

But 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, and 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 he was-- 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 fear, but please don't talk about my father at all. I don't want to hear it.

About three years ago, we took out the tape of our-- we have a videotape 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 hate. I don't hate, because I'm not able to hate. I might hate the language. I might hate the certain customs, but I can't hate people. How can you hate? I'm a very forgiving person.

And that's 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.

And 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, our oldest son, I think he maybe didn't want to be Jewish. He was a brilliant, brilliant child always, very high IQ. You know him, right? And he wants to push away the-- what's the difference? I don't want to be Jewish, because my mother and father went through that.

And not that I understood it at this time, because who was I? A little girl from concentration camp. And I didn't know how a baby is supposed to be raised, or how to have a baby, or how to care of a baby. And for years, I think, he didn't want to be Jewish.

But now he accepted that.

Do you think that that his feelings, that his reaction was because of--

I think so.

--of your--

And I had the Polish man that was over us. Some Polacks, some Polish people were over us, watching us to work. One wanted to take me out on arisch papers. And I told him, no, I want to die right here. I want to die like my-- I realized already that my mother, and sister, and brother, were not alive. So I said, here I want to die. I don't want to go anywhere.

Two of them wanted to take me out, but I didn't want to go. Yeah. And I regretted many times myself, so I didn't blame my son that he didn't want to be Jewish.

What parts of all of this do you still live with? What's most vivid?

What I just told you. What I just told you, about the children. You asked me on the telephone why we are so obsessed with children?

And I can't explain this to my children. I can't. They didn't want this overprotection. They didn't want that. But I was so overprotective. My [INAUDIBLE], don't take away now my children. Till this day, I don't know how I could live without one of them.

So my daughter didn't understand what I meant with it. She kind of disliked me because I overprotected her.

What do you mean by that?

Oh, don't go here, and don't move here, and now you're going to get hurt. And eat enough. And I run on the streets, and push the food inside the mouth, because of course, that's the way I was taught, and what I went through without food. So I just want my children to have everything. But they don't understand. Mother, I don't want to eat. But I'll tell my youngest one, don't leave anything on the plate, because there are a lot of hungry people, and that's the way they get fat.

So I took my daughter to the Holocaust gathering last year. And she told me, for the first time, there were mothers who went out during the speeches. And the pictures were horrible, what they showed us. I'm not interested to see that again, so I just turn my head away. And I wanted my daughter to see it.

We got out of there. She said, Mother, now I understand you. Now I understand you. But it's not right what I'm doing. I know it, overprotect somebody, because they have to live their own life.

As you look back, do you ever ask yourself why did you survive and your family didn't?

Well, I ask myself why I survived. And for-- because I was lucky. That's all.

There's one time that this German took me out from the row. I was really lucky, because my mother went at this time, my sister, and everybody went. So just luck. Pure luck. Not a hero. Just pure luck.

Do you ever feel guilty that you survived and they didn't?

No, because I say just that this is luck. That's all. I didn't want to survive, but I did. I really didn't want to survive. I thought to myself when my father is going to be gone-- I counted on my father that he be back from Russia. But no, he died somewhere. I don't know where.

The partner told me that he dropped of a heart attack. And my-- and somebody else-- excuse me-- told me that he died in Siberia. So I don't know what is true, what is not true. I really don't know.

What would you tell other people who have undergone horrors like you have undergone? What's the best way for them to cope with that after it's over?

Well, when you have a family, your responsibility is so great to them, not to bring them to this situation. Not to bring them into this situation. If they want to be interested in it, like Michael, my son, did-- and my daughter cannot take it. She just breaks down and cries.

She had a speech to make on my anniversary. She couldn't talk. She just broke down immediately and cried.

But I didn't talk so much about the concentration camp when they were little, because, as I said, I told myself there is no use to remember. Not that I have forgotten. No.

I don't watch anything with violence. It just upsets me terribly. Even cowboy movies upset me. Anything with violence.

I don't want to think about it. I see myself in it, and I don't want it.

As you look back, can you explain-- do you have any way of explaining what happened? How do you explain it to yourself?

I explain it to myself that some crazy men-- some crazy men-- like there are a lot of crazy people in this world. And in our country there is wonderful too. And he had a hate, maybe, for the Jewish nation or whatever. I never read his background, so I can't tell. I cannot tell what made him tick.

But he just probably wanted-- was insecure himself, and he wanted to kill. No explanation.

What really upsets me, that a lot of the Germans, the SS men, were like cattle. They went with him together. They called it a [GERMAN]. A [GERMAN] means-- how would you say in English? A must. Or--

A what? I'm sorry. I didn't--

A must. You must do what I tell you. And they were afraid of their own lives too, because if they wouldn't do it, the SS men, they probably won't be alive themselves. But a lot of them volunteered.

