

We're back with Wiera Goldman and talking about her liberation. Wiera, what happened?

Well, I have a picture here what I will show you, from my father's family. And here are my grandparents. Here are my-- if you want. Here are my grandparents. My grandfather was 75, my grandmother was 70, when they killed them.

This is a cousin who was killed with three kids. Here is my father. He was 41 when they killed him. My mother was 43.

And from the whole family, we were three survivors-- my aunt, my cousin, and me. And now we're the only two survivors. They all--

This aunt, with her daughter, was, with rope, attached to a tree in [NON-ENGLISH]. They did it to all the women and children. And they burned the forest. And the rest of them, I don't know how they died.

So when you were liberated, you had no idea at that time who was left.

When I was liberated, I knew that my sister is dead. I knew that my parents are dead. I really didn't know who survived.

But when I was home, a young girl, I used to write the addresses from my mother's family in Brazil. And when I got liberated, they ask us if we have idea if we have family someplace. And I says, yes, I have family in Brazil. I have in America, too, but I--

So I remember that was-- now I forgot. I remember, that was 48 Gracia Street, Sao Paulo, Brazil. And this was before the holidays, before-- that was our first holiday, being freed.

And they send a telegram. And they heard, on the radio, that I'm looking for them. And I got a telegram back, that they know already about me. And I start to get in touch with them. This was the only family I knew about.

Now, going back a little bit, did you receive medical attention finally?

Well, yeah, after the liberation, you know, like I said, I couldn't walk. I couldn't eat. I ate very little, and I didn't gain weight.

And I still-- you know, in the camps they gave us food that we didn't have a period.

It didn't-- it wasn't pure, you mean?

No, no, no. We didn't had our menstruation. You know? They gave us a food, that we shouldn't be able to have our period.

So I still didn't get the period. And I was so skinny, and I was weak, so I went to see a doctor. And they find that I have a spot on the lung. And he started to treat me with some medication. He got some calcium medicine, and he started to treat me.

And I still was very weak. So they decided to send me to a sanatorium. And I was in a sanatorium for six weeks.

Where was the sanatorium?

That was in Germany-- Gluckstadt. The name of is sanatorium was Gluckstadt. And there was a lot of survivors there.

But you know, suddenly, I became so strong that I wanted to survive-- suddenly, you know?

Do you know why?

Don't ask me. I just-- I wanted-- this was in the sanatorium. I felt that I wanted to survive. And maybe I will start looking, that somebody is there, too.

So I was afraid to mingle with the people, with the sick people-- even, they weren't as sick-- they were like me, but I still was afraid that I will catch the germs. And I was a very good patient. I obeyed all the orders. And in six, seven weeks, I think, I started to gain weight, and I start to eat. I wanted to eat, you know?

And I went back. They sent me back. After six, seven weeks, I was there. I wasn't cured completely, but I was still on medication.

So where did you go, then?

I went back to Neustadt Holstein, to this same place where I was there, you know, where I got liberated. I went there. The girls had already a room for me. And certainly we cleaned it up. We fixed it up. We had six beds, one and the other.

And it was like a dream. Is it really us? Did we really survive? And then we start thinking about what's happened to-- you know, why us? Why couldn't they make it?

And we start, automatically, to going in a normal life. So we got some old dresses. So I made myself a dress, and I helped the girls. We got some clothes.

The UNRRA took over, and they gave us some clothes. They gave us some food-- three times a day, from the kitchen, some food. And I was under the medication for a long time. And I start develop, like a little girl.

Who was providing you with-- were they providing you with food and money, to live?

The UNRRA, the English. This was we under the English. And they provided us with clothes and with food and with medicine, with doctors, with everything. There, I met my husband.

He was a survivor, also.

Sure. He lost a wife with a child, in the war.

He survived with a child?

No, he lost his wife, with a child.

And a child. Oh.

OK? And I met my husband. And you know, it was, should I get married, or I shouldn't get married? You know, it was like, do I need a companionship or I don't need a companionship?

And he was a very nice man. And you know, when I think-- I got married-- it was, like, a joke. You know? My girlfriend's mother was there. She still--

We had two mothers. There is still one mother. We adopted each other-- you know, sisters and mothers and aunts and uncles, you know.

