# INTERVIEW WITH ISADORE AND ANNI HOLLANDER

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# INTERVIEW WITH ISADORE AND ANNI HOLLANDER

**INTERVIEWER**: Okay. I'm just going to put down some basic information. This is just to get started. What I'll do is I'll go back and forth. So first I'll ask Izzy a question, then I'll ask you the same question. I need your age, Izzy. Your real age.

**ISADORE HOLLANDER**: 70.

**INT**: And I need your date of birth.

**IZZY**: July 26, 1920.

**INT**: And your place of birth. The city and the country.

**IZZY**: Paris, France.

**INT:** I didn't know that.

**IZZY:** Now you know.

**INT**: And the city and the country you were living in before the war?

**IZZY**: Bendin, Poland.

**INT**: Let me ask you the same questions. How old are you?

**ANNI HOLLANDER**: I'm 64. August 6, l926.

**INT**: And where were you born?

**ANNI**: Poland. Bendin, Poland.

**INT**: You were born there. It's pronounced Bengin? The d is a (soft) g?

**IZZY**: Actually, it's a different pronunciation, it's hard in English, so everybody knows Bengin. If you say Bendin, you should get it.

**INT**: Okay. And that's where you were before the war.

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: Do you know, I have a Polish housekeeper. I can speak a little Polish. I talk to her in Polish. I learned Polish. I didn't know before.

**IZZY**: I have two tapes.

**ANNI:** Do you want to listen to it?

**IZZY:** Do you want to listen to it?

**ANNI:** Polish lessons.

**INT**: To learn? Why do you need lessons?

**ANNI**: For the kids, when they were little. They wanted to know.

**INT**: I never spoke Polish at home. My parents never spoke Polish.

**ANNI**: My daughter had a Polish woman too, and she didn't know how. She took my dictionary.

**IZZY**: The word "shmatta" is Polish.

**INT**: Tell me a little bit about your father, and his background, and what kind of man he was.

**IZZY**: Hardly, I knew.

**ANNI:** It's hard to tell. He was three years old.

**IZZY:** I was three years old when he passed away.

**INT**: How did he die?

**IZZY**: He died. He took sick and he died.

**INT**: Illness?

**IZZY**: Illness.

**INT**: What did you know about him?

**IZZY**: What did I know about him? What I knew about him is that my mother had one of her best lives in the few years she had my father.

**ANNI:** She had a daughter.

**IZZY:** They lived in Paris, France. They moved from Poland to France.

**INT**: So your father is from France. He was French.

**IZZY**: My father is from Poland and he went in l9l8 to France. I had a sister, she was born in l916. And my mother had sisters in Paris, and they decided to go to Paris, and my father found a job in Paris as a tailor.

**INT**: So he was a tailor. That was his work?

**IZZY:** Tailor, yeah. And then he took sick after being there two or three years, four years. He decided to go back home because in those years in France they put people in mixed nationalities in the cemetery. You had to be rich, or have a lot of money to be taken to a Jewish cemetery.

So he was afraid that he would be buried in between goyim, so he decided he was to go back -- which he was promised by Rothschilds, that he worked for them -- that he would be put in a Jewish cemetery, but he didn't believe that, and Mother picked up the children with the sick man and went back to Poland, and it didn't take very long when he passed away. And since then we stayed in Poland and four years later my mother remarried, and I was age 7, and I couldn't be kept at home by my stepfather so my mother put me in the orphanage in Bendin, which it was a big help in the part of being educated in good manners and good ways. Being away from my stepfather.

**INT**: Was he a tough man?

**IZZY**: Very tough. My mother had a tough life. I was very jealous, but I couldn't do nothing. My sister had to get married by sixteen years of age because of him, to get out from the house. He had two more children with my mother. But there wasn't enough room to experience a better home life, that I should have, that any other child could, and the war broke out and I was age nineteen. I was caught, sent to a coal mine and...

**INT**: Okay. Before the war. Go back. So I understand that at age seven you were sent to an orphanage on the insistence of your stepfather.

**IZZY**: Not on the insistence of my stepfather. On the insistence of my mother. Not that I wouldn't be able to stay at home, but the conditions were no good for me to be at home.

