

Hungary, born and raised in Budapest, Hungary. My father was Dr. Bala Edno, prominent attorney in Budapest. And I survived the Holocaust in Budapest. They could not take me to a concentration camp, although the Nazis did attempt to do that. I was captured three times. I escaped from them three times. They got me into the ghetto twice. I literally walked out with cock and bull stories and forged papers from the ghetto.

It might be interesting to describe how you managed to escape or not be taken away.

I'll give you a brief summary of what had happened in Budapest, Hungary. I think it is important. It's not too much written or documented on what had happened to the residents of Budapest or Hungary in general. And yet, it is significant that over 80% of the Jewish population in Hungary was annihilated by the Nazis in the shortest period of approximately nine months. Now, I have written my autobiography, which we recently published. It's called *My Destiny-- Survivor of the Holocaust*, written by Georgia M. Gabor. And my husband and I published it together.

Or do you have the name of the publishing?

It was Amen Publishing. Yes, Amen Publishing Company. And our address is 365 Mariposa Avenue, Sierra Madre, California. It is softbound. And it sells for \$6.95. And I wrote it-- many times I'm asked that question. I wrote it not to make money. That was not the aim. We wanted to disseminate as many of these documents that history of a Budapest Holocaust survivor, myself, because there is not enough written on this topic. And people do not even realize that the suffering that people have gone through in Hungary was very, very severe, even though we have not gotten into concentration camps. The suffering in-- the torture by the Nazis, the Hungarian Nazis were, if it is all possible to imagine, even more the cruelty of the Hungarian Nazis than the German Nazis. I testify because I lived under it.

Did the Hungarian population engage in this also? Or was it primarily the Nazis?

Well, there's the distinction here. Hungary was fighting alongside with the Germans. But we were not really partnership all through the war. Now, I wrote my book in a novel style. But I verified everything documented. I have about 20 volumes of books at home that hasn't even been translated from Hungarian. And I have every bill, law, and edict issued against the Jews on a 1,600-page collection, every single one of them in Hungarian, never translated yet.

How did you get these documents?

I went back to Hungary three different times to research everything because I wanted the book to give a reader, to the average Joe Doe, the American reader, a picture of what was taking place-- a historical picture, but in a novel style, easy reading style, and yet, the information that, perhaps, they would not see from textbooks, or any archives, or whatnot in the same time. It's an educational, informational aim.

And personalized.

Yes. Now, as I was saying, Hungary was fighting alongside the Germans during the war. But in 1944, March 15, Hitler gave such demands to Regent Horthy that it was impossible to fulfill anymore. And Horthy, for the first time, said to Hitler, no, we cannot do it anymore. Among many of the demands was deliver me 10,000 Jews for concentration camps within 24 hours. Because by that time, they killed so many Jews that they were running short of the free labor, the free slave labor in the concentration camps. And Horthy said, no.

Hitler was allowed to return to Hungary, to Budapest after that conference in Waldheim. But he did not realize that while on the train, those who were supposed to be escorting him became his guards. And he remained under house arrest from 1944, March 15 on. In October-- now, the Germans occupied-- while he was out of the country, while the regent, and his entourage, and his cabinet members were out of the country, during that same night, which was the very notable March 19, 1944, German forces entered the country and literally occupied the country in a matter of less than six hours. All the news media was in their hand.

And all the horrible, horrible laws and bills started to be issued. Within a three-week period of time, they rendered us

not only homeless, in a sense that they deprived us from our citizenship, took away our money, disconnected our telephones. Everything was taken away from us-- dignity, and wealth, and means of survival, and so forth. I don't want to go into these details because that's commonly known. Or there is too much information.

But from my point of view, by June of that same year, they established that is under German control a quasi-Hungarian pro-Nazi government was established. And they established star houses, where Jews could live. The Christians also remained there. But the Jewish families had to move into those houses because the bombing was so heavy by that time that the Christian population needed to be housed someplace.

So they solved the problem simply by allowing each Jewish family to have one room in an apartment. So they crowded us in such a manner that in a small, two-bedroom apartment, let's say, a typical apartment building, there would be as many as 20-25 people living. But it was still bearable. It was still not torture.

