

We were four children in the family, two brothers and the two girls-- the youngest brother and the oldest brother. And we were very, very close. And we really loved each other so much.

We were not wealthy, but we were comfortable. And until 1939, we lived a very sheltered life. We really didn't know much about the world. We lived such a small-town life, not like the shtetls that we write about. It was really more of a modern type of life.

But it was a very, very loving-- the way I see it. Maybe it wasn't as loving when it happened. I don't know. But I feel it. I feel that love that was at home.

And then, of course, when it happened, it's very hard to say because my older brother was such a good-looking young man, such nice people. [CRYING] And for, well, those other things, the things that happened to me, don't matter. I never worry about those things that happened in camp, never.

I don't care that I was hungry or cold. Those things don't bother me. But what happened, that it was allowed to happen, that people allowed it to happen, and I can't believe that people could do it. As much as it happened, and I know it happened, I still don't understand that people could do it to people.

And when they took my father and my younger brother, it was in '42. We still lived in our home. We were not in a ghetto yet. And when they took them, we thought they are coming back. We even paid a Polish woman to go and to bring them back maybe, because before that, they caught-- they used to catch people in the streets. They would send them to camps. And we send somebody, and we got our father out and my brother out, my older brother. They were caught.

And we thought maybe we can do the same thing with them. That's why we let him go, because we assumed that we can get them back home. But they never were because, from what we understand, is that they gassed them right on the trains, on those wagons where they took them.

And when Wiesel was talking about those trains, that when he hears about the word "train," that is exactly-- when I hear a whistle of a train that is all I can hear is the trains that took them away, that took us away afterwards. And this was in '42. And then they changed the ghettos.

But even before that, such things. And nobody writes about like, when a friend of mine, her brother was killed just like this in the street. They just-- for fun they were killing Jews. And they were so poor that she went and took off the shoes from her dead brother to give it to somebody in the family that didn't have shoes.

Because this was already during the war, they didn't let us get out. It was very hard. When you needed something, we had to smuggle things in, which you risked your life for. I mean, if you wanted anything. But I was-- they made us work. So it was like sewing. We had to sew for the soldiers.

But all those things are not important. That is that you talk, and they are not important. But after '42, this was the first, we called it Aussiedlung, the first transport. When they were taken, we didn't know about it.

But then each time they had another transport. And then we already discovered. And that feeling of being like a trapped rat, we knew when they were surrounding-- surrounding. When we finally went to the ghetto, they separated the older people from the younger people, the parents from the children.

And we had to do quite a bit. I don't know how we did it. But we knew somebody that knew somebody. We managed to get-- and my mother was only 40 years old when she died. But even she was considered already old. And we had to get her to live with us through manipulation because only young people that could work. The others were in another ghetto, which eventually they killed the people in that ghetto. They only took the younger people to work. And all those people that were in the other ghetto were killed.

When we were sitting there, when they took us, we were listening to them the whole night, the guns that they were killing the people. And that's how my aunt died with her little baby. She was hidden, and they found her, and they killed her.

And it is like you don't know where to go because there are so many people, so many friends, so many-- so-- in the family, so many people. And then when we finally fought-- well, there was another transport, where we were working. They did it on a Sunday because they wanted to trick us. And my mother was saved by-- the dug a-- they dug some kind of a hole and they hid.

They put carpet because nobody had the stuff. I mean, we had to move without stuff. So everybody was leaving carpets and stuff behind. And they put some carpet on top of themselves, and they survived. We came back, we found them.

Another time, my sister had a stamp. By accident she had a stamp. I didn't. We were sort of almost buried alive because we had a house of our own. And we had a basement where we kept stuff for winter, coal, wood. So we-- and we had a big backyard. So people who had to move from their homes brought furniture to ours.

They didn't have what to do with the furniture. They thought maybe they can save it. So they put it in our backyard. And they saw that our basement was pretty well hidden with all this furniture. You see, you have different furniture here. But we had, for clothes, closets. You know, like, you have built-in closets, but we had the kind of thing that you-- and they were tall pieces of furniture. So the windows were hidden. Everything was hidden.

