

## **Abstract**

This master's thesis focusses on long-term effects of the Holocaust on the generation of survivors as well as on their offspring.

Firstly, the theoretical part defines the terms 'stress' and 'trauma'. This is followed by an outline of possible reactions to severely stressful situations as well as questionnaires that can be used to measure the levels of traumatization. Afterwards, attention is focused on the phenomenon of posttraumatic growth, mainly based on the perspectives of L. G. Calhoun and R. G. Tedeschi who identify five domains of growth. The possibility of facilitating posttraumatic growth is briefly mentioned alongside with one inventory that can be used to measure the extent of positive change following traumatic experiences. Furthermore, the complexity of the Holocaust is discussed and generations of the Holocaust survivors and their offspring are characterised. In conclusion, attention is drawn to the studies that are concerned with the transgenerational transmission of trauma.

The empirical component of the thesis is dedicated to the mapping of specific aspects of posttraumatic stress and growth in Holocaust survivors and their offspring. This data was collected by using a PTSD CheckList (PCL-C) and a Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI), and afterwards was processed by quantitative methodology. In accordance with other studies, the thesis concludes that Holocaust survivors and their offspring have higher levels of posttraumatic stress and growth and that linear dependence exists between these two phenomena. These findings were illustrated with case studies of two respondents – a Holocaust survivor and her daughter – both of which capture specific examples of trauma as well as its conversion into growth tendencies.

### **Key words:**

posttraumatic stress, posttraumatic growth, reactions to stress, Holocaust trauma, Holocaust survivors, transgenerational transmission of trauma.