**INT**: Are you talking about money? Or are you talking about emotional?

**IZZY**: Emotional and everything. It would have been a disturbance to me. Who knows which way I would have been brought up? This way the opportunity was better. Emotional and psychological and educational and being a mentsch.

**INT**: Was it a Jewish orphanage?

**IZZY**: Yes. But a very well-known orphanage. It was conducted with the same codex. I don't know if you know what codex means. Manners and laws by Januscz Korschak which we used, because he had the orphanage in Warsaw. And in many other cities in his name. We used this

by-laws and laws in the orphanage how we should be raised. I remember I was ten years of age. I was the chairman of the board in the orphanage. And it was a big honor in those years to be. I was six I was learning, by seven, seven and a half years of age, and who knows if I would have been able to do this otherwise?

**INT**: Was the family poor?

**IZZY**: Very poor. My mother came out from seven daughters, seven sisters. Some of them made it a little better. My mother was good off when my father was alive. She was a queen. She used to tell me the stories. But what had happened, things turned for the worse. She was left with two children, a young woman, and some people do remarry and have better luck and some people don't have the luck. And what happened to her it went on the sour side. It didn't work the way it was supposed to. Then when you get involved you have too much and you are stuck. By the time she had the children I grew; when I grew I go in the orphanage.

**INT**: Why do you call it an orphanage, and not a boarding school?

**IZZY**: It wasn't a boarding school. It was an orphanage. A regular orphanage.

**INT**: So you could go there because your father died.

**IZZY**: Yes. I took half. This was the help and this was the, how you say the "revenge", that I could have taken being away from home. But I lost. I lost the love of a mother, which under the circumstances she couldn't and...

**INT**: So did you visit?

**IZZY**: Every weekend. Saturday afternoon we went home to see Mother. But as a young child I missed the daily routines from a mother. Because being in an orphanage you live under restrictions, under orders. Make your bed, eat your breakfast. Every child has his own duties. One month you wash the dishes, one month you sweep the floor. One month you clean bathrooms. And we were on rotations. Being nine years, as I say, ten years of age, I used to give out food to l25, 150 children. Then had my duties to make breakfast every morning. Be under orders, up to ten years of age I had to go to bed 8:30. And I became the age when I could stay [up] as long as I want, as long as I got up and went to school. It was by routine, and it was by order.

**INT**: Was it a religious orphanage?

**IZZY**: Very religious. Orthodox religious. Very religious. Our supervisor was a Yid with peyos and as a matter of fact, he still has his home in Israel and we met him a few years ago.

**INT**: And your mother was, also?

**IZZY**: Yes. My father was a gabbai in the shul, and my grandfather, my zayde, was a gabbai in the Bendin shul, one of the most angezehene shul in Poland. This had nothing to do with being poor or rich at the time because of circumstances. My mother had to help two children till she remarried and it turned to the worst. So I was the lucky one, but I missed. I missed to understand to give people a description what love is.

**INT**: Is it sad for you, this story?

**IZZY**: ... What love is. As a child I missed sitting on my mother's lap. And I loved deeply my mother. I always hoped that I would be able to grow up and do what I have to do for my mother. But time didn't permit it. The war...

**INT**: When you used to go home on Saturday, did you stay until Sunday?

**IZZY**: No. I came back. I didn't want to stay. It wasn't enough place to stay. As I said, it was a very inconvenient situation. It's hard to explain, I mean, it goes through my mind and I can't sometimes bring it out. It's very difficult. It sits back. But I'm giving you the main overall...

**INT**: Are you okay?

**IZZY**: I'll be all right.

**INT**: Let's try this. I know it's hard to talk about it. To give me, if you can, a few describing words for your mother, and a few for your stepfather. Describing would be adjectives. "Beautiful," etc.

**IZZY**: The description is: My mother was a wonderful woman, she was a kind woman. We didn't learn from my mother years ago like life is today in the American atmosphere. We learned different. How can I describe? As I say, I hardly knew her. To give details of my mother...I know she was a warm woman, she cared for her children as much as possible. We had a sister in the house and she had to be aware of my stepfather, but we hear these stories day in and day out. But these stories weren't created now, they go back to Biblical times. Thank G-d nothing happened. My sister was aware of herself and she had to go and get a job.

