

Never done it before. I never wanted to do it, really, because there's so many bad memories coming back. So I always ignored it, even though my children told me all the time, Mother, why don't you do that. Let other people know how you survived and how things are happen. And I just-- I don't know. I think subconsciously I didn't want to talk about it. You see?

Many, many children brought their parents to talk about it for the first time.

Yeah.

That had never even talked about it to their own kids.

Yes. I didn't. I always kind or-- I never told my children, really, the truth. They usually-- because my husband survived the concentration camp. And whenever they say, where were you? I survived different. But the whole story kind of-- I don't know. Like I said, it always brings me back to some things at home.

But I'm old enough, I guess, to face it. And I really would like to tell people. I was born in Ukraine, which-- small town. There was about, oh, a third of Jews, and the rest of it was Ukrainian people. The way they feel about Jews was they were always antisemitic. They hated the Jew for no reason, really.

Mostly people in Ukraine, they were poor people. Children-- and they used to go to school. They went, as to public school in the United States. Then one day the child was beat up for no reason. Call him names. Call him everybody.

If parents could afford it a little bit, they used to have a Tarbut school, which is Hebrew school, private like you call here. If the parents could do it a little bit, they would send their children to private school, not because they were better or whatever, but because they were afraid those kids were beaten up all the time. Which I was, fortunately, one of those.

I went to private school. So did my-- I had a brother, a younger one, and a sister. And the big hope is that someday I'll be a teacher, which was a big deal there, that I really wanted to be someday. And unfortunately, the war came.

And you see, everybody says, run. Why do you stay there? Go away because, you see, when the Germans come they'll kill you. They'll do that. But then the rest of them will say, no, the German are nice people. They're really intelligent people. They never will do something to you like that.

Where I come from, the Russians came in 1949-- I'm sorry, in 1939. I'm already nervous. In 1939, instead of the Germans, we had the Russians. When the Russians came in, I went to work as a cashier in a restaurant. I was always not a big-- United States, big means this way-- a tall. Because my father was 6 feet tall, which is unusual for European, and I was one of the tall girls. So even though I was about 13, they hired me because nobody really knew how old I was.

And I worked, you know, like everybody else. My father died when I was young. And then when the Germans came in-- and I still was continuing school even though when the Russians was. I used to work in the daytime and go at night at school because I like school. I love it. And I love languages, which I do. I speak eight languages-- write, read, and everything. And this is something I taught myself. I'm very good at it.

But then two years later, the Germans came in. And the Russian, so-called Russian friends I had, which they were from Russia, those people told me and told my mother, said, run. Go. Go to Russia. Because really, I've got to give the Russian that credit. I don't care, regardless what people will say. They did help the Jewish people.

If somebody wanted to run, go, they gave you trucks. They gave you railroads. They gave you everything. Sure, the circumstances were bad because the bombs would come down. But it wasn't better for them. So they didn't make no difference if I was Russian or was Jewish because they tried to get you out from there.

You're on your own. Whatever you do later, that's whatever it's going to be will be. But when I came to my mother, my father was dead. And I told my mother, I said, let's-- people say the Germans are not too far. Let's run. Let's do. So my

mother said, oh, no. The Germans are intelligent people. Everybody said they would not hurt you.

Maybe the Germans wouldn't hurt us so much. It wasn't really, in my part of the town, that the Germans did hurt us so much. If it wouldn't be for the Ukraine-- and help a little bit Polacks. But we didn't have too many Polacks-- so many people wouldn't be gone because the German does not recognize you, who you are. The native, which is the Ukraine, they do because you do have an accent, regardless what it is.

If you're even born in this country and you went to school in this country, you do have an accent. Somehow we do have an accent. And only the people that you're raised with, they will recognize you.

When Germans came in, they took the whole city. And we had a bid, like you call it here, like a parking lot, a huge parking lot in that small town. I come from a small town. They had an announcement, all the Jews have to come there.

We came that day. And we realized we have problems there. They told us right there that they're going to open up a ghetto. And everybody has to go in this certain street, where it's going to be.

