand. Retaining what is rightfully theirs... DIGNITY  
Dignity that was taken away from them in these homes. Their self esteem crushed and driven into the ground. Being made to believe that they really were bad girls and worth nothing to society.

I feel angry that these evil, animal like creatures, were allowed to work in these homes! Did they just pull these people of the streets??

These girls were suppose to have been "Uncontrollable". I myself would have though that they would have taken these "Uncontrollable" girls under their wing and guided them in the right direction.

They did the total opposite. Mental and physical abuse was all they dished out.

My mum was one of these girls, and she has been deeply scarred by this, and is trying to get closure.

I take my hat of to my Mum. I am so proud of her. I hope as I get older that I can gain the strength and determination that she has gained.

It is time that people stopped sweeping this issue under the carpet. There are so many questions that need to be answered. Someone has to stand up

and take responsibility. For the pain, abuse and neglect that these young girls had to endure. That is the VERY least that needs to be done

Yours sincerely

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In addition, I would like to point out that my Mother can not obtain her personal file. She has seen her family file, but was informed that her personal file had been burnt. I know for a fact, that other women are obtaining their personal files. So why can't my Mother??