**INT**: Your sister was older.

**IZZY**: Four years older than I am. And my mother couldn't do any more than what she did. She had two more kids, girls with the second man. He wasn't a supplier, a parnosseh giver.

**INT**: He didn't work at all?

**IZZY**: Most of the time, he was supposed to be in business, most of the time he wasn't home.

**ANNI:** Salesman.

**IZZY:** Salesman. If he sends some money home, the following day he came and stayed in bed and finished the money, and when the money was finished he went away again. And it was a constant life, an ongoing life, day by day, year by year.

**INT**: So would you say he was a selfish man?

**IZZY**: I can't describe him sometimes. Believe me, I curse.

**INT**: You curse his name.

**IZZY**: I curse his name. I wish wherever he is that [Yiddish] Erde and keep in der Erd. That was a sad situation, the day I left. I had to leave. I had to go away. There was a reason. I couldn't stay at home. If I had been caught, my family would have known immediately. Because we had predicted that this would happen.

**INT**: You're talking about when you were older. During the war.

**IZZY**: Maybe I wouldn't have left even in l939 when we were already under the German rules. I was caught and I was sent to a coal mine, and I escaped, and I came home and I asked my mother to give me at least my two younger sisters. My older sister was married, she had four children. So I couldn't mix in in their life. Life became under the German rule, as probably many people have described to you the situation already, so we know we were deprived immediately when the Germans occupied, but if I would have known when I came home from the mines that what would come to a crematorium or a destruction in such a way the way it happened, maybe I would have forced my two younger sisters, not looking at their father or their mother. I said, "Mother, you want to come?" But my mother says, "Go, and watch yourself, and G-d should be with you," and I went. But I ran away. That's all.

**INT**: Tell me about the orphanage. There were rules there and you had responsibilities, and you also had to learn. I assume they were strict, the teachers?

**IZZY:** Strict.

**INT:** A ruler on the hand?

**IZZY**: Strict, no. Believe me, they had [Polish], translated in Polish. When the Hebrew teachers from the Mizrachi came to us twice a week to learn Hebrew, teach Hebrew. Sorry it didn't last long, that the memories couldn't hold in me, you know, what I learned when I was that age -- the tsuris chased it away.

**INT**: Were they strict?

**IZZY**: Strict in education. You had to go to school, you had to have a reason for not going to school. You were examined every morning, behind your ears.

**INT**: And if you were bad, what did they do?

**IZZY**: They had punishments.

**INT**: What kind?

**IZZY**: Certain punishments. To do work that you didn't like.

**ANNI:** No hitting.

**IZZY:** No hitting. To wash the bed towels.

**INT:** They didn't pull your ear?

**IZZY:** No, no. They had a punishment that the supervisor of the orphanage -- if I did anything wrong, the worst punishment she didn't talk to me.

**INT:** And that hurt.

**IZZY:** My duties to clean the toilets for a whole month.

**INT**: But did you get into trouble?

**IZZY**: A child of my age, eight, nine, ten, if you don't get in trouble you're not normal.

**INT**: Did you get in trouble a lot, or a little?

**IZZY:** No.

**INT:** You were a good boy.

**IZZY**: No, I was very well aware of myself. I learned how to handle myself because of being an orphan. So I was aware of myself, not to run in. Sometimes we would go into trouble.

**INT:** But there were some boys who got into trouble.

**IZZY:** Everyone got into trouble.

**INT:** But there were some bad boys, too.

**IZZY:** There were some bad characters, but they didn't last too long.

**ANNI:** Izzy, because they didn't let them.

**INT**: They got kicked out of the school?

**ANNI:** Yeah, they didn't let them do it.

**INT:** So they had no place to go.

**ANNI:** It's my city, I know all about it.

**IZZY**: If anybody misbehaved themselves to a certain point, they couldn't stay in the orphanage. They had to be...

**ANNI:** Dismissed.

**IZZY: ...** dismissed. So we were under very good supervision, but philanthropists in the city, Jewish, they were our supervisors, guides.