And that's the way it was. We left everything at home. We went into the ghettos. Then they used to take people. Every morning they'd come in. They took people out to work, with guns and whatever. And they took them out from the ghettos.

It was a locked ghetto. The ghetto is just in the morning open and in the evening closed. You couldn't go no place. There was no way you could get out or you get shot. They brought food in without thought there's enough food for you.

And me, I was working on the railroad by German people, what they-- they were officials for the railroads in that city. And I used to clean houses, you know, like a maid-- clean, wash, and everything. And in a way they were nice to me because if they had extra bread or extra whatever, they will give it to me. You know? Like I'll put myself in my front so I look bigger because you couldn't bring nothing in it.

One day I brought potatoes in, which those people gave me. And some of them, like they say, I stole in the gardens. When I was going home, you know, I stole some potatoes because I knew my mother, and we had still two kids at home. And then my mother had three sisters, and they had kids. And my grandparents were there. So whatever you steal that you can't buy, you can't get it, you bring it in.

And I've been caught going through the gate. And I was beaten so badly that was a week and bed laying. I couldn't move. This bad the police beat me up. They caught me and my-- because they realized I was skinny, and I had too big of a bosom. You know? And there must be something there.

And they did caught, and it was only potatoes, nothing else. Was just a few. How much can you take? And sure enough, since then I couldn't do nothing because I wouldn't dare because I know next time I'll be dead.

There were lots of sicknesses in that ghetto. Many people died. There was no doctors. There was nothing but dirt. Because people who lived before in a small little house, let's say one-bedroom, little house, one family, they put three and four and five in that because in that particular street so happened wasn't too many houses, what they put us into it.

So whoever had mercy took you in. And they didn't have no other choice. Listen, here I am, and here I'm sleeping on the floor. And that's what it is.

One day-- one day they come in, and they said, the old ones and the one who do-- sick ones will go on one side of the street. The younger ones go on the other. They took my sister and my brother. They were younger. Like I said, I was 13, and they were young-- and my mother.

They put them on the side, so-called what they're no good for anything. They can't work. They can't do nothing. My grandparents-- lots of my family, we had a big, big family.

And me, because I worked-- and I had a card. They'd give you a card that you work-- they left me on the other side. I just could see my parents, my mother and my kids, through the wired-- there was a wire fence. That's the only way I could see them. I couldn't go there.

But I worked every day. Then one day, was just before-- before the holy holidays, they killed all this side, which it's no good. They took them out at night. And they didn't kill them like somebody gets by gun. They had big, huge graves made out. And in that graves, they had hot-- how would I say it in English? Like we in Europe, we're painting houses with the stone. And you put that stone in water. The stone boils to 1,000 degrees. It boils like boiling water.

I don't know the name in English, but this is a stone. And from that later we're painting houses. That's we're doing here. We don't have paint like you have. It's from a natural stone.

What they did, they filled up those graves. There was huge, big graves, was done already a few weeks before, which nobody knew about it at the time. And they brought those people in. They didn't kill them because they said that every bullet costs money.

And they took all those people, which includes all my family, but not me. I was on the other side. And they put them in that hot-- again, I wouldn't say. I don't know the name of it, but it's a stone. And they burned them to death. You know they were boiling water, like you put a human being or anything in boiling water. Was boiling. OK?

So that half was gone. Now the other half is still around. They work. All they left, all the shoemakers, and the-- anyone who they could get something out of you, those people left. And our life continued. We were there waiting for what's going to be next.

Hunger, cold-- we burned every piece of furniture in the wintertime that we had because there was no wood. There was no more furniture. We took apart the floors. You know, we used to have like you have it here, floors, wooden floors. We took every piece of the floor just to cook a potato or to do something. You have to have fire because we don't have electricity. You see? There we didn't have electricity. So you have to-- so we used to take like burn, every day, one of the boards from the floors so you could cook a little bit of warm water or whatever so you could live on it.

And I went every day to work, to the same people. I was fortunate, one of those, which they feed me there when I work. There was an elderly man. He was-- OK, when you're 13, 14, the man is old. OK? He was maybe 50. But for me he was old because I was just a child, really, didn't know much about life yet.

