

OK, you can start.

OK, to begin with, could you tell us your name and your maiden name, where you're from?

My name is Rosalie Schiff, from my maiden name is Baum. I was born in Krakow, Poland. And I am a holocaust survivor.

Could you tell us a little bit about your family life, what was your home life?

My home life was very good. We had a very close relationship with all the relatives. We came together often, especially on holidays and weekends. I had a very good childhood. I think this is what kept me going emotionally.

When were you born?

I was born in 1922, December 20.

OK. Could you tell us a little bit about your brothers and sisters, what your parents did?

My sister was three years younger than I was. And my little brother, he was about six years younger. And they all died in concentration camps.

What about your mother and father? What did they do?

My father was-- he had a factory of insulated walls, and one in Poland. He invented this. And then he had-- we used to cook on wood in Poland, in the wood, the wooden ovens. And my father had another business that he sold the wood to homes and factories.

Tell us a little bit about your house and how everybody got along. What was your house like?

Well, we fought, my sister and I like, all children do. And my brother didn't, because he was the baby. And my father was a very strict father, not to the extreme strict. But he taught us from right to wrong. I never had too much money, because he didn't believe in it. He said, if you work for it, you're going to get it.

When I brought him lunch with the maid to his place of business, he gave me \$0.50, and he raved that I did something.

And sometimes I used to dislike him. As a matter of fact, we had a housekeeper. And she was putting on my socks and shoes until I was 15 years old. And I used to kick her, as all spoiled children do. And I used to buy her off with silk stockings that my grandmother gave it to me. Until one day she got very angry at me. She said, if you do it one time more, I'm going to tell you daddy. Of course, this meant a punishment. And I did it one time more, and she went to my father and told him.

I had to stay under the table all night without food. And my mother said, you are just terrible, father, to your children. How can you do that? But when I was in concentration camp, I told often about it, how much I admired this man.

Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

About the town that you grew up in, tell us a little bit about-- how did you notice things start to change?

Well, the war broke out in 1939. And my father, there was a gossip going on that all men are going to be killed, and they going to leave just the children and women. So my father and his partner went to Lwow. I don't know how to say it in English. And they got separated, as I talked to his son the other day.

And my father went another way, and they went another way. But the partner is now 90 years old. And I don't know. He told me the true or not, but he said that the Russians were chasing him, and he fell and dropped of a heart attack. So I don't know what is really the true.

You mean your father?

Pardon me?

You mean your father?

Yeah. And my mother and my sister and I and my brother stayed. And in beginning of the war, they took my mother, and told her she has to leave, because she doesn't have a job. So she took all three of us, and we left to a small town near Krakow.

And my mother and my sister had typhus. And they left us in the house, the Germans, with no food, with no medication, nothing. They just shaved my mother's head, and my sister's too. And I really don't know how I survived that, because I could have got typhus too.

Then they took them with very little belongings, they brought him to Krakow, to ghetto.

They took you back to Krakow?

Yes.

How long were you in this house, in this town?

In this town, I don't remember really, because I don't remember dates at all, as I tried very hard to push the whole thing away. And we had in the ghetto one room with no windows. It was just like a warehouse, and all of us were living there. And my mother had cancer, had a mastectomy. This was a terrible trauma for us children, because we were left little children with a sick mother. So secretly, my mother had a breast removed.

And my father never came back. So then when the ghetto was formed, they said whoever is working is going to get a stamp to stay. And who doesn't work, they took to exterminating camps. And I didn't have permission to stay, because I didn't work. I couldn't find any jobs. My sister did.

But staying in the line with my sister and my brother and mother, a German took me out from the row, and said, oh, what a pretty girl. And he said, they're not going to kill you. And he gave me a stamp to leave. It was just luck.

At that time, did you know that people were being killed?

Not really, because it was beginning, and we didn't know where they were going, or whatever.

Do you remember at the beginning of the war, how did you feel about the war coming on? Was it--

Well, it came on so suddenly that I didn't-- we really didn't know what hit us.

There was no warning that it was coming?

No, not at all. And then they were starting to take the people away in those-- how you call those wagons that we have? What they transport the cows in it, cattle or horses.

Cattle cars.