So they put us in a room behind. And then they closed the door with wood and with coal so the Germans couldn't see that there was an extra room in that basement. And they took everybody to a gathering place. And whoever didn't have a stamp, again, either they shot there or they took away in a transport.

But we saw. There was nobody there. We heard the Germans coming and saying, come out. Come out. We know you are there. But we didn't move. And then quiet, quiet, such quiet-- nobody, not nobody around. Nothing, you don't hear anything.

When we tried to push the door, we can't. We thought we are buried alive. There was nobody there. They took away the people from the home, like my sister. And we thought we wouldn't see them again. And we cannot get out. This was a very well-built basement. And we thought that is it. We are buried alive.

But then they had a segregation there. Certain people they took away, the ones that didn't have the stamp. But certain people they let back. So they came back. And my mother was with me, and she was saved. So I was sure that she will survive because there were so many times that she survived when other people didn't.

And then they took us to Plasz<sup>3</sup>w. So by accident she had written that she was making buttonholes, which she never did. But by accident, on her papers they wrote that she was making buttonholes. And they needed buttonhole makers. So they took her to Plasz<sup>3</sup>w with me.

My brother, who was only two years older, such a wonderful boy, went in another transport. And they came to [INAUDIBLE] with my friends. This was a young group, 19-- anyway, between 17 and 22 years old, only this age group. And nobody survived because I don't know what happened. They suffered some kind of a defeat, the Germans. And they just wanted to punish them for whatever happened to them someplace else. And nobody from that transport survived.

This was really the flower of our youth. They were beautiful, young people. And nobody ever heard from them again. But of course, we didn't know about it then. And all through the war, I lived with that feeling that my mother would be alive, that my brother would be alive because I couldn't imagine. If I survived, why not them? I mean, they were-- why would, you know, he went to one transport, and I survived. Why wouldn't he survive?

But he didn't. But I was, the same time, the whole time, with my sister. And we did not part. We would not allow anybody to come-- they were counting us every single day. In the morning we had to get up and stay there to be

counted. In the evening-- so we would not let anybody come between us because for fear that they would separate because sometimes they would say 10 here, 10 here, and that is it. And we survived together.

But we tried to save our mother. We thought we are doing her a favor, but we didn't because, in Plasz<sup>3</sup>w, I was sewing by a sewing machine. My mother was sewing by hand. That's what they made us do. This was our job there. And they came and they said they are sending people out, those people who were working by hand. So I gave my mother my place at the sewing machine.

And they came, and my sister and I were taken away to Skarzysko. And my mother was in Plasz<sup>3</sup>w. And then they took her to Auschwitz. And she survived Auschwitz. She was a good-looking woman. And she was-- still they had segregations in Auschwitz, but she survived there. But then they sent her to Stutthof.

And from what we heard, they drowned. They were sent on a boat, and they drowned. And we have to live with such memories. [CRYING]

Sometimes I really feel that I don't know how we go on. And many times-- I don't like to say it in her presence-- but I feel bad. When we sent a form to write, to say a few words, and what I wanted to say is I'm that [CRIES] because that's the way I feel. There is very little in life that makes me-- I don't know what happiness is.

And I don't like to say it in front of her because we try. We try. We act. We make believe. But inside each of us, I think, is a walking corpse.

But I'm upset that she hears it.

You told it to me before.

I don't like her to know that. Yeah, but not the same. I really don't like her to think because then I don't want her to live with that idea that we were so unhappy. It is not a very good feeling about thing about somebody you love, that they were so unhappy. But I always felt that I was sorry that I survived.

I never was happy. When people say, oh, aren't you lucky? Aren't you glad? We didn't care. When the family didn't come, it didn't matter at all. I wasn't happy when we were liberated by the Russians. But there was absolutely no happiness in liberation, none at all.

I used to say, why? People should have survived who enjoy life just for living. No matter what happened, but they are alive, they are happy that they are alive. And I wasn't. I felt that it was such a waste for me to live and for them to die. I just feel that some people react better, some people. There are still people--

Perhaps.