And I got married. That was in-- in the end of '45-- the beginning of '46. And then my son was born, October the 31st--

And he was born in Germany?

'46, yes. Both kids mine were born in Germany. And this is the way we start up a life. We lived, like--

You know, we didn't make money. It's whatever we got from the UNRRA. And then, you know, a Jew goes and buys and sells and this and this. Now, it's coming-- then my son was about three and a half. And my daughter was born in Germany. She was born in '48.

Now, what about your family? Were you finding out, during this time, what had happened to any of them?

No. No, I didn't. But, being in Germany, in Neustadt Holstein, I didn't even know-- I wanted to go home, back home. So we decided, how can we go home? They said that the Russians are willing to take us home. Because an hour and a half from us there were the Russians.

They were there, too. The English liberate us, but the Russians were there too. They came later. We were lucky that we got liberated from the English, not from the Russian, because they tortured us plenty too. They said, how did you survive? You helped the Russians, and you got food, and this is the way you survived.

So we said-- you know, this is really interesting. We got already a dress, and we got a fork and a spoon, and we got a cup, and we got this. Now, we heard we can go to Switzerland. Switzerland wants to take us in. But they will take everything away from us, because they will put us on the ship to Switzerland but we cannot take nothing. Dumb.

How can I share? This is something precious for me. I didn't go. Nobody went, from the girls. A few went.

Now, we can go home to Vilna. The Russians will come to get us. There, we were happy to go home, because, you know, who knows who survived?

We were packed, with our junk-- junk! And the Russians came with the trucks. And when I saw, and a few girls, we saw the Russians with the trucks, with their uniforms, it reminded us like the SS. And I said, oh, no I'm not going.

We were hiding in a cellar. And we heard they were looking-- the names-- calling out the names. But they couldn't find us. So some of the girls went home.

So I stayed in Germany. I didn't go. And this is the way-- you know, we were in Germany. We start to live a normal life, but still it was a camp-- you know, all nationalities. We were together.

We had a federation from the UNRRA. We had English people there-- women, what they tried to help us, like with medication and clothes and food. We were still getting food. You know, it's like, ration food. You know, ration, like butter, sugar. But the Jewish people always managed to live on more than the sugar and the butter and the other things.

And we got to know each other, because it was all kind from all over, from Czechoslovakia, Hungarian, Romanian, Polish Jews, Lithuanian-- from all over, together. And we became like a family. And there were marriages going on.

Like I say, I didn't have a big marriage. We just went to the justice of peace. Because I didn't want it. You know? I didn't even want to have a Jewish wedding.

And you will ask me why. Because I felt, if I don't have my loved ones around me, who cares? Who cares? I didn't even care to have--

But it was the respect. I didn't have a Jewish wedding-- just justice of peace. And--

But you did have some friends there.

Oh, yes, we made a lot of friends. And then there was some girls with whom I got liberated-- like I said, this one mother. I--

What about those people in Brazil that you had tried to find?

Oh, yes, I was in touch with them. And I wanted to go to Brazil. But a lot of people say, no, let's go to Israel.

And suddenly, I got a letter from America. My grandmother had, here in America-- she had three sisters. My grandma came out from a family from 12 children. They were 11 girls and 2 boys. And one died, and one survived-- and the Germans killed them.

So, here in America, from my grandmother, and from Brazil, they had the addresses, so they send them my address to America. And since I didn't want it-- I said, I want to go to Israel. So they said, maybe you want to go to America. Here is a letter, and you go look up the relatives.

So I was, six weeks, in America-- was ready to go back to Germany, because nobody wanted to give us rooms with children. This was in 1950.

And you found the relatives?

Wait. I came to-- how did I come to Cleveland? When I signed our papers, I said I want to go to Cleveland, because I knew I have relatives there. But I didn't say I have relatives. I just said I want to go to Cleveland.

When we were in Bremerhaven in the-- before you go to America, it was a camp there. I was there for three months, because my daughter's vaccination didn't take. So, every time, they took us off from the boat. I couldn't go.

Finally, we are ready to go. My son wakes up, and he said his throat hurts. I said, I'm going to kill myself. I don't want to go no place. I said, this is finished.