Yeah. And they took my mother, and they took my sister.

Did you see that happen?

No. They just took them away.

What were the last memories that you have of seeing your family?

Well, the last memories, I don't know what. They took him away so quickly, that I didn't have even time to think about it. And I was going already with my husband.

Could you tell us about your getting married and--

Yeah, well I was going with my husband. And my mother said, how can I leave her? She's just a child, immature little child? So my husband said, don't worry. I'll take care of her. And we got married in ghetto by a rabbi, but with a band on my arm, with about two witness--

What do you mean a band on your arm?

The star of David. And with just a few witness. And it was such a horrible marriage, I mean the vows that we took were so horrible. I had such a longing for a wedding, like every girl does. And my aunt was there, one the one that we found in her picture, and my grandmother. And that's all.

So we lived in one room with three or four families in ghetto, just divided by sheets or blankets. And my husband's family was taken away also, just a sister got left, was left. And then I hid my grandmother. I didn't want them to kill her, I loved her so much.

And they took her. They took her. I just couldn't live anymore. I just went to pieces. But I knew I had to get over, because the Germans are going to kill me. So I just took a hold of myself, and they made the ghetto smaller.

A lot of people were taken to-- I don't know, away with the wagons. And we didn't realize where they were going. My mother had a robe, a long robe that was made of silk. And I don't know how you call those gold pieces. How do you call those?

You mean the buttons? No.

Just coins?

Yeah, coins, gold coins. And she had every button was made of those gold coins.

And she said, here. Take this. Maybe this can save you when you sell it. What did I know what I was going? They took the whole cloth, everything away from us. And they made the ghetto smaller. And we went to labor work every day. And then one day--

Were you still with your husband at this time?

Yeah, we're still together. And then they made a concentration camp in Krakow. It was just horrible. They killed so many people, and hanged. We had to stand outside and look how they are hanging and beating people. One day, they brought my husband for sabotage.

And sabotage meant-- I don't know, or he took some food, or whatever they could find on anybody. And they brought him in, in the camp. And I was just wild. I knew they're going to kill him. The SS man, his name was Goeth. He was just like an animal, like a murderer. He killed anybody.

He could walk in camp on the street from one barrack to another one. He shot, and shot everybody. One night they put them up on a hill, where is a beautiful monument that we saw three years ago when we were in Poland. And carried them, and they fell down from the little hill, and then my husband, they beat him up real bad. He didn't kill him by really just plain accident, because before he had a group that he killed all the

people. So he had enough blood for the day. So it was just lucky that he didn't do it.

Then we went to all kind of chores. We had carrying heavy irons from one place to another, carrying rocks. As a matter of fact, I got something here, a vein popped out from carrying heavy stuff. And one day, I went to work out of the camp and I never came back. My husband went just hysterical.

And by his own will, he went to Auschwitz because he thought that I went to Auschwitz too. And then I was all alone. And they took us to Skarżysko concentration camp, was a labor camp.

Where was that?

In Poland. And we were working in an ammunition factory. And how terrible thought came to our heads that we are making bullets for our loved ones. It was horrible. We were covered with lice. We were beaten. They made appells every day. We had to stay in the camp, undress completely, like animals. And they shoot every minute somebody else.

I remember I had one friend who helped me, brought me sometimes a piece of bread, or a carrot, or whatever he could. He went to the men's room. And the Germans saw him. And he took him and hanged him. It was a terrible experience, terrible experience, because he was such a good person. He helped me. I had to stand there and watch him being hanged.

And then when I forgot in ghetto, the religious Jews had beards, long beards or rabbis. They took a match and put the beards on fire. And then when they exterminate, when they start on the children in ghetto, they threw them against the wall with their heads, and threw them through the fourth, or fifth, or sixth floor. It was an orphanage. And there was like a river on the street, with blood, and eyes, and little hands, and little feet.

This stayed in my mind until now, it was like a river of blood. And then I saw a pregnant woman, about nine months pregnant. And a German stuck a knife in her, and she just fell bad. Of course, I didn't know what a child meant at this time until I got pregnant with my oldest son. Can't do it anymore.