--who put their lives to better use. We feel guilty that we didn't go to Israel because we should have done something with our lives. If we survived, it would have been--

What are you doing today?

We do things. As much as we can, we do. But I mean--

But you're doing something.

It doesn't have a meaning.

You're contributing to my life by sharing this with me today. You are. You are making a contribution.

You have Phyllis and me. OK?

Well that it is. I have two lovely children. And that is-- that is the only thing, the good thing that came out of our lives. You know, but that is why we-- it's so important, sometimes we are so overprotective. And they cannot-- well, it is not so good. I know that, in many instances, we made their life very difficult because of our worries and concerns.

But they are so dear. We don't believe that we can hold on to anything. We have this fear that whatever we have we will lose, that it is impossible, that nothing is coming to us, that we don't-- you know, all those good things are meant for somebody else but not for us. And it is very hard on our children because, whatever they do, we get too emotional about everything they do.

And they have a right to their life. They are young people, and they shouldn't have to live with all our burdens. They really shouldn't. You don't know how worried we are about what we do to your life. Really, we-- very frequently we talk about it with my sister. And it hurts us. You want your children to be happy. Why-- why give them right away such a bad start with all the problems and with all the hurts?

And they feel responsible in a way, when they do something. I suppose other children, when they hurt their parents, so what. But they just feel like they add-- and many times, maybe we say something, that we went through so much. I'm sure that, well, maybe not Anita, but I remember saying it to Phyllis once, that with all the things that we went through, you know? And then she adds, it is not fair because nobody can be perfect all the time. Everybody hurts other people sometimes.

But I just, what I-- what I want to do the most, more than anything else, was talk to Wiesel because it seemed to me, when I read his writings, that he manages to cope with life. I wanted to find out his secret. How do people who feel the same as I do, because maybe some people feel different, not less but differently. They cope better. But he seemed to be going around with his pain.

At least in his writing, I saw the pain that I had. And many times my dream was to be able to talk to him so that he can maybe tell me how to go on, to make-- to make it worthwhile that we survived because I feel that it was-- a gift was given to me. I do understand that there was a gift that was given to me. And I don't do anything with that, and it's a waste. I just hate waste.

I keep telling them that one thing that I cannot stand is waste because there are so many hungry people in the world, and there are so many people who need things. And waste to me is the worst thing. And waste of time and waste of life is such a terrible thing.

And I wanted him to tell me how to go on so that life has a meaning. I just-- I really wonder if my life had any meaning except for the, for the two girls.

But do you see how you contributed to my life today?

How?

By sharing this with me. I don't know. I'm 28 years old. I don't-- I'm not from a family of survivors. And I understand-- I understand the cost by which your children were raised by you and being in a family, having to deal with that and the pain of that. And you feel-- you seem to feel that you were-- you were punished by surviving. You see, I see--

Not necessarily punished-- sometimes I feel punished, of course, but not necessarily punished. As I said, it was a gift that maybe I didn't appreciate enough the gift that was given me. I just-- I don't like to be, let's say, ungrateful. I consider being grateful--

You're not. You produced two beautiful children, right?

I did. That I'm very happy about it. And I think they are nice children. I really never had any major problems. There may have been a problem that makes it very hard for them because, like if my daughter would meet someone that wasn't

Jewish, to me it's a terrible thing. And I can understand how it must be hard for her because we teach them not to be prejudiced. We teach them all those things. And yet, when it comes to the-- but all along, this was one thing that I was very consistent about.

I mean, like some people didn't tell their children, and suddenly they are faced with it, and suddenly they wake up. My children knew from the very-- I didn't like them to sleep over in a friend's house if she was not Jewish because maybe she will meet somebody, a cousin or somebody from that-- person's brother that she may be attracted to. So all along I stressed it. And sometimes I feel that maybe I am wrong in a sense.

People are people. There are nice people in every faith. But this has nothing to do. I would feel that I'm betraying. I feel very strongly that I have a debt to the people who died. Maybe if they were here, they could easily understand the children, if they would meet somebody that wasn't Jewish than I can. Because I feel that this way I am just erasing their life. I'm minimizing.