**INT**: So people gave their money, and the doctors gave their time.

**IZZY**: It was, let me explain to you. It was a gemeine, a gemeine, like the JCRC. The Jewish Family Service. They had very rich people in the city, from doctors to industrialists. Very rich in our city. If you read about Bendin, you will find out that Bendin, that when we went three years ago back to Poland, we passed by their factories.

**ANNI:** Still there.

**IZZY:** So one woman, she came every Saturday with the rich other people, and they liked to serve us dinner, to help us, and we sang songs.

**ANNI:** Take them home.

**IZZY:** And we sang "In der Gezele Weil." Then we had a doctor, he was one of the first gynecologists in the European continent, Doctor Tareshevsky, it was written about him, and his wife used to go and take children home during the week after school, two kids to her house. And I remember the first building was built in Bendin with an elevator. And we were so...

**ANNI:** Shocked.

**IZZY:** Shocked, proud of myself that we were riding in an elevator. She gave us cookies, she gave us milk, she came to the orphanage -- the doctors' wives, they had no children -- she used to take our temperature if anybody didn't feel good and talk to us and explain to us. And then we had an association, an affiliation with an orphanage in the next city.

**INT**: The townspeople gave their time.

**IZZY**: The townspeople did this. The Jewish kehillah, Bendin was one of the nicest and the richest kehillas.

**ANNI**: They had the most wonderful things about Januscz Korschak there.

**IZZY**: And this was the advantage. The advantage was on me that was I finished public school and high school, and I finished three years night school, because I couldn't go to the Gymnasium, I had to go to work.

**INT**: Did you live in the orphanage that whole time?

**IZZY**: No, I lived up to age l5.

**INT:** And then what?

**IZZY:** And then I went to work.

**INT**: And you had your own apartment?

**IZZY**: No, most of the time I was with my balabost, I ate there.

**INT**: What's a balabost?

**IZZY**: Where I worked, the schneider. And I slept there and once in a while I had to go back to my mother, which we moved from Bendin to the next town. So once in a while when my stepfather wasn't home, I came home and I stayed with her, too.

**INT**: So you were training to be a schneider, a tailor?

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: Okay. Let me go back again. In the orphanage, did you have friends?

**IZZY:** A lot of friends.

**INT:** Boys your age?

**IZZY**: My age, age above, and age below.

**INT**: Did they have a big brother system, where the older boys...

**IZZY:** ...took care of the younger ones. We always cooperated, and I was always liked to be between the elders.

**INT**: And you were a leader.

**IZZY**: I was always a leader. Everyone had a nickname, and I don't know if I can explain my name.

**ANNI**: He was a leader. He tried to do from nothing something.

**INT:** Always.

**IZZY**: I was always a leader. I played in a show, I was eight years of age, I played in a show, and I played lighting the candles for Shabbas. And I was given a bonbonniere for lighting the candles.

**INT:** Candies?

**ANNI:** Chocolates.

**INT**: Little chocolates.

**IZZY**: We had a show when I would camp, in the summer camp, in the forest, and all the rich people came on a Sunday.

**ANNI**: They also had above the camp -- explain to her -- they also sent from the city.

**INT**: So from the orphanage you went to summer camp.

**IZZY**: The whole Jewish community. One month was the girls, and one month the boys. And we played a show, and I played Silverman, and I struck the match with my left hand, and the way I lit the candle, and I was eight years of age, I'll never forget. And I was good in it. And you know the situation.

**INT**: So you would be elected on the student council, or something.

**IZZY**: Yes. I was always with somebody in the orphanage, that maybe I didn't realize myself those years what the meaning, what it means to me, but I was...

**INT**: And it was all boys.

**ANNI**: There were girls, too.

**INT**: There were girls and boys. And you were totally separate?

**IZZY**: Oh yes.

**INT**: But you ate together.

**IZZY**: We ate together in one dining room. On the third floor was the girls, and on the fifth floor was the boys.

**INT**: And the leader of the organization was a woman or a man?

**IZZY**: A woman to begin with was from Bendin, and then was one from Cracow. At the very end when I left was one from Cracow.

**INT**: So you were close with the boys. You liked the older boys. Did you have friends that you felt were like brothers? Like family?