So I said to my son-- he spoke Polish already. And the reason I wanted to go out fast from Germany-- because I send him in a nursery school, and when he came home, and he said "Mutti," in German, I said, uh-uh! I'm not staying here. My child is not going to call me "Mutti."

So this, we-- and my husband could stay in Germany. He was a very intelligent man. He knew very well German and Polish and-- and Jewish, certainly. And he was a very active man. And they wanted to give him a business. It's, like, the May Company? Stay in Germany.

And I says, uh-uh-- not me. You want to stay? You're welcome. I go out from Germany. I'm not going to raise my children in Germany.

So we were ready to go on the ship again. And I said, Steve, if you open your mouth I kill you. If they ask you, open your mouth, don't open your mouth!

So we come there. Anita didn't take the vaccination. I says, I'm sorry, this is it. It doesn't take? It doesn't take. So here they want to check his throat, and he wouldn't open.

And finally, we got on the boat. And before I went-- we went through doctors, and we went through-- you see, so many Germans-- Nazis-- came to America. They weren't strict to them, but they were strict to us. If you are a Communist, if you help the Russians, if you did this, if you did this-- and we had to prove that we are innocent people-- survived a war, and we want to have freedom.

And we're going in to the American consul. That was like-- it was like the CIA and the FBI. We were so strict that you just can't imagine-- that I thought, when I come to America, on the street is just gold-- we have to watch how to walk. It has to be so clean.

And we're sitting there, and they ask us questions. And my son, Steve, takes a stamp, and he stamps all the paper on the desk. And I said, that's it. We are not going.

And the consul takes him on his lap. He says, you are going to be good for America. That's what we need. And I didn't

understand we have a dolmetscher.

And she started laughing, because I had tears in my eyes. She said, you're going! You're going, you're going, already-- you're going.

And finally, we got on the boat. And I had X-rays for my lungs. In case they take me for something, I have something to show.

And what do you think? We were 14 days on the boat, till we came-- our boat's name was General Blackford.

It was terrible. The trip was horrible. I was lucky. Because after my daughter was born, I was very sick, and I had to be operated. And I had papers from a doctor, that I cannot carry my child. So they took her, with a buggy, on the boat, and I was the only woman with a buggy on the boat.

And my husband was walking around with Steve. He almost fell in. He had to harness, walking in with him.

And finally we come to America. And we are already in New York. And they put me on the side. They want to see my X-rays. And if something is wrong, I have to go on the island. OK?

And I said, what's now? But somehow, I was lucky. I looked fat. I weighed 180 pounds. Can you imagine, me? I should bring a picture the way I looked, 180 pounds. So how can I be sick?

And finally we got off the boat. The captain wanted to take my daughter, Anita. She was gorgeous. He said he wanted to take her as a gift for his wife. I start crying, because a gift in Jewish is poison.

And the dolmetscher said, no, he doesn't want to poison her. He want to take her for his wife as a gift. It's nice that I can smile about it.

We came to New York. And when I walked down and I saw what's doing in New York, the paper flying, I says, oh my god, this is America? And finally, we came--

They put us on a train. And we came to Cleveland. And a family, Mrs. Kraus-- which, I never could find out who it was, because, you know, after-- I wanted to thank her, but the Jewish Federation never gave her the name to us. They were afraid. I don't know.

And they picked us up from the train. And I will never forget. They took us--

On 9th Street, there was a big restaurant. And they took us to eat. You know? On the boat, we had good food, but who could eat? We were sick.

The boat was going already-- the ship-- and we passed already-- we were close to the English Channel, and I didn't know that we are going. I was busy with the kids! I had my own cabin. My husband didn't sleep with us. He slept-- but I had my own cabin with the kids.

And the train-- I looked-- I said, this is America? Just land and barns and land and barns? And finally we came to Cleveland, and this Kraus family picked us up. And they sponsored us. You know? Because my husband was a tailor, so they sponsored us.

Did you find your relatives in Cleveland?

Then, when I got the letter, I said to my husband, I says, listen, I am very independent. I don't want to have charity. I don't want to do nothing.

I said, first you find a job. And we find rooms, I will start to look for the family-- not before. They put us in with three

families on Parkade-- Parkade 105. I don't know if the place is familiar for you?