You said some things about how the Russians treated you after the liberation, and you weren't very specific. What kinds of things did they do or not do that you think maybe they should--

Russians, they were raping a lot of survivors, women. And I had a incident myself. Some Russian girl was with us. And she told me, come on. Sleep in this bed, so one day you get a rest.

And this man came, and then thought that this was her. So I started to scream, I have terrible-- no, no to the Russians, because they were not very nice. Not at all.

And they took advantage--

They were soldiers from the front.

And they were-- did they--

I didn't want to stay in Poland, because I knew the Russians are going to be there, and I wanted to just go. Just go, get away.

Took a trip to Poland three years ago to show my Michael and Bobby-- my daughter didn't go with us-- what kind of circumstances we were living. And I didn't want to go. I didn't want to face it. I didn't want. But my husband told me, come on. If you cannot do it, you stay in hotel.

And when we went toward Kraków, my son was smart enough to rent a hotel on the outskirts of Kraków. So we slowly get used to entering the horror. Because Kraków was-- the other cities didn't bother me, but Kraków was the horror for me.

So the same night that we came to Holiday Inn-- I don't know how far. This was a few miles from Kraków, from the city-- I didn't sleep all night long. I took sedatives, and I took sleeping pills. I was up all night, about 3 o'clock.

Finally, I got up from bed, and I went hysterical. I screamed and yelled, William, why did you bring me here? Don't you see? Don't you see, they're killing on the streets? Look how much blood is on-- I went just hysterical.

He slapped me, and I thought to myself, oh, my god, what am I saying? And I looked through the window, and I saw that it was not so.

Then I went to a bakery, and I took a loaf of bread, and I ate it so quickly. And I hold it like this. So Michael looks at me, and he laughs. Of course, he knew why I did it. Just automatically I did that. And started to tear the bread apart. And I ate.

And Bobby asked me, Mother, how can you eat this bread? And I said, Bobby this is delicious. I was here, and I didn't have the bread. So to me, it was like a symbol of hunger. Terrible.

And I went to the place, to the house where my parents lived. I saw the furniture again. And she probably recognized me. I gave her a couple of dollars. She let me in.

And I saw my father's furniture there. My son made some pictures there. And we said a prayer for the dead downstairs, that I saw my daddy for the last time. And I was glad I went, because I found those pictures. They are very dear to me. Any pictures dear to me.

But on the last Holocaust survivor was a very nice man from Belgium. He said, isn't that sad that those people stand here, and cry, and beat their heads against the wall. They are so nervous, just to find something they can touch from childhood. And is that true? I have the same feeling. Is that true?

I found this girlfriend, that I saved her life, in Baltimore. She is so nervous. I have never seen anybody as nervous as she is. She had open-heart surgery and a lot of operations.

But oh, I wanted to find, in Kraków, the door that I run. This was so important to me to find.

The what?

The door that I run in when the Germans are chasing me, that I dream about it. And I couldn't find it. I went from door to door.

And now I don't know where I wouldn't go back. Maybe I can find this door, so I won't dream about it anymore.

Do you still dream about it?

Oh, yeah. The Germans run after me, or they're attacking my grandchildren, or my children away. Because when-- every woman that is pregnant, she prays just for a healthy child, right? And in my mind, for several years, when my son was born, just the other children-- it didn't bother me.

When my son was born, I thought for sure somebody is going to kill me and him, for sure. When I saw even here in United States a policeman in uniform, that is nothing to me today, I was automatically frightened. I froze up automatically in Austria and in Poland. And how afraid I was of the Polish police when I went back to Poland. How afraid I was.

So I think bad memories-- of course, everybody can say I have a reason for it. But I don't find a reason for it, because life goes on, and everybody has to see what they can do to be more happy for themselves. Today I'm happy. I have three healthy children, and beautiful grandchildren, and thanks god for everything.

I very seldom think about it. Sometimes I talk a lot about my father. A lot. Of course, as you know, he was my favorite person. And whenever I make a step in my life, whatever I do, I always remember, Daddy told me so.

And I know a lot of survivors that came out from a better background, they always go back to their childhood. Yeah.

Is there anything else that you'd like to add to the record?

Well, really I made this very short, because a lot of things I don't want to remember. So I just said the most that bothered me. The most that bothered me.

Is there anything else you would like to-- anything else you'd like to say?

The hatery will not get anybody any place. Not at all. You can't hate. You can dislike something, but hatery is a illness in my opinion.

Of course, who has a better reason to hate than I do? For years I was jealous, for instance, Christmas time, or our holiday time, or any holiday time. I was jealous that people have family. There were cars on the streets. People went out from the cars. They left.

Nobody came to see me. Was a empty house. And that's the way my children were raised.