They died as Jews for doing nothing else except being Jewish. And it is like going over to the enemy. If you join-- it is like joining the enemy because even if people convert, the second-- the next generation will not be Jewish because if people that come from such a background, if they can do it, why would their children not do it? They had already an example of one of their parents doing it. And to me, this would be like I'm betraying them. And I couldn't do it.

And regardless how if I'm-- I don't say I'm right. It's not a question of right and wrong.

That's just your gut feeling.

It is a question that I could not cope with it because I could not betray my parents. I could not betray the Jews that died for being Jewish, only for being Jewish. So many people said, you must have done something. They couldn't just take you just like this for nothing.

That's exactly what they did.

But it was strictly for being-- and it's such nice people. I mean, not everybody was nice. But when I think of the values, they were people who lived really-- charity was so widespread. People were so much more involved with other people's lives. Here, everybody lives in their own little world and so preoccupied with their family.

There are some people who work socially, but in a larger sense. They belong to organizations. They don't know one to one.

Yeah, well, that's life in America. And I'm certainly not proud of it. I don't like it. I wish it was different.

But we helped ourselves. I remember at home--

You were really close.

My mother would bake 10, 20 pounds of flour on a Friday, Thursday, Friday to take to poor people. Or not poor people that were-- there were people who wouldn't admit that they were poor because we always took care of our own. There was an organization that would take care of poor people. But some people were too proud to come and ask for help.

So people who knew about it, we would do it so that nobody should know. When my mother is telling me something, she would say do it so nobody should see. When we were in camp, and they gave us a piece of bread, we would save from that piece of bread because if somebody-- we had an uncle, at that time he was still alive. He would bring us a piece of bread. So my mother would say, go and give it to her because she doesn't have anybody. But do it so nobody should know.

Nobody should know that somebody takes charity. Nobody should know, not to embarrass that other person. It was done so naturally. It was just part of life. You had to do it. As little as you had, you shared whatever you had.

And it is-- to think about it, I was sure that my mother will live for being so good, that she will live. And she did live until I was already liberated. And she was still alive in another camp. And I was already free when she died. And it's a terrible thing to say because maybe if I hadn't taken her away that time, then she would have been alive. Maybe if I didn't send--

You can't know. You can't know.

Look, we don't know because very few people of her age-- and she was, as I said, she was only 40. But that was already considered-- I remember once when we were standing in Plaszów, and they were making a selection, and everybody who had red hair and anybody who had glasses and anybody who just they didn't like-- it was not a question of old people because there were no old people. They were all the young people. Like, the oldest were around 40.

And still they were selecting. They were putting down. And I remember saying to my mother, don't be afraid. If they take you, I will go with. I would have died. It was just never a question. We could have maybe survived by taking on Aryan papers. There were such things as, you know, some-- it didn't help much, but some people survived that way.

But I didn't care to live if they did not live. It was not a question I want to live at any price. It wasn't. If they didn't live, I didn't care to live. And yet we live. With all the pain and with all the heartbreak, we lived. They did not.

And I know that. I just wish that somebody could put it into words. I don't have those words at my command. But I'm sure there are words. Somebody should express them a little bit better than I do because I don't think that people still understand. Even I cannot put it in words. How can anybody that wasn't there?

You're not doing a bad job. I get it. I really do.

I don't know. There are so many things that are even hidden from me already because, like I told her, I have a very poor memory of names and even streets and of events from before the war. And I ask-- I told her, maybe somebody did a lobotomy job on me because part of it-- unless I'm trying to-- because it's too painful, and I don't want to deal with it.

Oh, I'm sure.

But it is terrible because my sister is younger. She a year and a half younger, and she remembers many more. I come to her to ask her about names of people and streets.

It sounds like it's harder for you to-- you said you were more emotional.

I was very, yes. I was very devoted. It was natural to love your parents, but I was exceptionally devoted. I remember when I was 13 years old. And in Europe, when you were 13 years old-- I don't know if you know Yiddish. They used to say [YIDDISH], that you are getting already to marriageable age.