We were three families there, living, with kids. And we started to look for rooms. We couldn't get it. Nobody wants us with kids. And I said to my husband, let's go back to Germany. That's it-- finished.

So finally, I met a mailman. And his parents was from Vilna. And I said to him, help us find some rooms. And he said he's going to look for rooms.

And here I met another family. They came a month after us and-- no children, so they got a room by some people in the place where we were living. And I came to visit her, and the older couple said to me, if you are from Vilna, my grandson is going to have bar mitzvah. Come. You will meet a lot of people from Vilna.

I says, no, I don't want it. They will think that I want something from them. And this was one of my cousin's mother's son.

I didn't go. I was very independent. So finally, we can't find rooms. My husband cannot go to work. He was sick.

And the Federation, they said, let him get well first, and then we get him a job. So I said to my husband, I says, you know what? Let's look for the family. What can I lose? Couldn't speak English.

I asked my milkman, where is it? He says, it's on 147 and Kinsman. He says, take the 105 bus, and then you switch to the Kinsman bus.

So we did it. And I cannot speak, so I gave the address to the driver. And he stopped by the house. He let us off-- 147. He says, walk in there, and--

I had the address. I says, no. I go there, and I ring the bell. And I said to my husband, you stay downstairs with the kids. In case they won't accept us-- big deal. So I'm insulted. And they knew already that somebody is coming, because my aunts got connected with America, that I'm going to America.

And I went up, and I said to her, do you speak Yiddish? She said, sure! She said, where are your husband with the kids? I says, downstairs. She said, why didn't you bring him up? I says, well, in case you wouldn't want me-- oh.

I showed her the letter, you know? And they took me in right away. And they went on the telephone, and she called all the relatives.

And I said to them, I says, listen, I don't want you to come. When I get rooms and I move in, then you will come. Because I don't want the Jewish Family Service should find out--

I don't know how I got it in my head that I have a family and you have to support me. I don't want it! I said, we meet. They never came to the house where I lived on Parkade.

Finally, we found a house, a single home. The mailman find this. I meet the owner. And he said, well, you have kids.

And I was standing like this, and I said, let's go back. Let's go back. I don't want it-- America.

And my husband said to him, why don't you want to give us the room? He says, well, with kids, and it's a single house, and the kids might-- so my husband said to him--

He says, Mr. Rubin, he says, Moshe Rabbeinu didn't see the Holy Land. He didn't see it. But when he came down with the Ten Commandments, he saw what happened, so he broke them. He said, you don't know me. Give me a chance. He says, OK, I meet you tomorrow, and I give you the key.

So I said to my husband, he's bringing a cow? Because in Jewish a key is a cow! You know, it's like-- I laugh about it

now.

And we got the rooms. And we moved in, and the federation helped us. And my husband got a job.

And then I called on the family, and they came over. And the first impression-- they didn't ask me how I survive-- "she looks like our family." That means, I'm not pushed in. I belong to them.

And right away they called-- you know, it was like-- and they came over. I didn't have nothing in the house. The Jewish Family Service gave me a couch and gave me a kitchen set. And it was an old stove. When I didn't have a Frigidaire, they gave me an icebox.

I was happy. I was happy. I had my four walls.

And my husband got a job. And I called him up-- I'm not coming. They paid me \$23.50 a week. And from the \$23.50 a week, I saved. [LAUGHS] I saved!

And when my husband got the job-- and the rent was \$40 a month, in a big house. \$40 a month in 1950 was a lot of money, too. And I called up the Jewish Family Service, and I says, my husband got a job and you don't have to pay me. They said no. It's not going to be paid.

They paid, two months, for us, rent. And till my husband got the first paycheck, they helped us. And this is the way I start my life in America.

And I tried to do the best. And when we settled down, my husband asked me, would you have a kosher home? And I said yes, if you want me to. I said, I was raised in a kosher home. In Germany, we didn't have it.

So I threw out all the pots and pans what I have from Germany. Once I left as-- [LAUGHS] as, you know, like a spot on the wall. And I start up to live a normal life.

And my husband got a job. And we made money. We got nice breaks from big people-- lawyers, judges-- because one of the cousins had a restaurant on the 14th Street. This was a market there, on the West Side. And whoever came in, he right away said, a cousin is here-- a tailor-- and he's good.