I thought that somebody is going to do it to me too. So I always lived in fear through the whole nine months. Well, going back to Skarżysko, we went out to work every day in the morning with one slice of bread and a little soup. That's all we got to eat. And one time, I said, well, I'm not hungry. I'm not going to eat today. Then I have more for tomorrow.

And I put-- wrapped in an old dirty paper this piece of bread. And I was sleeping with it like this, so nobody would steal it. Of course, we were covered with lice. So the bread had lice on it next day. And I just shook off the lice, and I ate it. It made me sick for years, how people can turn to animals.

But one never know what means to be hungry, and don't have clothes or a change of clothes. One time I went to the ladies room, and the lice were biting on me so bad, I couldn't stand it. So I wanted to take a shower. And when I got back, the woman that was in my department, the German woman that took care of us, she was horrible. Pawłowska was her name.

And she took me aside and said, where have you been? I said, I just had to run to the bathroom. And she, her husband was about 6' 4" tall. And they put me on the table. I was covered with boils, probably from being undernourished. And he told me to undress, undress myself, whatever I had on me, just a jacket and a skirt that was painted yellow as a Jew.

And two men stand on both sides, and beat me to death. I was just a bloody mess. I thought I never will get up, and have the guts to go. Next day, I was hurting. I was black and blue all over. But I had to go to work, otherwise they would kill me. So I went to work. And I was just so broken down I didn't even want to live anymore. Oh God help me that somebody would shot me from the back, it would have been such a relief.

But it never happens when you want it, I guess. So at night one time, I went to the bathroom which was far away from where we slept at night. And a German pointed the gun to me and said, where are you going? I

said I just want to go to the bathroom. I had dysentery so bad at this time. I don't know it was from the slice of bread what I eat, or whatever they put in the soup. I just could not stand it. I lost so much weight.

And I remember one man said, oh, I know your father. I know where you come from. You have to stand here so hungry, my god. You had everything when you were at home. Look what can become of a human being. He brought me apple. And this is what stopped my dysentery some.

And then they took me to Częstochowa. From there, I don't know.

Do you remember how long you were--

No. I tried so hard to push the years and the memories away.

How did you live day to day? How did you cope day to day? How did you feel?

Well, I felt like I didn't want to live. I just didn't want to live. I remember in Skarżysko was a girl, pregnant of course, from her husband. He was sent somewhere else. And when the baby was due, somebody had a rag, and she just tied herself real tight, so the Germans would not see that she is pregnant. And she got in a labor probably five or six months, and we delivered the baby. And threw it in the bathroom.

Yeah. Threw a screaming baby to the bathroom. I have to stop. I can't take.

You're doing a good job. Could you--

Let an innocent baby-- I found the girlfriend that was with me in concentration camp that lived in the same house that I did. We were friends from childhood. She was young. She was my sister's friend. And one time, the Germans came in. And I said, Lucy, just cover yourself up with anything you can, and don't move. And I was standing in front of her. So nobody will know that anybody is laying there. She was skinny and little. That's the way I saved her life.

And then in Skarżysko, we were together in Krakow, Plaszow. And in Skarżysko, she went with the same transport. So she was so little and skinny, she was sure that they're going to kill her. And I said, stand beside me, and stand on your tiptoes. And she did so, and she's alive today. Thanks, god.

But the day to day, we were just pushing time, and it's never going to end anyway. So we'd be all dead. So what's the difference? And how many times at night I went to the ladies room, and I prayed to god, please god, let them kill me. What is the use to live like this? I don't want to live. But--

Did you think you'd die?

Pardon me?

Did you think you would live or die?

No, I didn't think I'm going to live. I was very immature. And I didn't know how to cope with the situation. But when you have to, you have to, I guess. So somebody up there likes me maybe.

Then Częstochowa, we were at the same camp. There were no ovens in the camps that I was, just hard labor. They took people every day, every day, and shot. From here down, so they made a big hole, and all people were naked, like animals around, men and women, and they were shooting. Until this day, I don't like to go on escalators down, because of this scene.

Every one of us has some hang-ups, and this was with me. This is with me, rather. And I don't know. I don't know what to say the rest of it.

What kind of labor did you do at--

Knocking the rocks with the hammer, or carrying iron from one place to another, or in Skarżysko I was working in ammunition factory.