And I was fortunate. Each time that I worked, which it was every day, they used to feed me there. You know? Whatever they had, they used to get it from the canteens. They brought it into the house. And if I was done working, he said, you eat it here because you cannot take it with you. They'll kill you.

So I was fortunate with that. And life went on. It was very hard to see people dying in front of you. You see them young kids, they got typhoid because we had lots of lice. You know what that is. Because of the dirt, we didn't have no water, couldn't wash ourselves.

Was lice. There was bugs. There was typhoid. There was all kind of sicknesses. You hear screaming each day in another window in another house. Kid dies, father dies, and that's the way it went. Each day there was 10, 15 funerals in a day. There was no place to take those people. You buried them right there where you lived because they can't get out.

That was a horrible life. But even though, I thought to myself, I'm young. I have hope. Maybe someday, someday, somehow-- one day, I went to work. And the people I lived with, I used to go with their son. And their son, the Russian Army took him away as a soldier. when the Russian went away in 19-- you know, when the German came in.

He was born in this year that they took soldiers. But he told his mother. He said, whatever happens, you watch her because when I'll come back, I'll marry that girl because, you know, we were going-- it's from school. You know, we were going to school. We were children.

The mother was beautiful to me. She was like my own mother. After they killed my parents, my mother and my family, she was beautiful to me, very nice. So the German says to me when I was working, like, the morning I came there. And he was very upset. And he says-- and he was very nice to me.

And he said, you know, he said tomorrow they'll kill you I said, what do you mean? I'm working. Why should they kill me? He said, they're going to kill the whole ghetto. Everybody goes.

He said, they don't want no more, nobody. And he says they're going to do to everybody exactly as they did to your mother. The graves are all done. And he tells me where they are. The graves are all ready. Tomorrow morning, he said. Well, he was very upset, but nothing we could do. He wasn't the police. He was just working for the railroad.

And he said, you know what? Don't go home because if you go home, you can't go back anymore. I said, no, I got to go home. I said, that's my second mother there. I got to go home.

And foolish me, I went home. I went back into the ghetto. It was early enough. I went to the ghetto, and I talked to the lady I lived with, which she was to me like a mother. She had children too, big families and all that. And I told her what he said. And she said, it's probably true.

And I said to her, what should I do? She said, run. As long as it's not the gate-- it closes, let's say, in this and this time. She said, you've got to run. And run fast. You could save your life, she said. Why should you go down with us together?

And I ran. And I still was luckiest. Thank God, everything, somehow I was lucky. I went back out from the ghetto. But it wasn't time enough to close. And I was hiding. And sure enough, the next morning, the whole next part of the ghetto was gone. There wasn't a human being left.

I hide it. I was in-- I don't know if you ever saw in the fields, when they take the corn and they make like a house to dry the corn. What do you call it in English? You know what I'm talking about.

Yeah.

One of those I was for three days, no food, no water, nothing, just sitting there. And then I thought, I've got to see it for myself. And I knew what it is because I was born in this city.

I went out. I listened. It's quiet. So I walked and walked. And I came there where the place was. And I never in my life would I forget what I've seen. Blood was boiling with that things together, with that hot thing. Was blood all over.

But I'd say, if you-- if you boil something, you know, and it's thick, you know, like-- you know what I'm talking about? And this was really thick. But it was mixed out blood. And the ground was split. You know, it was like a thick layer on it-- white from that white, from that stone, and blood all over. But it's like God will split it.

It was split in part. All those graves were split in the middle. But I thought, and still think, that people must have been still alive. And they must have tried to get out or tried to move, and that shifted itself, what I tried to say because [INAUDIBLE] was a few thousand people, maybe 10,000, 15,000 people they took. And everybody tried to maybe, you know, maybe they were still a little bit hope for them, but they couldn't get out no more.

And I stood there for a few minutes. And I thought to myself, there's no use standing there because they'll catch me, and then I'll be the next. And I start running. And I went in the next city, which is about 15 kilometer away from my town. It's called Brody.