So the first letter I got from a lawyer-- Charles Smith-- he's dead already-- that, when we learn a little English, he wants to meet us. So it's funny. I learned how to read, because--

You know, it was hard for me, because it's different. You know, the alphabet is the same like Polish, but it's pronunciation different. So I took right away my son and started to go to the library and reading the books with him. But some words I couldn't pronounce.

So we had neighbors-- colored people-- very educated. The mother was a principal of a school, and the daughters were teachers. So I used to say, how did--

I come back-- how that my son is Steve, and Anita is Anita. My cousin didn't like [NON-ENGLISH], and they didn't like Zelig. They right away went through the dictionary, and this is Steve and Anita. And my name is not Wiera. My name is Dorothy. But I still go on Wiera, and it's confusing.

So I send Steve-- ask May, how pronounce. So, a few times, she couldn't figure out, why is Steve coming to her to ask her? So she came back, and she asked me. And I says, I don't know English. I know just a few words.

And one day the kids were playing, and they were screaming. And I said, tell them not to cry. And Steve said, Ma, they don't cry; they scream.

And when I used to get mad, I used to holler in Polish or Jewish. And the kids would say, oh, how come your mother is

angry? We don't understand [LAUGHS] what she's talking. And this is the way we start the life.

Now, did you ever find out what happened to your brother?

Being in camp in Germany, in Neustadt Holstein, a couple came from the American zone. And they signed up to go to Israel-- where I got liberated. And when he saw me, he said he met my brother in Poland.

So you knew your brother was alive.

That's right-- in L³dz. He said, your brother might be in L³dz. I send a telegram to the federation in L³dz. And my brother left. They said he went to Vilna.

He went back home. He was searching. And every time I find out where he is, he was gone.

He didn't find us. He went through plenty hell in Vilna, too. This is the way he got-- this is the way he find my picture from school, what I graduate in 1937-- sewing-- three years of sewing. This was a lifesaver for me.

And finally I heard he's in Italy. So I send a telegram to the federation. He was already on Exodus, on the boat to go to Israel. And they caught them, and they put them on Cyprus.

And through Brazil, I got in touch with my aunt, who died-- this one. She went to Israel. Her daughter was in the partisan. And she had a history, too.

They were very rich. They had a jewelry store. They had a lot of property. So, before the war, he went to Israel, to build up a business there and go to Israel.

So he opened a jewelry store. And he came home to take his wife, with the daughter with the husband, back to Israel. And the war broke out, and he was the first one, with his son-in-law, to be killed. And the daughter went to the partisan. And my aunt was hidden by some gentile people with a grandson.

So when the Russians liberated Vilna, my cousin came into Vilna and she found the mother with her son. And she sent them right away to Israel. And this how-- you know, the connection between Brazil and Israel and me, that my brother was in Cyprus.

In 1947, my aunt sent there a teacher to take him out. And when he came to Israel, the war broke out, and he start again. He was in the '48 war. And this, how we got together.

So you finally were able to contact him in Israel.

Yes. Yes. Yes. And after 20 years, I went to see him. You know? And it was like--

He was afraid to see me. He said, I don't even know her. He was a child! And this was--

In 1962, I went to see him. I send myself-- because I get a pension now from Germany. And I said, the first money I get from Germany, I go to see my brother. And when I got the first check, I left my husband with the kids.

My husband worked there for Cannon Tailor, you know. And he had a good position. He was making nice money.

And I went to Israel, to see my brother. Then I met my brother, and he was married. And his wife expected a baby.

And it was unbelievable, our reunion, because I didn't believe that some of the family is alive. And the wife had the baby, and I saw the baby. And the next day, I had to leave Israel.

And when I came back from Israel, I found my husband sick.

He was sick.

When I came back. And I was coming down the plane. And when I saw him, I, like, went back. I said, what?

But, when I was in Israel, they gave me so much support. And I felt like I have something to live. I have somebody there.

And my aunt said to me, you should be ashamed. You're not a businesswoman? Your husband works in a factory? She says you? You know who we are from.

I said, I have children. I want to raise my children. I'm not going for the money. I don't want to get up in the morning, throw the children in a nursing home, and go to work.