OK.

In the second camp that you were in, tell us a little bit more about that camp.

It was the same thing, the same thing that in Skarżysko. I didn't see the ovens, because it was not an exterminating camp. It was just a labor camp.

Tell us some of your experiences in that second camp.

In the second camp, I was on-- we had A, and B, and C. The C, that were yellow people. My aunt that survived it, passed away two years ago, that I showed you her pictures. She was in barrack C. Everybody was yellow. There were yellow people.

What do you mean yellow?

From the-- I don't know, what--

You mean their skin turned yellow?

Skin--

From jaundice.

That's right, all of them were yellow. Terrible they looked. So many people died over there. Because before war, they paid very good wages, working at this part of the factory. But they didn't do it for long, because everybody got tuberculosis.

And lots of people died of tuberculosis. So luckily, I was on the A part. But the people from C came through the wire, electric wires, and we saw them. We threw them something to eat, because we knew that they are a lot worse off than we were. And--

They were working with things that made their skin yellow?

Yes, the powder. And I don't know how you call it.

Nitrite.

That's right. And they turned yellow from that. They were just falling like flies there.

But your aunt survived?

My aunt survived. She ran away several times with my little cousin. And of course, they killed the cousin in Krakow. I remember she was such a smart little girl, such a cute little girl. She told the Germans, please don't kill me. I can peel potatoes in the kitchen. I can do a lot of things. I can clean.

He took a gun and shot her.

Did you see that?

No, no. But my aunt told me. She saw it. My aunt, unfortunately was very mentally ill from the camp. She passed away a few years ago. And then--

You said that you were in the A department.

Yes.

What did you-- and those people worked in the-- you all worked in the ammunition factory?

Yes. But not as bad as those. They were I think working directly with some kind of a powder that made them, most of them had tuberculosis from this powder. I don't know really what it was.

Were you aware of what was going on in the world? Did you think that--

No, we were cut off. No newspapers, no nothing, nothing. No, just like animals.

You didn't know--

Every day.

You weren't aware of the--

No.

--ovens?

Not at all, not at all. Not at all. We didn't know where they were taking them in the boxcars.

When did you learn?

When? After the war. Well, toward the end of the war, we suspect already that is that they must kill those people that they are taking.

Did you-- when did you realize that your mother, and your brothers, and your friends were probably dead?

Well, when we were standing in a row waiting for permission of die or live, they took them right away. And it was a horrible, horrible trauma. My brother was just a little nine-year-old child, didn't even look Jewish.

In the camps, when did you start to see things were starting to change, that the war was coming to a close?

Well, when I was in Czestochowa, they put us in one big hole. We heard already the planes going. But who would suspect that we can walk on streets sometimes? It was not unbelievable.

You had no hope.

No. No hope at all. No hope at all. So towards the end of the war, they put us in a big hole. And we were already so-- so demolished and skinny and hungry, that it-- it didn't matter or I'm going to live or not. What's the difference?

So when they put us in the hole, a German came in, and came to me, and told me. We are lost, and for you comes new life. So I didn't know what he was saying. And I went to the girls that worked with me. And I told them. You heard what he said? Well, we heard the planes already. He said maybe we're going to be free. Is it possible? Free? What means to be free?

And next day, we got up, not got up. We were in one corner, one on top of the another, because it was so cold. It was in January. It was below zero. And there was no heat or anything in this hole. They took off about 3/4 of the people, took them with the boxcars away. And I was the one that stayed. So I was freed December 17, 19--

'44?

Yeah.

Where did they take these others? To the ovens. They burned them all.

Why didn't they take you?

I don't know, just-- just luck, just luck.

Tell us about the liberation. Who came?

We came-- we got up in the morning, and the Germans were gone. So how do you walk free on the street? Is it possible? It's not possible to walk free on the streets. So we got out slowly from the doors, the electric wires and everything. We opened the doors. And we were afraid to walk on the streets, because we didn't know how-- we didn't know how with how the guards standing behind us and shooting, and beating, and shooting, and beating. This was every day when we went to work. Every day.