Now, I am focusing in on Budapest because by June, by that time, from my research, the Hungarian Jews had been rounded up in all the other cities around the country. Budapest was the last bastion left. And they had been taken, most of them, either to labor camp or Auschwitz. Now, the Budapest population was little aware of what was going on. We had no access to information coming in. We could not travel and so forth. We had to wear the yellow stars. We were allowed on the streets for between 1:00 and 3:00 in the afternoon for only a two-hour period. And all we did is just pray that the Russian liberators will soon reach the city because every day meant to us life.

October 15, Horthy managed to smuggle out the tape from his castle, which was broadcasted on the news media, stating that he's ordering a cease fire. It was 11 o'clock, October 15. By 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the Hungarian Nazi party led by Szlasi, called the Arrow Cross Party, had begun taking power. And by 8 o'clock that same evening, they were in total control.

They eliminated all the anti-Nazi elements left because by that time, the Germans had cleansed the anti-Nazi elements of the government. But if there were still someone who was not too sympathetic to them, they were eliminated. And they, as I said, these are the Hungarian Nazis that I am making reference to. If it's possible to be even more cruel than the German Nazis, they really did it. They were well-trained in that. And they rounded up the Jews immediately, that same evening, that same afternoon. They began rounding up all the Jews, taking them down to cellars.

They were taken from these star houses--

From the buildings.

--you were talking about?

Yes, I-- one of the episodes that I describe in the book how I crawled from the attic to the top of the building. And I was watching the actual takeover, sitting on the roof. My idea was crawling down the chimney and hopefully escape from the building while the Nazis were coming into these buildings, rounding up the Jews, and hearing the cries, and horrible, horrible screams of the people down in the cellar, whatever was going on. They took them down to the cellar overnight.

You were a little girl at that time?

I was 14 years old. I was born in 1930. And this is taking place on October 15, 1944. And after rounding up, as I said, after rounding up the people, in our particular building, they kept us only for a day and a half or so. But it depended on what section of the city, which particular Nazi group did what. Some of them killed indiscriminately. Some of them beat the Jews indiscriminately. Some of them immediately rounded up these Jews to collection centers, taking them to labor camps, or taking them to train stations and ship them to various camps.

So what happened to you, Georgia?

In my particular case, after about a day and a half being kept in a cellar, they took us to a temple where they kept-- a temple, a local temple that was built for about 200 people, they kept-- they squeezed in about two and a half thousand of

us. They kept us in the temple without food or anything for two and a half days. And then, very interestingly, the Hungarian police-- there was a group of maybe 20-25 policemen-- Christians, of course-- who were very decent. And they were willing to sacrifice their own lives, attacked the Nazi guards-- because of course, they were the only ones who had guns-- attacked the Nazi guards, and literally liberated us, and took us back to the same building where we were rounded up from.

I want to sidetrack for a moment because perhaps my view is a little bit different than many of the other Jews that you have interviewed. I feel that we Jewish people, survivors, are focusing so much upon the six million Jews. And that's all we are talking about and not giving enough credit to-- first of all, there were 11 million annihilated during the Holocaust-- but to the perhaps another million, at least, righteous Christians. Maybe they have no names, but righteous Christians, I mean, those who were hiding Jews, who were also annihilated because they were caught by the Nazis for aiding, in any manner, or shape, or form, Jewish people was the greatest crime that they could commit in the eyes of the Nazis, aiding a Jew.

And I know that I owe at least eight of my nine lives-- like a cat-- to those Christians who chanced their safety, their security, and their life for hiding me or feeding me, maybe for a night, maybe. I had an SS boy-- SS party member, a young boy who belonged himself and his parents to the Nazi party, for three weeks, he was hiding me. And also, I am trying to highlight the psychological point here that--

Would you like to describe some of these-- or one or two of these episodes?

I will. Yes, I will. Let me make this point, though. It was very interesting for me to observe-- by the way, I have my master's degree in educational psychology, my bachelor's in mathematics, but my doctorate now to three more courses will be in educational psychology. And to me, it's very interesting the Nazi philosophy, this whole philosophy, and the reaction, the emotional reaction, of these survivors like myself.