And it is not easy on Holocaust children. Very hard. Very hard. You don't want to disturb them with your own memories. But I believe that all children need to learn how not to hate, that there is nothing in the world that you can hate as much as to care. This is very important for the young generation to learn.

And I think that the Holocaust children, of course, they are probably all nervous. I don't know. I know mine are. Because it was not easy for them. They were jealous of families. They were jealous of relatives. Who had any relative, they were jealous.

So it was not easy on the Holocaust children, to bring them up. Very hard. Very hard.

So I'm happy. Whatever. They are nice human beings and honest human beings. I'm very happy with them, what they became.

And all Holocaust survivors strive for better future for the children-- all of them. Well, my oldest son went to a gathering in Washington, I think. No, in Washington? In New York, I think. And I didn't go with him. I didn't feel well.

And he came back, and he said, if I were to see what was going on in Carnegie Hall, in New York, right, how the second generation were crying and embracing each other, it was just fantastic. They were-- I don't know who was the entertainer at this time. They played Ani Ma'amin. Means, "I Believe."

And all those children, they felt probably like they have something in common, that they are-- the backgrounds are similar. Of course, a lot of the survivors are very disturbed-- very. We didn't know about mental illness, anything, at this time, and probably to begin with, the parents were not very nice, or maybe it was a very poor background, or not knowing our background. Maybe the mothers were busy surviving, because there were a lot of very poor people in Poland. And until this day, the children suffer for it.

So I don't know. Or those people our right to have any children. They didn't have any right to have any children, because they just damaged the children. But it's hard to tell. I know I wanted children.

If you could say something to my grandchildren, what would you say?

Don't be ashamed for what you are. Be proud for what you are. And learn what you people went through, the history of your own people. And don't hate. You can dislike, but don't hate.

It's very important to learn what you are, and not to be ashamed for what you are.

Something that you didn't tell us at the very beginning that I'm curious about, was your background what you would consider Orthodox Jewish, or--?

I'm going straight back to my daddy. My daddy taught us whatever they-- they were throwing rocks at my father because, of course, he went to synagogue Saturday or Friday. And he said that when one is going to come to the point where people don't hate each other. And, oh, did I answer your question?

No, I just wondered what your-- were your parents shomer Shabbos? Did they observe the Sabbath?

Yeah. Oh, yes. Oh, yeah. I was raised in a more Orthodox house, yeah. But I was raised with charities that you have to do for people. And this what I practice right now too. Wherever is somebody needs something, I always go to help them.

Are you active in any charities now?

Until about two years ago. I got ill. But I was with the Jewish Family Service as a volunteer for the Russians, because I knew how I felt when I came here, how lost I was. And I helped a lot of Russians.

And I went to a old age home, to Golden Acres, which was very hard for me because I turned the clock back and thought to myself, oh my god, my mother and father would be probably here too. So I kind of didn't want to go back, but I pretended that those are my parents.

Especially was one lady was paralyzed. And she said-- when I went there first time I was very upset. I came home. I was very-- I said, I'm not going. Can't hack this.

And this lady said, I need you. The first time, the second time, the third time she didn't have to say I need you. I went by myself.

I believe-- of course, I take my religion as something I was brought up with, and something that you're supposed to do, being a human being. But my main religious outlook is to help others. And it gives me lots of satisfaction.

I drive people to the hospitals. When somebody is ill, I cook for them and bring to their house. And I know that's my-- that's my mitzvahs.

Have you ever been angry because of your experience?

I don't know you can call it anger. Automatically, I'm just a human being. And the word "angry" is like you want to take it yourself. I cannot be angry at everybody. I cannot.

As you talk about these experiences, do you get angry?

Oh, no, I don't get angry. I just wanted to forget and push it away.

You look sad. Do you feel sad?

Well, when I talk about it, yes. But usually I really don't.

Do you think you're pretty successful at putting it away out of your mind.

Well, telling you the true, I'm fighting with myself, because to have it bottled down in my mind is no good. Is not good to store something like this, and not to bring it out.

And I thought I'm going to take a course this year, what Holocaust was, and whatever. But the course was canceled. Otherwise, I wanted to help myself, to train myself how to live with it, which I really don't talk often about it, because, I mean, it's my private feeling.

Do you think that once you recovered from the immediate effects of having gone through this experience, maybe after you came to the United States, have you had any ill-- do you have any ill effects from your experience?

I don't know, really, you would call this an ill effect. I mean, that I don't want to see violence. That I have enough of

violence.

No, I was thinking more physical.

Physical illness?

Yes, I do.

Directly related to what happened to you?

Yes, yes. I have-- my intestines and my stomach are very weak from having to carry heavy stuff. And I get hernias. I had about seven or eight operations.