And every day in the barrack where we slept, this girlfriend next to me was dead. This girlfriend was dead. So we lived with dead people really. We were barely alive, because we were so weak. And most of them had dysentery. Who had dysentery, they killed them immediately, because they didn't-- they knew that they cannot survive, and they cannot do their jobs. So they killed them immediately.

So every day, the SS woman came to us, and asked us who has dysentery. Of course, we didn't want to give out this information. She-- she took for instance, me aside, and asked me, or this or this had dysentery. I said, no. Nobody gave one another out.

But every day they were shooting and killing, every day.

Tell us more at the end.

At the end, we were going out very slowly, sticking our head out, and walking, and walking. It was so cold and snow with wooden shoes, with no stockings, with nothing warm. And my legs are frozen here until this day. And I started to spit out blood. I didn't know what was the matter with me. I thought maybe I have tuberculosis, coughing and spitting out blood.

So the first step we went to a hospital in Częstochowa. We went there. We had already how we walked on streets like animals, because we didn't know how to walk free, like you normally walk on streets. And every time we saw a saw a Russian soldier, of course, we didn't know it was Russian or whatever was going on. We were hiding behind trees or whatever.

And I went in a hospital. I found a box of chocolate there, cherry covered chocolate. And I had a whole group with girls. We were together. And I took this box of chocolates under my cover at night, and I ate it all. I ate it all. And I was so sick. I had dysentery so bad. So in this hospital, I begged him to give me something for dysentery. And they did. And of course whatever they gave me stopped.

Then we were going slowly toward a city where we were born.

How did you feel about liberation? Were you happy or were you still--

No, it didn't matter to me at all. I knew I'm all alone. I knew by this time that I'm all alone. But it was very hard to take your own life, very hard. It was easy to die there. Because if I would eat it all probably, maybe I would have be dead. But who wants to kill himself?

Did you have friends that you made, friends in the camp?

Yeah, we were four or five girls together from the same city. And slowly we were going toward Krakow.

How about with the Russians? Did you see much of them?

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. How did they treat you? Not too good, not too good at all. I'd rather don't say it.

Did they give you food?

No.

Where did you get your food?

We-- we were going through little towns, and picked up some carrots, you know dugged out some carrots, or digged out potatoes, or whatever we could. We didn't have any place even to wash them. You'll be surprised what you can eat when you're hungry. So slowly I was going towards Krakow.

And of course, I don't remember everything. Most important things I don't remember. So-- I remember we stopped in a small town. And somebody gave us some bread. So we divide the bread in four or five pieces, and we had for a day or two something to eat.

Then we hitchhiked to Krakow, what meant hitchhiked? We didn't go just with anybody. We were afraid. Anybody with a--

Uniform.

Uniform was not our cup of tea, because we couldn't even look at him, scared to death. And when I came to Krakow finally, I went on a-- on a train, on a boxcar. Then we were jumping off, because we didn't have any tickets. We didn't pay for the fare.

And I came to Krakow. What do you do? I have nightmares about a big yard. In Europe they have those rocks, not the yard like here with grass.

You mean cobblestones?

Yeah, yeah.

And I had nightmares until this day that I run in the door and I cross with another door, and I run out and the Germans are chasing me. I have very often nightmares about children, how they killed the children, their eyes and little hands. I couldn't. I can't forget that. It was just horrible. How can you attack a little human being that was so precious to the parents, that is so precious today to the parents, how can you attack and throw it with the feet against the wall, and blood was just running on the streets.

At this time, I didn't know that made such a horrible impression on me, until I got pregnant. That I wanted so badly something to hold of my own. The all blood relationship was gone, nothing left. So I wanted the baby. And I wasn't really in a shape to have a baby, because I was spitting out blood. When my husband came, when I met with my husband too.

Tell us a little bit about what happened to you as soon as you got to Krakow.

OK. When I got to the house where we lived, I walked in, in the apartment where my parents lived. And here I saw the furniture that my mother left. And I said, please, let me in. I will sleep in the corner in a hall. We had a great big long hall. And she said, I don't have room for you. I said, I'm sick. Please let me in. A lot of people slept like in a federation or whatever, on tables, on bare tables with no heat.