It would be typical for me to hate the Nazis because my entire family was annihilated, totally, my entire family. I have one cousin alive, period, up from second cousins, everybody annihilated. And I don't hate. Some Jewish people will hate the Germans, and especially hate the Nazis. I don't hate them. I feel sorry for them. I really pity them. They are sick. They were sick. They were led. They did not know what they were doing-- no, not all, naturally. I'm talking about the majority.

Some of them did it, joined the Nazi Party, and did whatever they had to do for selfish reasons to gain the personal gain of wealth from the Jews and so forth. Some, like sheep, followed the leader. They can't think for themselves. Some realized that they don't like it, but it was too late to get out of it. They were already involved with the Nazi Party. And they knew that if they turned their back, it is too late. But it is-- I have come across so many of them who said to me, oh, Jews are no good. But you're different. It is very interesting in human psychology, that aspect on it.

These were Nazis who said that to you?

Nazi, no, dedicated Nazi Party members. As a matter of fact, one of my father's ex client, who got my mother out of a situation when she was captured and she was about to be taken to Auschwitz-- was it-- I believe Auschwitz at that time, or one of the camps it was. And I simply walked into the Nazi house. I was not wearing a star, needless to say. Was a cock and bull story. And I said that this is my uncle. And my building was bombed. And I am lonesome. And he's the only relative I have. And I had to see him right away.

He was one of the 12 party leaders in Budapest at that time. He was in charge of annihilating 100 to 200 Jews per day. The guard fell for my story. He had another guy take me upstairs. Now. I really took a chance at that time because I didn't even know if Mr. Nagy, a client of my father, ex-client of my father, was even married or had any family. And I claimed that I was his niece. Now, I naturally would have been not just shot, but tortured had they found out that I am bluffing.

But fortunately, I made it. And perhaps not just fortunately, I don't want to sound conceited. But I do believe that the Lord had protected me for some reason. It was meant to be that way. I call my book my destiny. I have been in so many

situations where the probability, statistical probability is one in a million of surviving it. And I had it over and over again, I'd say hundreds of times happening.

But in this particular situation, the guard opened the door. I snuck in. I made a beeline, jumped in the lap of Mr. Nagy. Fortunately, he was in. And Nagy says, please get rid of the guard and quick, as he was about to faint, seeing me, a Jew, in his office. I mean, his position was like a Senator here in Washington. And when somebody opens the door, you can imagine, a little girl runs in, puts his arm around him.

He was a Hungarian official?

He was a Hungarian official. And he was a dedicated, believing Nazi. And when he got rid of the guard, I told him, get my mother out. My mother was captured yesterday in another Nazi building. Get my mother out because I know that she is going to be shipped out of the country and perish. And he says, Georgia, I can't. That's a different section. I can't do that. I says, Mr. Nagy, one of these days, you're going to die. And you will have to account for all the horrible, horrible things that you have committed. It would be awfully nice if you could say something in your own defense that maybe one good deed you have committed.

I must have reached him, again, from the psychological point of view. I must have, well, reached him. He had the guard take me downstairs and put me in a cab, which was a no-no for Jews because, by that time, for months and months, we were barred from using any public transportation, and sent me home. And he actually brought my mother back from the old Buda Brick Factory, which was a collection center for the transports to be shipped to concentration camps. So he went that far and got my mother into the international ghetto, into a Swiss embassy consulate house.

Because by that time, I had also acquired and forged new, safe passports. I should have made my living forging. I wouldn't ever do anything like that anymore. I loathe even the idea of doing anything illegal because I had to do for survival at that time. And that's one of the survival characteristics, to have the guts to do some things that, under normal circumstances, you would never do. But when your life is at stake, you go very far, much further than you think. You can take an awful lot more than you think you can take when you are under a situation that's survival or death.

What are some of the other survival characteristics and examples of the things that might be?

OK. We were talking about that yesterday in another interview. These are just a very, very few notes that I happen to have with me. I would say, the most important survival characteristics is quick thinking, ability to make decisions, act upon it, a doer. Those who did not do were the ones who were caught, and most of the time, perished, unless some miracle had happened that they survived. But that is a characteristic that is almost necessary for survival.

Another one is adaptability. I came from a very well-to-do background. I had to ring for the maid to bring in a glass of water if I wanted to, spoil brat to that extent. And in a matter of weeks, I turned from that stage-- well, almost, a few months-- turned from that situation to eating out of garbage cans, sleeping on the rubbles, walking around snow up to my knees without-- with huge holes in the sole of my shoes stuffed with cardboard paper, or newspaper, or whatever I could find on the street-- adaptability.

