

What was it like for you, Mr. Rubell, to have freedom? Now that the war--

Right after the war or dur--

Yeah, the period right after the war.

Right after the war for me, it was very-- I didn't know how to handle freedom. We were-- I was still afraid. I was afraid of any kind of uniform. Uniform represented something that was not very good, but then when I saw the family again, my sisters, my brother, there began to be a certain more warmth and a sense of belonging.

But in the beginning, freedom was great. It was just like being liberated from beatings, but you were not liberated from yourself because of what some of the things that you went through and some of the things that you were not prepared to handle the way the future looked for, because you saw, especially coming to this country.

Did you find yourself in your mind back there again in the camps, in the--

No, I never want to go back there.

I don't mean physically--

I know. I know. No, I didn't find myself to go back there. I did not find myself back again.

Did you dream about it?

I have nightmares all the time. I had nightmares before, and to this day I have nightmares, but when you say, how did I handle freedom? It wasn't easy to adjust to freedom, especially in the beginning when I came here. I saw family units together. I saw children my age or young people my age who had parents normal lives.

That was almost difficult to cope was watch this process. You saw education that was so great and people were finishing high school and I was illiterate, in a sense. It wasn't easy.

How did you feel about talking about it or didn't you in the beginning? Or was it difficult?

In the beginning, we didn't talk much about it. I think that we kept it-- I kept it to myself. After that, when I got married and I had children, I spoke about it when my children asked questions. But I don't think I went into all the details for a very long time. I was just hoping that this whole thing did not happen, and I did not want to expose my children to all these things that I went through.

How did your children happen to ask about these things?

They were aware that I went through the Holocaust. I think that they saw a certain sadness in me when they were becoming teenagers.

As I imagined they asked where grandpa and grandma were.

Beg your pardon?

I suppose they asked were grandpa and grandma were.

They asked for-- they wanted to know, especially during the high holidays, and we used to walk to The [? Shoe ?] where I lived in West Orange, and this was a ritual that I would walk with both my children, and I would have to repeat, again, the same stories. Everything. What my mother was like, what my father was like. They wanted to know and where I live and what we talked about and how-- they wanted to know what grandma was like, what grandpa was like.

They wanted to know what the cousins were like and uncles, and this was our time during the holidays that we would reconnect and couple the past with the present, and there were special moments, and we still do that once in a while.

So they've never resisted knowing or--

No. In contrast. I think they're aware of it. I think that they're both, Michael and Lisa, will always carry on the memory. That their grandparents did not die in vain. They will always remember, and now that I have two grandchildren, I'm sure that that will also be the hope of carrying on, and that's why this feeling of-- like I mentioned before, the tug of war between optimism and pessimism.

About the Holocaust and can this happen again. There are times that I feel hopeless, but there are times that I feel very hopeful. I have to feel hopeful.

I see a lot of faith and hope there with you, Morris, because--

Of course.

Yeah.

I have grandchildren.

That's it. And your children. To bring children into this world or something like that.

No, there is hope. That hope, hoping alone by sitting idle and not to hide yourself and putting your head like an ostrich. That is not going to be-- that is not the answer. There is, unfortunately, there is a lot of knocking on our doors, and we have to resist that.

We have to be helpful to programs like this, and we have to fight back some of the lies that are being spread around now, and I know that when time goes on, we survivors aren't going to be here. Already we're dying, and--

Can you specify what lies you're talking about?

The lies that the Holocaust never happened-- not to this mammoth proportion and that this is-- anti-Semitism existed before and history has proven that for thousands and thousands of years, and evidently, I really felt that, after this war, after the-- that this Holocaust, we always had small little pogroms and killings and uprooting of the Jewish people and through history. This is history.

But I really believed that after this Holocaust that never will I ever read anything that this doesn't happen again and never did I think that there is going to be anti-Semitism again. I really am disappointed, as a human being, not as a Jew, but as a human being. I hope that we can counter all this by education.

By whatever means that is necessary to fight back the lies, and if you have to, if there are lies in literature, we have to fight back with literature. If there are fights if they are lies in any form or fashion, I really am not ashamed to fight back in every possible way in order to keep this memory of the 6 million. We owe it to them, and we owe it to ourselves, and we owe it to our children and our grandchildren.

Thank you very much for coming.