And I don't know what it is, but when I go on a diet, I feel like the blood pressure goes down. Of course, I had so many blood transfusions, and when I came to Dallas, even, I had to go for B12 shots. And this what was left with me.

But you can hold it. You can hold it in your heart, but you can't hold it in your mind. No. Because that's torture.

So that's why I pushed away all those-- I don't remember years at all, when this happened, and how this-- how it happened, yes, but why this happened, I don't examine it, because I will not find the answer for it. Nope. Just one crazy man did it, and he had cattle to follow him. That's all.

I'm not going to tell you that when at first, when I got out from camp, that I didn't feel hate. Yes, I did. I thought to myself, when I get out, I'm going to pay him back.

But later on, I saw, oh, what am I going to-- hate all my life? You can't. How cruel it is to kill children.

And in ghetto, they took a match. The real religious Jewish people had beards. They put them on fire. You have to look at that. It's very hard. Why they wear a beard, this is nobody's business. It's their private religious, maybe fanatically beliefs, or whatever you want to call it.

And I don't know. To kill little children, they don't-- they beg you to come here on this world. And to kill them the way they did, there is no excuse for them. No excuse whatever.

I don't know. Maybe it made me softer, that I cannot-- I cannot hate. It made me softer towards sick people and people that need help.

And I even understand people who were emotionally disturbed from it. My own aunt was, as a pitiful, pitiful case.

What do you mean, emotionally disturbed?

She lived as a beggar. She had a lot of money. She stored the money away. In her house was no food. And she was terribly emotionally disturbed.

Fortunately, she passed away. I wanted to bring her here to Dallas. And she didn't want to come. She had, in Bronx, in the worst section, an apartment. And she lived there since she came to the States.

And I can see on my uncle that he has some bad feelings and bad memories too. I think all of us do. You can find very seldom people that can turn the clock, and go back to Poland. They can't.

The only reward I had from Poland, that I have those pictures. They are very dear to my heart. This was my daddy's and mother's family. But a lot of people wouldn't be so brave. I don't know what I would want to go back to that, if I would find--

Probably, you see how the Holocaust survivors, they want to have even a picture to hold onto something from their childhood. If I would find some pictures, I might go back to it.

But it wouldn't be easy. It's never going to be easy to go back to it. I don't really want to.

OK.

I can give you an answer for that.

There's a empty feeling, that you don't have anybody at the table for holidays. My children don't know what is a grandmother, what is a grandfather, what is a cousin. They don't have anybody.

A lot of those children have problems from those years, from the way they were raised without any family. My oldest son just looks for family. I love her. Ah, it is so sad. And Mike, he's a brilliant, brilliant boy. He's not a boy. He's a man of 39.

But Mike wants a family so badly. And he was the president for the second generation. He's very active in it. And he's longing for some family.

Until this day, we found somebody, my husband family, in Argentina. He wants to go there and seek for him. So it's very sad. Comes a holiday, there is nobody there. It was very hard all those years. Yep.

Well, I can't tell you how much we appreciate your coming--

Well, you're very welcome. Do you remember this song, Maurice Chevalier. "I don't want to be young anymore." This is with me. I love that I don't-- I would love to be young again, but I wouldn't want to go through again what I went through. Even here in the United States was very hard at the beginning.

Thanks god we are very well to do today, and I can live comfortably. And just God give us the heart, the good heart, so I can see how my grandchildren grow.

And now is so much better. I have three children and three grandchildren. So I have a full table. So it got a little easier. And thanks god they're all normal. That's all I wanted. But it was not easy. No.

If you ask me what I-- or what else I would want to be instead of the Holocaust survivor, I would answer anything, but not a Holocaust survivor. Very hard.

I consider myself better off than maybe others, because I could forgive. Forgive, I don't know. Forget, I don't know. I can tolerate. That's all.

It bothered me, the German language in Germany, which, I mean, what can I have to little children, or to-- to other Germans? All of them were not that bad. No.

There were some of them that were pretty good. Pretty good. I mean, not as as murderer than the SS were, the Wehrmacht. There's a lot of them between the Wehrmacht were pretty good.

But it's even hard to go to Poland. I don't want to hear. I speak Polish at home to my husband, just when I forget myself. And I cannot stand the language, even. I can't. The real Polish language, I can't stand it.

Not that I hate them so much. I dislike them because they didn't like me. So how can I like him? That's right.

OK. I think that would cover this.

It was very hard to talk about it.



You've done an outstanding job. You have really-- I'm really proud of you.

Well, I'll tell you what you are-- what you were raised, in what kind of surroundings. This what will stay with you. All your life, I'm the better-- the best proof of it. It will stay with you all your life.

Can you-- [INAUDIBLE]?

You were...