She said, you better go home. Learn how to drive a car, and go in business. And that's what I did.

But I went in with a sick husband, because they called me up from the shop, and they said, Mrs. Goldman, your husband is going on vacation, but he cannot come back. He cannot produce. He cannot examine. He cannot nothing.

Now, here, what should I do now? I'm another survivor-- with two kids. And I ran to my doctor, with my husband. And as soon as we walked in, she knew right away he has Parkinson's. So they send us to one doctor, and it wasn't good.

She sent us to Dr. Wolkin. And as soon as we walked in, he said, operation not advised. I said, what are you talking about? This comes from the brains-- Parkinson. It's connected with the brains.

And what's now? So my doctor takes me in-- Dr. [PERSONAL NAME]. She passed away already, too. She kept me for an hour and a half. And she gave me the whole story what's going to happen to me.

And she said, now you have two choices. She used to live on Cedar and Coventry, where the big church-- she says, take the car. Either you go right or you go left. She says, left goes straight to the lake. Right, you go home and you open a business.

I says, how can I open-- I'm not a businesswoman! She says, I don't care-- excuse me-- she said, even a store from shit.

And I sat down in the car. And I said, well, should I be a coward? I survived the Nazis. I brought two kids into this world. Who is going to raise them?

And I went home. I'm looking for a business. I'm not a businesswoman. I don't know about business! I know how to sew, but I don't know about business.

It's luck. I live on Berkeley. You know where I live. There is a shopping center in the corner. It was a dry-goods store. And I see he's going out of business.

I go in to the guy-- the butcher-- and I says, to whom belongs this store? He said, to me. I said, I want the business.

I said, do you have anybody? He said no. And he knew me already. I was taking me there.

I said, I want to open a tailoring store here. He says, fine. I said, is it word-- by word? He says, yes. I was so dumb that I believed him. And he was honest, but everybody said, how could you believe him? He was nice.

I come in, and I said to my husband-- I says, you know what? It's enough for you to work in factories. Enough is enough, I said. The kids are older. I says, I can help you more. Why don't we go in business?

He was never positive. He always used to say, we think about it. But here, fire is burning. He cannot go back, and I don't

want to tell him why. I have to hide it.

You mean, he did not know how sick he was.

No. He didn't know nothing. He find out later on. He listened to the radio and-- the symptoms, and he asked me.

So the next day, I went again, and I said, how much security I have to give you? And I want to sign a lease. I gave him \$475 security. It was \$170 a month-- was a lot of money, but I didn't have a choice. And it was across from the house.

I walked in there. I could see the kids. I have an eye on the kids.

And about five days before he was supposed to go to work, and I said, Sam, I have a business. He got so white. He said, what? I said, yes, we are going in business.

And I build up a store. I tell you that, when we had the opening, my neighbors-- it was like a boom-- a bomb. I thought, I will get rich. Because we didn't have-- in this section-- no tailor, no cleaning, no nothing.

And I had helped. We build up the place-- elegant, beautiful-- that nobody could even notice the store. And we a life. I stayed with my husband for three years. And the last year that I survived is a miracle. But it's a miracle. I couldn't--

I used to go home. And then start the problem with Steve, with the hippies, with dope. He was arrested a few times. Was very bad.

He was a good student. He has 140 IQ. Because of his behavior, they took him off from the swimming, from the football-- from everything, you know? And I saw it's going to be very bad.

And how was your husband's condition, at that time?

Pardon me?

How was your husband doing?

It was going down so fast that you just can't imagine. Meantime, he had to have a hernia operation. And he was in the hospital.

And then, when he came home, he used to do such horrible things in the store. And I used to cry, and the customers would come in and say, what's happened? I have an allergy.

And I saw I couldn't get on with the business, because the men wouldn't let me go in the fitting room to mark. And I used to make the mens' alteration. And I used to--

Anita would come to the store after school, and I would run and make supper. She would close the business, come home-- would have supper-- and I would go and stay till 2 o'clock in the morning. I couldn't do it.

I had to sell the business. Nobody wanted to buy, because they were afraid that I will take away the customers, and I said, I won't. And then it start that he start to shake. And when he had the hernia operation, from there I had to take him to Highland View Hospital.