Understanding of human nature is a very important characteristics. If I could not anticipate what the Nazis were about to do or action-reaction stimulus response situation, I would have faltered. One example of this that I will told to you, when I escaped from the ghetto five days before liberation, five days before the Budapest ghetto was liberated, I came up with a scheme. Among the rubbles, I acquired a typewriter.

Among the kids that I was with in an illegal orphanage, we were taken by the Nazis, finding out that it is an illegal orphanage. We were taken into the ghetto. But meanwhile, those people who-- those Jewish people who have set up the illegal orphanage, trying to save kids for days, because we knew that the Russians are outside of Budapest already by that time. And we could hear from the shootings.

So it was a matter of every hour could have saved lives. Like Elie Wiesel said this morning, that 10,000 people were eliminated every day, just 24 hours could have saved 10,000 Jewish lives. That's what many of the Jewish-- and

Christians also, many times-- risked their lives, and set up false orphanages, and false Red Cross shelters, and so forth. Oh, the Nazis found out too in two or three weeks. And then they took us into the ghetto or whatever. But we gained two or three weeks or even two or three days.

Anyway, I acquired a piece of stationery that one of the boys had who was in an orphanage before. The typewriter-- and I forged a statement, stating that I was sending by the International Red Cross Orphanage Headquarters in Budapest to bring some medication for the half-Jews who were just taken into the ghetto a few days before. We carved a stamp to make it look realistic, that the reading could not be read-- the writing could not be read, rather, but the Red Cross stuck out.

I found a piece of white rag. I made a headband and an armband from it. I drew blood from my finger with a pin. And I painted the Red Cross with my blood on the armband and the headband. And with this very powerful document, signed by an adult, I simply walked out of the ghetto. Now, there were no guards outside. And the gate was not locked. My scheme also included how we would break the lock, if necessary.

Why did you want to leave the ghetto?

By that time, the rumors were that the Germans are going to either bomb the ghetto or poison us instead of allowing the Russians to come and liberate us. And I wasn't going to take a chance on that.

Where were you going? Did you have any plans on where you wanted to go?

No, we never had plans. Our plans never exceeded 60 seconds. All we want to do is what we are going to do in the next 60 seconds. That's all. We couldn't plan. We didn't know what will happen to us. Anyway, when I got out-- then I actually walked and reached the other side of the gate, simply walked through the gate. There were no guards. Typical human reaction would be run. Had I run, I wouldn't be here to tell the story. I anticipated that the guards will be standing under a doorway, under the gateway nearby.

And sure enough, about 100 yards further down there, was a building. And they were standing in a gateway of the building to be protected from the wind and the snow. And I put on an act that Zsa Zsa Gabor could never match. I hopped, and skipped, and I acted like a half-witted child. And then I approached them, came close to them, I started to swear, Heil Hitler, [HUNGARIAN] and Szã;lasi, those rotten, filthy Jews. I've had to bring them some food and medication and all that. And I simply bluffed my way out of the situation. And they believed me.

As a matter of fact, I used these kind of approaches when I escaped from Hungary now. I'm skipping a little bit ahead, while it is still on top of my mind. After the war, when we were-- and I put in quotation-- "liberated" by the Russians, I have witnessed atrocities committed by them that convinced me that my days are numbered because I'm too outspoken. I couldn't-- I was going to school. And they were indoctrinating us that we owe nothing to our parents, that we owe everything to the state, that it is our duty, our duty, to turn in anybody-- friend, relative, parent, or whatnot who says anything against the new philosophy, the new state, the new government, and so forth.

Talking about the Russians now, right?

Exactly, yes. Exactly the same as the Hitler Jugends were drilled, we were drilled in that same philosophy of anti-God, anti-family, our obligation to the state. And that bothered me, as a Jew, although I am not very religious. But I'm always God-fearing, God-believing. And I always try to live by the Ten Commandments. And to me, that was very upsetting. Then when I went to school, we were indoctrinated in Leninism, and Marxism, and Stalinism, and-- no, not Stalinism at that time, Trotskyism, and so forth. And it was illogical. It was beautiful. It sounded very beautiful-- be good, humane, and all that.