It used to-- I used to be terrified that I would ever have to leave my home. It was not such a good way to be. But I just loved my home. I loved my-- I don't-- as much as I love them, sometimes I wonder, do I love them as much as I loved my family.

My younger brother, I used to-- I used to give him-- like you know, we were children, we'd get a piece of chocolate. I used to give him my chocolate so he would allow me to kiss him. He was like a baby. He was not that much younger, five years younger. But he was the baby. Since we were already, let's say, 12, he was-- we loved him so. And I still have in my ears his voice because when they took him he was-- I think after typhoid. I think it was typhoid that he was. And he just came out from the hospital.

And he wasn't feeling well. And we let him go. It was on a Sunday, and we let him go. And he said--

How would you have-- I mean, who could ever believe it? I'm telling you, if anybody came for me in my apartment--

I'd go. And I wouldn't know.

Well, I wouldn't. I mean, I'm so-- I'm pretty-- I mean, if someone came now after what you know--

[CROSS TALK]

But you cannot have the experience.

But back then, how would anyone? How would you have ever known?

It so dehumanized. It is just impossible to understand how they did it.

You want to think that people are good. We all want to think that people are good.

I used to be sorry for the German soldier until '42. You know, the Germans were fighting. We had a hospital where my friend lived. And I would see a German soldier coming to the hospital. And I would be so upset because he's dying so far away from his home. I was sorry for the German soldiers. Knowing what they did, and I still could not-- you know, I felt sorry that he's away from home and dying all alone. Well--

Who wants to think-- I mean, how could you think anything bad of somebody when you're-- I mean, you just don't want to think that-- all of us, I know, even when I don't trust someone, I still want to think the best of them.

Well, but you don't know how they did it. They did it so step-by-step. They would make one person-- so many people ask, why didn't you fight? First of all, a lot of people fought, a lot of people.

But they would make the whole town responsible. If one person did something bad, if one person would attack a German, they would take 10 people. They would come and they would say, and you have to tell me who to give. There are so many people who carry on their conscience the selection that they had to make.

The Germans came to them, and they told them, you will give me 100 people that will be killed. And they had to do it because otherwise they did more. The 100, if they didn't give them the 100, they would take the 1,000. If they didn't take the 10-- it was just that kind of thing that you had to make those decisions. What is more important? What wasn't?

They took people, one of my uncles. They took them to the cemetery. They shot them. He made believe he was dead. He was shot. He didn't survive, but at that time he survived. He came back.

And he had to come back as a corpse. He was with the corpses. He was supposed to have been there. They took little children. They made-- at that time, they allowed you to go if you come-- if you give away your child. If you had a child, you can go here. But if you don't want to give your child, you go here.

And some of the mothers, of course, went with their children. But many times, they pulled those children out of your arms, and they took them. And there was a truckload of little children crying, crying. Can you imagine, two or three-year-olds on a truck, on a bus-- on a truck, just going? And they were gassed right there, crying, those helpless, poor children.

As much as I say, I never-- I don't even tell you because I myself cannot bring to remember all those terrible things, those children, little babies. Yesterday we watched those children singing. And all I could think about is that those are the children that wouldn't have lived. There was nobody. You can count. I don't know how many, 10, 15.

But you did what you could with the bullets and things like that. You know, you saved those people that you could that way.

Whatever we did, whatever we did-- we were in one camp, where people were, like, they're like ghosts because they

worked with the chemicals. And when the-- normally, when people work with this chemical, they had protective shields. They had masks. But of course, nobody worried about such things with the Jews.

And when we saw them, because this was in one camp where we were, in one section of the camp. Then there was another section. And those people, when they came to a barrack, they looked like a ghost, green, completely, just like if you-- you know, you may think it is Halloween-- green, completely green. I don't know how to describe that color-- wrapped in pictures because they were cold. And papers insulate them.

And from that camp, I don't know if there were five, six, seven people that survived. Everybody died. Because that feeling of seeing a living ghost, it was just like a living ghost. And then my friend's parents went there. Nobody came out that I know.

And we were, by accident-- I saved my sister from that camp because they were segregating. They didn't ask. They one in here, one in there. And they put her there. And I went over, and I pulled her over to my side, just-- and I am not-- I was not a brave soul. I was not one of those pushy people. I survived despite myself, not because of anything I did.