And in that town, they didn't have no ghetto yet. It was in a different part of the country. It wasn't too far from us, but it was the-- they called it a protectorate, which different governor, let's say, this way. And I came over, then I went to the Jewish-- where Jews were there.

First of all, I didn't have no shoes. I lost my shoes. And it was freezing cold. I didn't have a coat. I didn't have anything. I

was barefeet. So they gave me a pair of old shoes. And they gave me something. And they say, don't wait too long because we're going to have here the same thing few people had in [INAUDIBLE], we'll have it here within a week or two. Run.

So I thought, where would I go? So because of me working at the train, and I knew I was working there, I said, it's the only way. I'm going to go there and see wherever a train goes. And I'm just going to go in and go because there was normal trains. It was wartime. OK?

And I went over there. And here stays a train with sick people. But the Germans, they were working in Germany. Germany took people, like you, young, strong people to work because they didn't have enough men. And once you got sick in Germany, they send you right back to Ukraine, wherever you come from.

TB people, epileptics, stuff like that, sick ones. And I thought, what's the difference? Any train goes anyplace. And I'm going there and I speak-- I speak Russian. I speak, like I said, many languages.

There's a Russian fellow, young fellow standing there. And I said to him, where does it go, that train? And he said, to Dnipropetrovsk, which is way out in Russia and Ukraine. And I said, can I go in there. He said, it's all sick people. What do you want in here? I said mine-- and I didn't know at the moment what to say. I said, my parents ran away, I said, from the Russians. I didn't want to say from the Germans because from the Germans, I can't run.

And they told me they're going in this part of the country. I said, they lost me because it happened. The war, you could lose anything. And I said, I'm looking for my parents. I said, if you don't mind. He said, I don't care.

But he didn't recognize me, that I was Jewish because only the Ukraine and Poland did recognize you. The one from way back out in Russia, they don't recognize you as good.

And I went there. We were five days on the way because they stopped and they go, they stopped and they go. And when we came to Dnipropetrovsk, which is a big city, the guy says to me, so what are you going to do now? I said, I don't know. I'm going to start looking.

He said, looking? It's a big city. He said, I've got a mother. And we live in the outskirts, like here Oak Park. We live at the outskirts of the city. He said, but I'm working, as you see, this is my job. I'm working for Germany, for the Germans.

If you want, he said, you come with me to my mother, and you say. She's an old lady. And you stay with my mother, he said. Till we find your parents or whatever you want to do. That's all what I had to hear and I wanted to hear.

But by the way, on the way, as being a young girl, in the train there were about 15 men watching the train. And when you're young, I was harassed and was all kind. But so happened, that young fellow who I asked the first time, he was nice. He used to see what's going on. He came over and said, lay off of her. Leave her alone.

She's a sick girl. She's from the sick ones. Make sure they don't touch me. Maybe they're afraid of me, that I'm sick. Which I wasn't sick, but he wanted to protect me. He was really a nice guy. He was older than me. I mean, let's say I was 14, so he was 22, 23, but still young.

And I said, fine. So I went to his mother. She was an old lady. Again, like I said, to me she was an old lady. And she was very nice. But they were poor, and I was with his mother maybe a week till I got a little bit, you know.

I was scared, and I was-- I was frightened. I didn't know-- didn't have a penny, not one penny. I didn't have a piece of bread, nothing. And just I was like a charity case. People have to give me. And I realized the woman is wonderful and everything else. But I realized one thing. I cannot stay there because she can't feed me. I've got to go to work.

And then I thought to myself, if I go to work and be a maid or be any low-class worker, they'll catch me. There's no doubt about it. They'll get me. I've got to go hide.

So I got dressed, and I went into the city. I went into the city, and I went by where says, [NON-ENGLISH]. That means it's like City Hall. I walked in there and ask them if I they look for somebody-- they know would look for-- I'm looking for a job.

So the man there said, what kind of a job? And I says to him, I said, mind the kitchen, anything. I wasn't sure what I want. He said go next door, which it is, he says, the Feldgendarmerie. This is like the Gestapo. They call themselves Feldgendarmerie.

Those are the people. Maybe you saw on the picture. They wear silver. Here they had a silver-- they're like that-- for the civilian people, they call the Gestapo with the brown colors. For the military they call Feldgendarmerie.