So this is after the war ended and you were--

After the war, still in Budapest.

--in schools? In a high school?

All schools-- elementary school on. And I have seen people disappear because their little first grader or second grader said to the teacher, well, my mommy and daddy do not like what is happening in Hungary today. They do not like the present conditions, do not like the present government. They liked it better before the war. That was enough for these people, by the thousands, being picked up in the middle of the night, taken away, never to be seen again. And I testify to that personally.

So I decided to join a Zionist group. And one boy from Palestine, five of us teenagers, we forged papers for 93 children under the age of 12, and stating that we are German-born. And we want to return to Germany-- Austria, and Germany under the repatriation negotiations that were going on at that time. And we simply boarded a train, and bluffed, and dared the Russian guards. And thus, we smuggled out from behind the Iron Curtain 93 children.

But I could go on, and on, and on. You can imagine that's what fills the book all these experiences. But what I did want to also get on tape, if anybody would ever listen to these tapes, future generations, to think about it. What did the free world do during the time that millions of people, innocent people were tortured to death? Not just dying from the war because war is horrible, and people die during the war.

But what was the free world doing when these innocent people were tortured to death? They were aware of it. There's enough documentation in Washington right here, from 1938 on, our State Department was aware of what was happening fully. We stuck our head in the sand. And as long as we don't see it, it's not happening. We don't want to get involved.

Now, I am not saying that the United States and other free countries should have gone into war over 11 million people, not necessarily so. As I said, I had enough of war. I hate war. But there were a lot of other things we could have done and we haven't done. And I think that this is something for future generations to think about because things like that do happen. And it's happening right now. And I'll get back to that in a moment too.

One thing that we should have done is airlift food packages, medical supplies, and most of all, arms into the ghettos and concentration camps if for no other reason but-- as an American, I am talking because I'm a great patriot. I'm very grateful to this country for what I've been able to accomplish, having come here as a 17-year-old child with a dollar and a half in my pocket. I now have-- I'm now 3/4 away from my doctorate. And I did it all on my own.

And there is only one country, the United States, in the world where that can be accomplished, I think, today. And I can sit here. And I can criticize the government now or before. And nobody is going to put me to jail. If I ever tried that back in Hungary, I would have been-- all my nine lives would have been used up in five minutes.

But what I am trying to bring out is if for no other reason but selfish reason, if our government, if Roosevelt at that time would have allowed-- and there were plenty of volunteers who would have done flying over the concentration camps and dropping weapon packages, airlifting packages besides the bombing, besides what Elie Wiesel was mentioning today, and the other speakers today, that they could have bombed the trains, and the railroads, and so forth.

Beside that, can you imagine how many American boys' lives could have been saved because these Jews would have risen up? But when the Nazis are holding submachine guns at you, you are not going to fight back with kitchen scissors and knives. We talking about-- I hear a lot of Christians always saying, well, why didn't-- why did the Jews go like cattle to be slaughtered? Why didn't they fight back? And I says this, what? I am very strongly against gun control because if we would have had guns, we could have saved millions of lives, absolutely millions of lives because we would have used them. But we have no chance to use them.

Help your fellow man if it's possible. If you see somebody else in trouble-- because I know I owe my life so many times, as I mentioned, by people who have helped me. I think it is important to help each other because after all, it's a very small community that we live in. The world is a very small community, considering the universe and who knows the different dimensional existences there are.

Did you notice or have you noticed these other-- many of these other characteristics in other survivors that you have

noted?

The ones that I have listed, perhaps. Yes and no. They may not be aware of it, but yes. Many of these, not all in the same person, but many of these are characteristics. Unfortunately, there is one characteristic, a negative characteristic-- oh, the positive, while we are on the positive, one other important thing is imaginativeness, it's a survival characteristics.

Creativity?

Creativity. I think the most important, however, is a belief, a belief in yourself, and a belief in God. Many times, when we gave up hope and gave up-- we became apathetic. That was our end. The children, the people around me, the body does not produce the necessary chemicals to fight infections, diseases, and everything else, we give up. And it takes over. And we died, many, many of the people around me. As long as they were fighting, the body produced the adrenaline, the antibodies, and everything that was necessary. We were in a fear condition at all times. Maximum biological, chemical flow kept us overcoming sicknesses that otherwise would have killed us.