So many times people say, what did you do to survive? Why did somebody survive, somebody else didn't? No answer because, basically, I'm not a person who can assert herself. But when they took her, I pulled her over, and a German came over to me and said, what are you doing? And I said, that other German told me to take her over.

So he didn't care. We were young. I mean, what did he care where-- you know, we were on this side or on this side. There was not such a difference. But I just-- to this day, I don't know how I did it because it is just not me. I am always doing what I'm told to do.

Well, what about the bullets? Talk about the bullets. I want that on the tape. How you used to put, like, bad bullets that jam the guns, let the bullets go in.

That is true. We were working with ammunition. And of course, if they would catch us doing something bad, they would kill us. But whatever we could do, whenever we could get in a bullet that wasn't good, you know, we tried to do as much as we could not to have that. But you see, that was one of those minor things.

I know. But it was like-- you say it was despite yourself, but you did all these little things that wasn't despite yourself.

Well, everybody did such little things. We helped. We had one friend who was very hungry. Now, we were lucky that we were not hungry. We got very little food at that time. But this is never something that-- I'm not Scarlett O'Hara that she said she will never be hungry again. The food was the least part of it.

They gave us, in the morning, a slice of bread that was like clay. And because you cannot slice the bread evenly, and one piece may be bigger than the other, the people would hold it in their back and call out the name so that you couldn't treat your friends differently. Let's say you have a friend, and you want to give her a bigger piece of bread than somebody else. So to make it just, somebody would stay there and say this person and this person. And whatever came, the next piece of bread, was given.

And we were-- Ida and I, we tried to save a piece of bread because we never knew when we are going to go again on a transport. So we had some extra.

[AUDIO OUT]

So we shared. We gave her our bread. I mean, it was just a natural thing to do. And I don't feel very noble about it. It so happened that I was not as hungry as she was. I did not feel that hunger the same way as she felt that hunger. She was always hungry. And she got the same bread that we did. I mean, it wasn't that. But because we were together, we already had something. It was so much easier because my sister was with me.

People feel hunger for different reasons.



Right. And we would give her-- but I mean, those are not things that you feel proud. You just did them. It was-- you know, you were there. We, for the whole time we were in camp, we didn't have a blanket to cover ourselves. We slept like sardines. We had eight people on a bunk.

One went down. When she came back, there was no room for her. I mean, I don't know how she managed to squeeze in again. But we would sleep like legs, head, legs, head. We covered with a coat. So the person that had to go down at night to the bathroom-- we didn't have a bathroom, we had to go to a latrine outside-- their legs were uncovered because we had like one coat that covered the top. Two people could share a coat. I mean, to cover themselves.

So one was for the legs, one was for the upper body. So whoever went down had to take a coat to go out. So one part of the body was exposed. And that is the way-- but you see, those are not the things that matter. I really would never blame the Germans for the discomfort of war, for being hungry. Those things are not the important things.

It is the inhumanity. It is-- it is all those things that-- the death of so many people. And my problem was also I was a religious person. And I still didn't come to terms about God, how he allowed it. And that is a terrific problem with me because I-- for the longest time, I just needed help, really. I don't know how we managed because I felt the need to go someplace. And we didn't have who to go to because we got platitudes.

Every time, if you went to a very religious person, he would say, well, God must have his reasons. If you went to another person, he would say God didn't do it. People did it. God didn't do it. God didn't-- you know people did it. And there was no answer.

So many of times, we knew we have to do it ourselves. Many times I just felt I can't-- I have to have somebody. Somebody help me. But there was nobody to go to because nobody can understand it.

Who could explain why that happened?

Who can explain it away? Who can say anything? Who can tell me why or what reason? And I want the reason. You know, one of those things that-- when we think about intermarriages, to me this would be a complete negation of our life, of our parents' life. It is very hard to explain it to somebody who is not in it.