He was already in a wheelchair. I took him out from the wheelchair. We tried so hard, till finally we got him into a nursing home-- Beech Haven on Chagrin.

And I had seven years torture. I had to send off Steve to Vietnam, to enlist. And my daughter graduated from school. And she wanted to go to college, and I didn't know what to do. And I talked with the counselor in the school, and he said, let her go. She needs it.

And I did everything to pay the tuition. And then she got a loan, you know? And she got married-- a nice man-- in '71. And my husband was still at the wedding.

And he died in '72-- April, right after Pesach. He died on a heart attack.

Now, your son went to Vietnam, but he was OK. And he came home all right.

Yeah. Yeah. He was in a boot camp in California. I had to make him go. [CRIES]

He did not want to go.

Well, he didn't have a choice. This was it. I couldn't take care on him anymore.

But then, he came back from Vietnam, and he straightened out eventually.

Oh, sure. Oh, sure. He came back, you know, he came a few times visiting us. Even when he was in the navy, you know, before they sent him overseas, he was home a few times. And he finished high school in the navy.

He had a half a year, for 45 minutes, English. And I went to the teacher. And I says, please, let him get the diploma.

She said, look, Mrs. Goldman, somebody has to stop Steve, someplace, because he knows that he's smart. He knows that he can get away with everything he wants. And somebody has to stop him. She says, and I'm the one who has to do it.

And he didn't finish. He didn't go. He hurted me. I'm not going to finish school; I'm going to hurt you. It was always me.

And I had to do it. And he finished high school in the navy. And thank god, he came healthy home. He finished, electrician-- electrician. And thank god, he's all right.

Do you think often about the Holocaust?

I think a lot about the Holocaust, because I think more about this-- that till 1978, I couldn't talk about it. I was hiding. I was so hiding that I didn't want to have anybody to talk about it. I didn't want my kids to know about it.

I was so strong. But in '78 I broke down. I had a nervous breakdown. And how did it start? I start to shake, and I got scared that I have Parkinson's. And this, what brought me to my stage.

So then, through talking about the Holocaust--

I didn't!

Oh, I mean, after you had a nervous breakdown--

Yeah. But what that start with me the nervous breakdown. I start shaking. And I said, I have Parkinson's. I don't want to live. I don't want to go through--

And they proved it to me, no, but I didn't believe anybody. So the one way was either to leave again or to survive. So I went into the hospital. I was there for a month. For three weeks, they couldn't make me talk-- no way.

And when they took me out-- I told them once I'm a bowler. They took me bowling. They forced me. Anything I did, they forced me to.

I couldn't concentrate. I couldn't read. I couldn't-- I was--

You know?

Then, after three weeks, when they took me to the picnic and I saw young people having the [? good ?] child, children running around, older people playing, having a good time-- I said, what am I doing home? What am I doing here? And I started talking.

And that's what helped you get better.

Out.

Out.

[LAUGHS]

And I still am a survivor. And I still count myself as a survivor.

Can you tell us why you decided to tell us about your story in the Holocaust, knowing how painful it is?

Well, because there is going around so much that the Holocaust is a hoax and it's not true. We have to tell our story. That's why we survived. We're telling it, of our parents, of our grandparents. We want to build-- that's why we have a monument on the cemetery-- Zion Cemetery.

Did you ever go to see? We have a monument. This is our graves. I have a grave now, too, for my husband, but this is where we go to pray. This is the ashes there and the soap, that they made from human bones, what it called-- RIP.

And I feel, if we won't talk about it, it might happen again. And that's why we are here-- to teach and to grab now the young generation.

I believe that, in public school, in the sixth grade, they should start talking about the Holocaust-- teaching-- because the children should already learn. My granddaughter is 10 years old. She told her teacher that her grandma is a survivor, a Holocaust survivor.

And she asked me already the question. I says, honey, wait. I will tell you, but just wait.

And that's why we have to talk about it-- not to start in high school. Because if these kids will come to high school, they wouldn't think.

Wiera, thank you so very much for telling your story.

I'm glad I could do it, and I'm really very proud on myself--

You should be.

--that I don't refuse nothing. I talk.

That's wonderful. Thank you again.

You're quite welcome.