So a belief in God gave me, at least in my position, a very strong belief in God, gave me this definite ability to say no, I am not going to give up. I know that God is going to help me out of this mess, and that mess, and that mess. And I prayed. And I believed. And it gave me the strength to go on one more day, or one more hour, or one more minute, even, in the different situations. God does not need us. We need him. It's a very important thing.

When you ask me about, Nick, characteristics of survivors. And negative characteristics-- or positive, I don't know, it can work both ways-- but I have watched these last three days during the convention sisters and brothers of the same family react so differently to their mother or father, who is the survivor, my daughter, talking to other second-generation children, and viewing from their perspective a given situation, and watching how-- you know what I mean-- the different generations and the different individuals reacted.

One is survivors are strong people, very determined, very-- not domineering, but overpowering at times. Now, the youngsters who happened to-- many times, the oldest youngster in a family has acquired this characteristic. And it is very interesting to see the conflict.

These Holocaust survivors children, they love their parents. Many of them feel an illogical guilt, strictly emotion, an illogical guilt that they have to be better than the average because their parents suffered so much. They don't want to hurt their parents anymore if they know that their parents had suffered. Sometimes, the guilt is too much for them to bear at the developmental age, especially, during their teens and post-teens, I would say, between 15 and 20 to 25. It affects the second generation, in most cases, very severely.

How did your children react?

Same. My daughter and the ones that I am watching, the same. I'm very close to my daughter. And we talk about it. She says, Mom, many times, I don't want to say no to you when you ask me something to do something for you, even though I don't want to do it because I feel sorry for you or because I feel that you don't have anybody to turn to for advice. And you lost your parents, you lost your family. I appreciate that you are, even I don't agree with you. There is my daughter who just came in.

It is interesting hypothesis.

I am doing the interview. And we're just talking about the reaction of the second-- as I was saying, a common characteristics among survivors, they are very determined. They are very strong in their beliefs, in their opinions, very opinionated. And they want to have their own way. Now, it's very difficult to live with people, survivors, like myself, especially as mates, let's say, who are not survivors, who have not gone through the Holocaust or any of these horrendous experiences because we are so determined. But perhaps there is a reason for it. And I see that as a very common characteristics.

And the reason the way I analyze it, the reason is that we have seen so many other people perish around us. We have

gained a conviction that we are right because of our decisions, our reaction to situations, would not have been right, we would have perished. Therefore, we are right. It's perhaps too much self-confidence, call it whatever you want. But it's so internal, so integrated part of our psychologically, such a deep-rooted conviction that yes, I must be right because I am alive, because I have overcome all those adverse situations, all those horrible experiences--

It gave you a great confidence, or maybe-- would you say, or even a feeling of superiority? Or would you say just a really--

Not superiority. It is just that what-- if there is any conflict about a particular action to be taken or a particular way of handling a situation, we feel our way is right. And we are not likely to give in to somebody else because so many times, we have seen people who have given in to parents, to other people, older people, or people who would be more wise, then we ended up in situations, especially like me, if I listen to anybody, I would not be here. I had to make my own self-reliance. It's extremely important. And that makes us seem very overpowering, very domineering at times.

So would you like to describe, now, the effect on the second generation? And would you also like to comment on that?

Now, the effect on the second generation, if the child has a very strong personality also, there is going to be conflict between parent and child. There is going to be a definite generation gap, no matter how close the child is going to feel towards the parents. Very often, the child is going to resent-- why do you think that you are always right? And yet, we cannot give in.

We try sometimes. Sometimes, even consciously, I have made many times attempts to say, well, gee, she may be right. Well, I-- no. I may go along with her-- my daughter's idea, I'm talking about right now. I may go along with my daughter's idea. Or I may go along with my husband's idea. But I will never be convinced that my way would not have been better, unless it's proved to me because I am so positive that I survived simply because I was able to make quick and wise decisions. You wanted to ask me a question about the feeling when the--

Yes.

--so-called liberators came in.

Well, first could we get your daughter to be part to this? Your name is?

I'm Roberta. I'm Golub now. I'm married.

You live in?