They used to wear the same brown color, the same uniform. But here they had like a silver piece hanging in front of them, like a shield. OK. That was the military Gestapo. If you done something wrong, they'll hang you. I mean, there's no doubt about it because you were a military.

So I said, OK. So I'm going next door, and I'm walking in. And there's a man, a soldier, sitting there. He asked me what I want. I said, I'm looking for a job. And he said, can you speak languages because we're looking for an interpreter. I said, yeah.

Oh, he said. Good. But you have to wait till my boss, the captain, will come of the company, and he'll interview you. So I was sitting. And it didn't took long, comes a little elderly-- again elderly-- gentleman. And he tells him in German that I'm looking for an interpreter job.

He said, sure. I'm walking into his office, and he looks at me. And he says in German, how old are you? So I wanted to make myself older. And before I could say something, he said-- I didn't even finish saying what I wanted. He said, my God, do you look old.

And I said, what do you mean? He said, gosh. I know you're young, he said. But you look so old. I have children, he said, in Berlin. But you look old. I said, you know, it's the war.

He said, what are you doing in here? I said, I'm looking for my parents. The Russians took away my parents. And I'm looking for them. And I can't find them. And I said, now I'm hungry, and I need a job.

He heard the way I spoke German. And he said, you're hired. And they gave me an apartment for myself. They gave me a uniform right in there with a gun, exactly like the men. The only thing is, I didn't have no papers, no nothing. And here you cannot work like in a secret service and with no papers, no anything.

So he said to one of his men, he said, you go over to the civilian Kommandantur, for civilian, which first I'm a civilian. Now, I'll be there. And I tell them that I sent you. My commander says to him, and I want her to make a Reichsdeutsche. Reichsdeutsche means a clear-blooded German, has no father or father is Ukrainian-- not Jew, forget about Jews. But father is Polish or father is whatever-- Christian, any Christian.

No, I am clear-blooded German. And I still have the passport. I do have my passport. And right in there put in in the party, in the German party, which I have that too, this is the German-- the Hitler, Hitler Youth that are young. The man took me over there and showed-- because that man is a big deal in the city. They made me-- they made me out my German passport. They made me out that I'm in the party.

Once I had that, I came back. They gave me the uniform. They gave me an apartment and a maid. And I had the right to eat in the canteen with the high officers together because I was a high-ranking, like and officer because I was the only woman interpreter they had.

They had six men working for them, but they didn't speak as many languages as I did. So I was his, like the high commander's interpreter. Anyplace they went, I went with them. Mostly with them was partisans. They had lots of-- you know what a partisan meant.

Yes.

They had a lots of partisans in this part of the country. And they had people blowing up bridges and whatever. This was - but they were the judge and the jury for that.

And one day-- I don't know if you want to know about it, but I'll tell you. One day they brought in a girl. And the guy says to me, she's Jude, meaning she's Jewish. And not that the Jews look different, it's just silly to say it. But that poor girl-- I mean, I don't know why Because maybe-- because one Jew to another-- right in there I've seen through her. She's 100% Jewish. And they caught her in the woods because the woods had so many partisans and unfortunately she was caught.

And she stays and she shakes all over. And he says to me, he said, tell her, tomorrow we'll hang her. And I said, don't say like this to her. And he said, yes. He was mean. He was from the SS, and he was a real mean guy.

So I thought, God, how can I help you. And she's crying. And she said-- I said to her, I said, you-- see, I'm afraid of my own skin. But I'm saying to her in her language what she spoke. At that time she spoke Ukraine. I said, tell the man that you went just to look for food, that you live around here.

I'm trying to give her the words what to say. And she's saying, but he wouldn't listen. And they locked her up. And it was on my conscience all day. And I think, how in God's name can I help her?

So I thought the only one who could help me is my boss. I can't go to those guys working with me the office. They wouldn't listen because their hatred is so much that they would not listen.