And she said, I don't have room for you. Just get out of here. I said, why then give me back my furniture. And you can imagine how I walked in, in this house where my parents lived. It was horrible. I started to cry. What would help me to cry or scream. She didn't have any room for me. So she said on third floor is one man older, college professor, very nice guy. I walked in his apartment. And I asked him or he has a room or something, for that I can sleep, or a corner. He said, no. I don't have much food, he said.

But I already rented the room. So he asked me where are you coming from. I said from concentration camp.

And he said, oh, you were in concentration camp? I don't believe it. I said, yes. He said, because you were in concentration camp, I let you sleep here. I let you stay here. And he gave me a room. I said, of course I have three, four girlfriends with me. And we all need a place to sleep.

He was such a wonderful person. He divided every piece of bread, everything he had to eat, he divided with us. And when I left Poland, I forgot his name. I should really reward him for it. But I struggled for many years. And--

During this time, did you know that your husband was alive?

No. I registered my name in like a community center or whatever, where everybody registered. And I was looking for my name, for my parents name. And nobody came back but was my husband's name that he's alive. No, no. No. I was walking on the street one time, and a girl came to me and said, are you Rosalie Schiff? I said, yes.

You know your husband is alive. And I passed out. When I woke up, I was in a somebody's apartment, all wet, they threw water on me. And got me on my feet back. And since that, I was every day over there in community center, waiting for my husband. And one day, he came about six months after I was freed. But my husband was one of those skeletons that you see.

So they kept him in a hospital there until he gained a little weight.

How did you feel during this time?

Which time you mean?

Around the time after you learned that your husband was alive.

I tell you, I felt of course, being young, being locked up for so many years, I wanted to live a little bit, you know? I was young. I wanted to sing and dance and be a young person. So I had invited some people, young people over to our apartments. And we were having a good time. And one time, somebody came in. I think I don't remember exactly, and told me that my husband is on his way back.

So he came to the-- I took a little chair, a little stool, and sat there all day long, wait for him, until late at night. Until finally, I got tired of it, because I thought maybe it's just a lie that he's not alive. And I-- I went home to the house where I lived. And he came one day. It was such a such a wonderful happy surprise that he is alive.

But my husband registered himself when they took me to Skarżysko. He registered himself, and wind up in Auschwitz. He thought that I was in Auschwitz too. So we met again, and when my husband said, why don't we stay here and make a life for ourselves? And I found the engineer that operated my father's factory, was one in Poland, just only one. He invented this himself. And he wanted to start a business with us.

I said, never. I will not stay in Poland. If I have to be a beggar all my life, I'm leaving. No way, not in Europe at all. I won't stay.

So what happened then, after your husband got out of the hospital?

He went toward Krakow, toward home. And we met back.

What about--

He was still in the-- he was in the hospital.

Yeah, for six months, yeah.

In and around Auschwitz.

Six months.

And then he came back?

No, he was in Buchenwald.

Oh, OK.

Yeah. But he was--

He was freed in Buchenwald.

And he was in that area and he stayed there for six months, and then came back?

Of course, yeah, they took him probably to the hospital. He was freed by the Americans, so they took him to the hospital, and got him on his feet a little bit. Then he went toward Krakow.

Tell us what happened after you all were reunited. How did you leave Krakow?

We just left. I think we were hitchhiking on the-- on trains or whatever. We left. We came to on the border of Austria, and no, I don't know where they stopped us. Soldiers stopped us with guns like this. And I was just terrified. I said, let's go back. I don't want to go anywhere. And they let us through the border, and we went to Austria.

In Austria, we lived in DP camp for three or four years, where I had my oldest son.

What was that like? Tell us a little bit about that.

Well, the UNRRA sent us packages every week. And that's what we had to eat. And we lived in one room, all kinds of people together, from all kinds of walks of life, all kinds of nations. Of course, all of them were Jewish refugees. And we lived in one place. It was one apartment with where we shared the kitchen.

And the ones that had a child, lived and got a bigger bedroom. So they were fussing and fighting who's going to cook first, or who's going to do whatever first. And we didn't have enough water in daytime. So when my little son was born, I had to wash the diapers at night, or cook, or whatever. It was not very pleasant. But it was wonderful what we had.