I live in New Jersey. I live in Secaucus, New Jersey. And in speaking with another--

And how old are you?

Right now, I'm 33 years old. And I think that I had it a lot tougher than my brother, for instance. I'm the first.

There were two children or what?

There were two children. My brother is two years younger than I am. And after listening to a lot of the other second generation, I feel that there is quite a similarity in the first born and a little commonality in being girl versus the boy and how they reacted. And I find that I am a lot like my mother. And there's a very large love and hate. It happens in children, obviously, with their parents. But I think it was even brought out more in the fact that, like she said, she's always right. They're very domineering.

And we don't understand it as children. And I really-- I literally hated my mother for many, many years till I was really 17, until I could understand, really, and empathize-- not just understand, but empathize with her, and not to really give her an excuse and not to pity her, but just an empathy. And I find that when I speak with friends and loved ones about

my-- and to me, I had atrocities as well-- of course, a lot different than theirs. But nonetheless, they were more so than my own peer group. And then telling them of my--

You mean of an emotional nature or something to it?

Yes, because of the way they reacted to situations, for instance. It was very severe, much more severe than other parents. I find that my mother and a lot of the survivors, they were young when they lost their parents. And they were not ready for children. They were not ready for children, to be parents. But yet, they needed a family so badly to fill in that gap. And a lot was expected of me. My mother loved her father dearly.

And she wasn't able to-- I think a daughter, for instance, is in love with the father, just like the boy is in love with the mother. And I think that through maturing, they learn to fall out of love. I mean, they love them. But they're not in love. And they'll be able to substitute it for their mates. Or in her case, she lost her father at 14. So she had a certain image of her father that might be unreal today.

And because of that, my mother wanted to further her education. It was very meaningful because that's what her father would have wanted. And she has a belief that her parents are up there looking down. And she wanted to prove to them that she could strive for and be as good as. And I came in a time where just the opportunity was there. She was of age to go to college.

And all of a sudden, she was pregnant. And so she resented the fact that I took away this from her. And she didn't want to be responsible, again, for another person. And she wasn't ready for me emotionally. And then she didn't have a mother, or an aunt, or someone to turn to in order for guidance. What do I do? My child is screaming her head off or whatever. And so she overly reacted to situations. And I'd been a lot like her and very hyper.

And a lot-- I'm seeing a lot first-- second generation that are first-born have that similarity. Either they go passive or super aggressive and like a nervous kind of a person. And so we kept coming against each other until I was about, like I said, close to 17. And if I-- what I want to share with my loved ones my past, I don't want pity just like they don't want pity. I want empathy. I want them to understand my journey, how I had to go through living from her experiences.

And what do I get? Is that they either hate my mother for what she did to me because they don't understand. And they says, well, that happened to her. It doesn't mean she should have done that to you. They can't empathize and say, look, I mean, she just was doing her best. And she overreacted. And that's something that was not a conscious level.

She had to mature, also. While I was maturing, she was maturing. She was a baby. She was 14 years old years old in certain respects and a total adult on the other because she had to take care of herself. And a lot of Americans or people who do not have to go through this don't understand it. They either pity you or they get anger towards the person doing it to you. And I feel that I'm in conflict because I want my loved ones and my friends to understand me. And so therefore, I tell them my story. And at the same time, they're turning against my mother. And I don't want that also. So I find myself, right now, in between. And it's another problem that I have to deal with.

And I don't want to shut up. Because just like they wanted to tell their story, I still have to tell my story. And my children have to hear my story as well as theirs. And I think that the second generation needs to unite a heck of a lot better than they are. Because although there's organizations going on, a lot of us never knew about it. I don't know another second generation other than my brother. And we can't talk because our ways of being really were different. We reacted differently because we had a different mother. She was not the same mother.

Two years later, I was much more mature.

She was more mature. And she was ready. She decided, I want to be a mother because I don't want my daughter to be left in the world alone like I was. So she programmed her mind for a child, where with me, she wasn't programming for a child. She didn't want a child. So it came out totally different. And my brother is not as nervous as I am. And he also doesn't empathize the same way as-- with my mother. He doesn't understand.