But then it would be like we condoned going away for everything that they died, the end of life. In my case, let's say, I have the two children. If they would marry out of faith, that is the end. So what-- so what was the reason for my survival? I mean, if we are not going on--

I guess that's why it's important for me. I don't know about you, but I guess we're in our 20s.

I'm 27.

I'm 28, going to be 28. I'm 27. But I know for me, five years ago it-- I was very involved with someone who was Catholic. And I really thought I was going to marry him. I know there's no way. I mean, in the last year, I have just come to terms with there is no way I could ever compromise my religion for someone else. I mean, that's the bottom line. I mean, I can have as many-- I mean, some of my closest friends are not Jewish.

But the bottom line is, I know that there's no way that I could compromise my Judaism for a man or a marriage or a relationship or anything like that. And that's why it's important for me to be here and for-- and that's why I see is what you're doing for me and for you is a real, I mean very real contribution to my life. I mean, you are really contributing to my life.

Well, if I could save one person from not marrying a Jew, it would be all worthwhile. That is--

Not marrying a non-Jew.

A non-Jew. That would be very-- to me, this would be a very big accomplishment because if they would come to me today, and they would say you deny your Jewishness or you face death, and I could not say that I would live as a non-- not because-- I'm not that religious. I just couldn't deny myself. It would be like giving away part of me. I could not live with half of me.

If I live, I live. If I don't live, I don't I could not-- if they would-- if my life would be put right now on line, and they would come and they would say, either you denounce your Jewishness or you are dying, I could not do it. And it is not because I'm so, you know, so-- I just couldn't do it. How do you give away something that is part of you from so many-- I don't know-- generations?

I suppose that I feel a part of all those generations from before me. How could they just deny myself?

Or how could you deny your experience?

How could I deny their-- it is just like, how-- their life meant so much. Their Jewishness to them meant so much. I am not a religious Jew. I practice whatever I can. But with my problems of why and what, certain things are so unimportant.

It's difficult.

It is very difficult. But my parents, this was their whole life. It was just everything. And how could I deny? How could I betray them? How could I-- how could I ever answer to them?

And to me, meeting them-- now I don't know. Now I don't try. I try not to think about it because so many people don't believe in life after death or meeting anybody. But I don't think that I could go through if I would not think that I would someday meet them. For the longest time, for the longest time, that was something that gave me a reason to go on because I just felt that someday I would still be with them.

And I always knew that I didn't want them to be embarrassed or ashamed of me. We were alone, my sister and I. And I can say it very sincerely, we never did anything that would bring shame or dishonor. And I'm not meaning anything very important. I'm talking about little things because we were pretty good children.

I mean, as children we were pretty good. My parents were very proud. We were good students. We were nice kids. They were setting us-- you know how other kids are like? You look at them. They are such good kids, why aren't you? But we were always set as an example to other kids.

And it is just something-- I don't know-- it was-- you deny yourself. It is just impossible. We feel a responsibility to them. It is as if they-- and I still feel that they would know. I mean, I always-- this was the measure. Will my mother-- not so much-- as much as we loved both of them, but of course with a mother you talk to more. Well, she has to be proud.

Now, we always felt after the war-- some people did things in camps. I don't mean very bad things, but they did things in the camp because they were hungry or because-- you know, they did certain things that they may be embarrassed about, even the things that are not embarrassing now because, like, having boyfriends is not embarrassing now. But in our times, it wasn't a thing to do.

And I always felt that if my parents would meet us, they would be proud. We always-- this was somehow something that we put as a measure of things. Whatever we do, would the parents be proud? If we did this, would they be proud of us? Would they be happy with what?

And we always had that good feeling that they would never be embarrassed of us. But that if we ever faced them-- I am not afraid to face them, the way our life was. And I still-- I still have that feeling. No matter what people say, no matter how sophisticated we get, I still believe that someday I will meet them. And it is still in me. I always, when I pray, when I light candles, I always say-- I pray that my mother and father, they should intervene for us that they should whatever. I always do that.

I mean, to me they are real people. They are still very real people. They are not-- that's why I was afraid of that because I don't want to say goodbye to them.

You don't have to.

I am not.

I'm not either. I can't wait to meet them when I die.

Well--

Thank you.