And then we left Austria, and came to United States.

When was that?

In 1949.

Was there anybody here for you, or did you just leave?

No, no. What I was really so surprised and until this day, like I told Jamie on the telephone, that why nobody took interest in us, we were-- we had this emotionally disturbed, or hungry, or sick. We had to pull for ourselves. Nobody took interest for us. Just UNRRA to send us some packages, or money, or whatever to like a commune.

We had a big place where we got our food weekly. And I remember I was so sick. I didn't have enough red corpuscles in my blood, and hernias all over my stomach from carrying so heavy.

So I was anemic when I was pregnant with my oldest child, of course, in fear what I saw previously. And I thought somebody is going to sure kill me. I thought why am I so dumb? I'm free. You can't believe it. You couldn't believe it, that you're going to be free. How can anybody walk on streets, and eat, and sleep in a

clean bed? How can you do that? How people live, how the world is functioning.

The world for us was killing and beating. And we were so mistreated, like the animals. So I was pregnant with my oldest son. I could stand and talk to somebody, and I passed out, from not having enough blood to carry on a child. But I want this child so badly.

Did you work when you were in Austria?

No. Or did your husband?

Not really, no, because where are you going to go to work? You were displaced person. So the UNRRA just sent us something to eat, and that's all. The pregnant women got a little bit more milk, or a little bit more food or whatever. But this was our life.

And Michael was born in Austria?

Yeah, yeah. Michael was born with a club foot because I was too small, and too sick, and not capable to have a child yet. But I didn't want to wait. I wanted to have something a little, small to hold it. I overprotected this child, because it was all I had, that little child.

So I could stand and talk to someone, and I just passed out. I had blood transfusions. And I had, of course, the medical care in Austria was pretty good, not that there was any catering to us or there were so many people with emotional problems. They have them until now. And nobody took any part of seeing what was wrong. Nobody.

How has this-- how did your experiences in the war, in the holocaust, affect you? How have they affected you now?

I talk many times to myself and say, what are you going to live with what happened? You can't. You got a responsibility to your children. You want to have children? You cannot raise him with holocaust. So I tried to push it away, and I tried not to think about it. I don't like to talk about it.

Sometimes, when I talk to another holocaust survivor, like day before yesterday, my father there was my idol. And when I talk about him, I always cry. Of course, now I'm a lot better. I couldn't even talk about him. When he was mentioned, I had to run out from the room and cry, because I couldn't talk about it. What a terrible disappointment this was, so many people from Poland went deep in Russia to Siberia.

Of course I thought that he was in Siberia. But what a disappointment this was that he didn't come back. He was the strength he gave me when I was a child to correct me, to teach me how to eat, to teach me not to mistreat people. Everything he taught me. And at the time, being a child. I thought I hate it because who wants to sleep under the table when I do something wrong?

And he believed in discipline. He was a great man, rich and smart. He was a great man. He did that all by himself. So a few years ago, I went to my uncle from Toronto that I was raised with. And my other uncle, I have one aunt left that she was living in London, and the uncle that I was raised with in Toronto. We are very close.

And I went and I saw my uncle for the first time since I was just a little girl. And he started to talk about my daddy. And I just run out. I started to cry. And I told him, I know you don't know what I feel. But please don't talk about my father at all. I don't want to hear it. About three years ago, we took the tape of our-- we have a video tape of our anniversary. We took it to Toronto to show to my aunt, and my father is mentioned, of course in speeches and everything, because my son made up the speeches for us, and he talked about my father.

So she couldn't take it. She walked out and started to cry. Everybody loved my father. And I don't know. You have to live. You can't hate. I don't hate because I'm not able to hate. I might hate the language. I might hate certain customs. But I can't hate people. How can you hate? I am a very forgiving person. And this is

what I learned also from my daddy.

I learned a lot of things. You see, sometimes you think that a 15-year-old child doesn't know anything. Yes, those years are the most important years in your life. Yeah, not that I didn't have a good mother. I had a very good mother. But she was a softy. And shows you that children need the discipline. If you can't give them this, you cannot give them anything. Because money is not important to give it to children.

How did your holocaust experiences affect your children in terms of bringing them up?

Yeah, well, my son--