I used to also inject, as my daughter is talking, and she's taking these points very well-taken. I agree with her. And I understand what she's saying. And I think that this has to be brought up a lot more because the second generation is the one who needs this psychological understanding, what she's talking about. Another thing is that survivors like myself, who had lost their entire families, we have so much love to give. And we need so much love to be gotten that we expect - not expect on a conscious level, but on the emotional level-- we expect a lot more from our children. We are giving so much that it is overdone. In the same time, we want so much love back that they are incapable of giving.

We resent it as well because we tune off. After hearing the atrocities, it almost becomes like all right, all right, I heard it. I heard it. I don't want to hear any more of it. So you went through there. Let's stop. Let's live for today. And we're caught up with finding and empathizing at the same time. And it is expected. My mother, all of a sudden, this powerful woman, this aggressive woman, all of a sudden, she can't make a decision. And I'm not ready for it because it's almost like I'm parenting her. And I don't know how to parent the mother that already took over everything for me.

And I find that a lot of them do. Usually, in old age, they do it. But a lot of people, like my mother, they've fought so long that they're tired. They want to give up. There's nothing else. They've told their stories. And if their families, their parents aren't living or whatever, they've given up. My mother had given up for a life mentally years ago in her 40s and 30s. I mean, she said, I have nothing to live for other than to put out my book.

Right.

She says, I don't have my parents. And it's different having a husband and wife versus your own child and your own parents. Nothing can touch that same kind of a feeling. A husband or a wife cannot really empathize the same way. They really can't. And so my mother now has given up on life. And she says, when I go, I go. And I get angry with her because all right I know she wants to die, that she has had it. But I want to enjoy her. I want her to live with me while I have her on Earth. I don't want her to die living, if that makes any sense.

There's also psychological hangup with many of us. We want to be reunited with our loved ones who had lost their lives so young, in such horrible circumstances. And most of the Holocaust survivors believe that someday, they will be together with their loved ones. So most of the Holocaust survivors are not afraid of death, not at all. As a matter of fact, they would welcome it. It would be sort of a relief from the struggle in this world. We have seen too much unhappiness. We have seen too much horror. We had enough. We don't want anymore. Just withdraw. Many of the Holocaust survivors can't talk about it. They cannot.

I know. So that's what I've read this week. And so it appears you've been quite open about it.

I was bordering a nervous breakdown. I was bordering a nervous breakdown for five years. It took me five years to write this book. I have relived experiences in order to write the book. I had to relive the experiences. I would break up, scratching myself, all full of scratch marks in the morning because I dreamed about those incidences when I was infested with lice, these kinds of things. And that will never completely disappear. There are some experiences that I have had are so vivid in my imagination that I can describe the exact size, shape, detail, even smell of that particular incident. I was telling about the story when I once caught.

Even though it happened 40 years ago, they're still--

That's right.

--you relive it.

I was describing an incident when I was captured by the Nazis and taken in a torture chamber. And I have to-- the chief Nazi pinched me on the cheek and says, oh, what a cute little Jew bitch. Come on with me. I knew that he intended me for the Hungarian Nazis' brothel at age 14. He put a Luger into my rib. And I had to watch as over 100 people were literally beaten with a cattail whip, seven strips of leather, literally beaten to death. I watched as the flesh was sliced off the skeleton. I watched as three people were hung on the wall by their ankles, nailed to the wall upside, their genital organs cut off, and they were still alive, and they were still wiggling, trying to get off, hanging upside down, and

bleeding to death. Another one had the body slashed from throat to groin. And I had to watch that while the Luger was in my rib. And I know that he would pull the trigger any moment.

And I was describing this to somebody. And I said, he had the Luger in my right rib. And I stopped. I caught myself immediately, without even being conscious of it. I said, no, it wasn't the right rib. Because I immediately recall the scene. I said, it was on my left rib.

These things, we will live this for the rest of our lives. And psychiatrists can't help. I was just saying to Roberta. Psychiatrists can't help us because they cannot empathize with us. They cannot feel with us. They never experienced anything like that. So it's not like handling family conflicts, or problems, or individual situations, which are normal, which are case histories, records, and so forth about.

Thank you for your interview, Ms. Gabor, and your daughter, Roberta.

I was very happy to do that because I think that the world needs this documentation. There are not too many of us are alive. And we are dying very soon. And I think that it should be on record.

Well, I hope you live many more years myself. I think you seem very alive to me.