So I went to my boss, and I told him the story. I said, there's a girl. They locked her up. And I know they're going to hang her tomorrow. I said, for what? She's hungry. I said, listen, you have children, you told me in Berlin. You know how it is. I said, just because she's hungry and she's dirty, I said, why should you-- and you know, I start talking to the man and to his consciousness.

And he said, OK. Come on, Annie. And he took me out from his office, and he went with me. Let the girl out to him. And he looked at her. And he said, she looks dirty, doesn't she?

I said, well, it's no crime. She's hungry, I said. By right she should be fed and sent home. There's nothing wrong with her. To make the story short, it took a long talking. She got free. The woman got free, and I didn't see her, didn't know her name, didn't know anything.

After the war, I'm walking freely, all free. I'm walking down the street in a little town called Memmingen, not far from Munich. And somebody grabs me in the back, and I look. And I see her. And I look. And she says to me, I'm looking for you all over. And I said, what? And she didn't know I'm Jewish. She just thought I'm working for the Germans.

I said, for what. She said, you saved my life. I saw you walking before, she said. And then you disappeared, and I couldn't find you. She said, you know I'm Jewish. I said, I know. When I saw you the first moment when you come in. It so happened, I'm Jewish too.

She says, no, you're not. I said, yes, I am. But I said, I saved your life, and that is important. She said, you saved my life. And she cries, and she takes off her ring from her finger. She said, you see that. It's a red ruby, and I have that too. She said that my mother gave me, if I ever will be hungry to give it away for bread.

But she said, you gave me life. And she said, take it. That's the only thing I've got. And what I'm giving-- it was right after the war. She said, I'm giving it to you. I said, I don't want your ring. I'm happy I saved your life. She says, oh, no. You did it. You get it.

She's alive today. She lives in Munich, has two beautiful kids. We're communicating. Matter of fact, she offered me

several times to take a trip. She's doing pretty well. This is one story.

And another story, I walk in the same city I was working that was-- I'm not finished with my one story, but so many things I remember. Was a guy walking right after the war. And he had boils all over him. And he looks there. The war wasn't quite over, but it's already like over.

And he comes over to me. And I said, are you hungry-- the first thing I asked him. But I still was German. I still was a military. And he says, no, I'm sick. I said, OK. I said, just walk after me. Don't walk with me because I'm still not, as the Jew, we'll say kosher. I'm still at the war.

But he, poor thing, he escaped a concentration-- some camp. They were walking and he escaped because he realized he's going to die. He's sick. But it was just like a day-- next day was already the war was over. I took him into a German doctor. The doctor looked at him, and he said, what do you want me to do with him? I said, whatever it costs, I said, you know me Dr. Chad. That was his name.

I said, money I got. I said, whatever it cost, I said, I want you to do anything for him. Put him in a hospital. I'm paying, I said. Here, that's money first. You do what you can for that man, I said.

He said, why? I said, because. Just do it. He put him in, put him in the hospital. The man was fine. And I didn't-- again, I didn't know where he was or where he disappeared. I come to-- after, well, many-- three, four, five years later, here comes a handsome fellow. And he says, remember me?

I said, no, because he looked two people different. It wasn't him. But remember, you send me to Dr. Chad? This is me. And ever today we're the best friends. He lives in Toronto.

There's so many things in my life went by. But coming back to the other story, I worked for the Germans. And like I said, I was an interpreter. And I had problems of my own down there. I had a maid. And I think somebody must have sent her because she was-- she was not a Jew lover. But somebody must have told her, maybe recognized me or something. And they wanted me in trouble.

So she had a son. And she come, and she was crying and pleading with me that the Germans want to take her son to send him to Germany away to work. And me, young and foolish, I said, in my house is the place-- the best place for him to hide him.

So she brought her son over one night. And it didn't took an hour later, the police came and arrested me plus him. But I know now and I knew right afterward that it was a setup.

And since then, they kind of didn't trust me too much with things. Like, I knew many secrets before. I wasn't in the meetings anymore. I didn't-- I wasn't-- you know what I mean? They did not-- I was working for them, but I was not no more trustful because they say, if the German said they want that fellow sent to Germany, you didn't have no right to hold him in your room till the transport goes away, which they were right in a way. But I guess she persuaded me.

I thought all the way she was loyal. But she-- till today, I don't know who did it. But she-- she did something to me.

Then when we left, I went from there and we went into Stalingrad. Then in Stalingrad-- and it didn't took me too long. I was there maybe three or four days, bombs coming down. That was the biggest fight that they had was Stalingrad.

Annie, that's me, get a hot piece of metal coming down from the sky. Get me right-- see, I'm a cripple.

Oh.

All the way in my leg and one in my shoulder-- crippled me in my arm. Well there's nothing, nothing you really can do. It's no meat. It's nothing in here. And get me out from there, from the front. It was still in Stalingrad, and the bombs were coming, German bombs, Russian bombs. It was a terrible, terrible thing, freezing weather, cold. People were



freezing up their hands, their noses. It was a horrible thing.

Excuse me. They get me back behind in the hospital. I was in the hospital, and the doctor said he has to take off my arm because that arm, he said, it's blood [NON-ENGLISH], which is blood poisoning. And he said, if this is not cut down, you'll die.

My boss came, flew in to visit me, how I'm doing. And the doctor tells him this. And he says, no. She is not going to cut that arm down because she's a girl. And you cut that arm down, she'll never get married. She'll never have a family.

He said, we'll get a specialist. They did. And as you see here, what they did-- see, they didn't want to use the medication on me. They're using it on soldiers because they didn't have too much. But when my boss came, he said, everything you have, you use on her because it's happened to her on our front. And she's going to get like the military gets it.

And here I am. But afterwards, after Stalingrad, that company, a lots of them died. Many, many died. And the company started growing apart. You know, like everybody went someplace in a different division.

Let's say this division split up in smaller. So what they do, the people still was there. They went into other ones. And I was like out of a job, which right in there in Russia [? working would help. ?] Right in Russia there, in Dnipropetrovsk, I got myself a job with a company. They were building the bridges for the soldiers. You know, those quick bridges that you build just for wars, in the war time.

[SNEEZES] Oh, excuse me. Pontoon bridges?

Yeah. Bless you.

Thank you.

And they were building them with prisoners, all kind of nationalities, prisoners. And I was interpreted, again, to those prisoners. And I worked with them. And then, when they-- was in 1943, '44, and the Germans started going back, I went back with the same people, towards Germany because Russia-- And I, many, many time I thought, should I run away? Should I do something?

But I was afraid. If I run away, they'll catch me anyway. This way I thought, whatever will be will be. And the company I was working with-- it was a funny thing too. There was a guy working with us. And he was so-called an interpreter. I didn't know him. He was-- he said he was from Russia. So one day we're sitting and eating, and one of the guys said, you know, the John, this guy here, he's a Jew. And I thought to myself-- and I said to him, oh, come on. He works with us here. How could he be a Jew? He has to be in the party.

You can't work no other way unless you have a card that you belong to the Hitler party. He said, oh, he's a Jew all right. I've seen him in the shower. You see, a man is very easy to recognize because of the circumcision. And I didn't know that guy. But I knew how he looks.

So I went over to him. He was walking. And I said, your name John? And he says, yeah. And he smiles. He thought I'm just a girl coming over to talk. I said, it's a funny thing happened. I said, you know what they say about you, that you are a Jew. And I said, this is not true, is it? And he said, no, it isn't true.

So the next morning, the guy was disappear. He wasn't there no more. He disappeared because like I tipped him off. They didn't tell him that they think he's Jewish. OK? But I tipped him off and said, they say you're Jewish. So he just disappeared.

With that company, I went back into Germany. And I worked like a stalag. You know what a stalag is? For prisoners-- Italian, Russians, Poles, all kinds, and I was working there for them. And we had American prisoners, American in the same stalag. You know, they were mixed. They were working for us too, all kinds.

And there were one group, they were Jewish because they did separate American Christians from the American Jews, separately. I mean, they were treated beautiful because Red Cross took care of them. They couldn't touch them.

But when they picked up people, the Jews they sent to one side and the Christian American they sent to another side. OK? Even though in the barracks, they could be together. But at work, they could not work together.

But for me, it was no difference. I had to interpret one and the other. So it was a guy down there by the name of Louis. That Louis-- I didn't spoke any English at the time. That Louis did represent his prisoners, which he was Jewish. But he didn't spoke German. He couldn't speak a word German. He spoke Yiddish.

But by me knowing the Yiddish, and the German didn't know what I'm talking to him. You see? And he thought he speaks German because it's very similar. German and Jewish is similar.

So we're working over a year. One day, they didn't show up for work. When they didn't show up for work, and I didn't-- living in a world, in a wild world of mine own, didn't know what day it is, I came into work. And that group, the Jewish group, didn't show up. And I said to my superior, I said, what's happened? Louis' Group didn't show up.

And he said, oh, they have some kind of a holiday today. So I thought maybe American holiday, whatever. So I don't care. So they'll be in tomorrow. When they come in tomorrow, I went over to Louis, and I said, what's happened? Your people didn't show up yesterday to work. And he says, in Yiddish again to me, because he didn't know I'm Jewish. But he speaks Yiddish. So he says to me, yeah, we had Yom Kippur. And we don't work in Yom Kippur. That's a Jewish holiday.

And I look at him. And at that moment I got hysterical. And I said, [HYSTERICAL SOBBING] just like that. And my tears start coming down, and just like I would have a convulsion right there. And he looked at me. He was pretty smart. He was a druggist in Boston, very intelligent person. And he said, [NON-ENGLISH], which means, you're Jewish, aren't you? And I said-- [HYSTERICAL SOBBING] just like that.

I said, the first time since 1942, '41-'42, that I heard somebody say there's a holiday. Because we used to at home, you know, holidays, especially in a small town, they were very celebrated, whatever. And then at the moment it dawned on me. And I said, Louis, you're the only person who could kill me. In the next five minutes, I'll hang right here.

I said, nobody, but nobody knows that I'm Jewish. I'm Christian. And I'm-- I work for the Gestapo. I said, you say one word to my foreman, I said, I'm out. And he looks at me with a big smile. And he said, I'd rather kill myself than I'll kill you. He was young, 20-something again.

But I trusted him because I realized, why should he? I mean, no reason for it. And not enough that that man didn't hurt me. He-- anything came in from the Red Cross-- socks, warm socks for the soldiers, shawls, soap, anything-- he used to put it on the side so nobody will find it. But I knew about it. And he said, come on, Annie, take it. Do that.

One day, I was very, very sick. I had a strep throat, and I was very sick. And there was no medication. He got it for me. He found out I'm so sick. He got penicillin. But they did it for the soldiers, to the American soldiers. So he made a deal with somebody there, and he brought it.

He was very, very nice to me. The rest of them didn't know anything about it. But they thought, boy-girl, you know you fell in love, even though I'm a German and he's Jewish. You know what I mean? Not that we had something between us, nothing, because, God forbid, he would hold my hand. This was against the law too.

But this is the way those guys used to look at me and say, oh, Louis is looking for you. You know, in a joke. But they really didn't know what between the two of us. And that man is in Boston. I've seen him a few times, [INAUDIBLE] his wife, met his wife and his kids and everybody else.

And I was liberated in a small town in Bavaria called Stockheim. Met my husband there. My husband was in concentration camp. And I'm happy. I got three lovely children, two grandchildren. I wish my parents would be around

and my sisters to be with me. I haven't got nobody.

But I guess you get used to it. This is life, and you settle for it. And that keeps me really happy. I'm working. All my life I've worked. And I want to, not that I have to. I want to work because this way I don't think so much. And I don't get unhappy.

And just one thing that happened to me-- in 1960, I had a total nervous breakdown. And doctors told me at that time that, because of my past and because I was so young when the war broke out and all my family gone and all that what happened to me, to be afraid all my life, that that's why I broke down. And it took me four years in and out Sinai hospitals.

But thank God, I'm doing fine. And I'm coping good with all my work. So I'm happy. And I'm sure I left out a lots of it because you know how it is. You cannot put in all six years of war-- five, six years of war within half an hour, an hour talking. But--

There's more time.