**IZZY**: Yes, I had two or three close friends.

**INT**: That you could go to with tsuris, and with problems.

**IZZY**: No, no.

**INT**: You didn't talk personal.

**IZZY**: It wasn't as I say. My understanding, I did not develop to find out what a chore it was to go and explain to somebody.

**INT**: But you could say to your friends: I'm scared or...

**IZZY**: Oh yes. I'm scared, I have a stepfather. Yes. I had friends who were very close.

**INT**: Well, how about some of the adults, some of the teachers?

[Gap in the tape]

**IZZY**: I went to public school.

**INT**: So two times a week the rebbe would come. How many kids here are Jewish kids?

**ANNI**: All Jewish. There were no goyim.

**INT**: But you said it was a public school.

**ANNI:** Public school, Jews?

**IZZY**: Let me explain to you. We had a yiddishe public school, not to learn Polish, but it was for Yidden. Later, before the war broke out, in l937, they began to mix, send yiddishe kinder to mix in with the goyishe. Because we didn't go Shabbas to school. The goyishe went Shabbas to school.

**INT**: My mother went to a goyishe school.

**IZZY**: Now I want to explain to you. There were plenty Jewish when we begun to emigrate. The [inaudible] kopf the goyim till we came to understand each other.

**INT**: But there was no Jewish studies in this school.

**IZZY**: Yiddishe religion.

**INT**: So you had a math teacher in Polish, history in Polish, and then a Jewish teacher would come in?

**IZZY**: Polish teachers, but when it came to religion, our Jewish teacher came and taught us the yiddishe religion.

**INT**: Like Torah Academy. Morning is English and the afternoon is...

**IZZY**: But it was a Polish school under the Polish charter.

**INT**: So this was also a school. This is a school picture?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Oh, is that funny. With a teacher in a hat.

**IZZY**: He's alive, he's alive. And I met these people. I enlarged these pictures and I gave it to them.

**INT**: I see. Okay. So you didn't have a special friend who was a teacher or a supervisor?

**IZZY**: Not individuals. I didn't have, like you say, a guardian over me, no.

**INT**: Sometimes, let's say, if I'm in school, like a teacher's pet, the teacher has a special feeling.

**ANNI:** The teachers liked you.

**IZZY**: I was liked by the teachers. I remember their names. Goldshtein and Rodel, Rottenberg...

**INT**: You said: "I was aware of myself."

**IZZY**: I was aware that I was an orphan.

**ANNI**: You know what this awareness is? Let me explain something. He was aware, because we had a lot of hardship with the Polish people in Poland. So this word "aware" means you have to be aware of the goyim and the anti-Semitism.

**INT**: Aware of the difficulties. You couldn't be a child and just play.

**IZZY**: I want to tell you incidences we had in the orphanage. Our orphanage was on the edge of the city. The orphanage was a camp, an artillery camp, and that orphanage was built beautifully. From that orphanage, I want to tell you, was the confiscation of the Jewish people. They threw children from the windows.

**ANNI**: No, they had this place special, to organize people, to transport, liquidate them.

**INT**: In the orphanage.

**ANNI**: Yes. Because it was big. That's why.

**IZZY**: We had incidents. Because one night I went home with a few friends. We had permission to come 7:30, and we had a big gate in front. And here was living the superintendent of the building, a goy.

**INT:** Like the security?

**IZZY:** No, he was heating the boiler. And by the time we came up to the gate, we saw a little bunch of goyim. And we stopped and wanted to go in, and they surrounded us. And we would have been maybe killed, a couple of us, if we didn't start to run. I was young, we start to run, they chased us, but we run. This is the incidents that we went through, and we had to learn how to protect yourself, and how to be aware of yourself in general.

**INT:** Aware of what's around you.

**IZZY:** Of everything you had to be aware. I learned very quick.

**ANNI**: Some kids took it easier. For him it was harder.

**INT**: Well, you had a hard life at home, there was the anti-Semitism in the streets, and an orphanage.

**IZZY**: I asked my mother a question, I remember. Before I went to the orphanage I was six or five years old, I ran into a little misunderstanding with a friend. And I came in crying. And my friend was crying, he was saying, "Daddy, Tatie," and who do I have there for escape, for who? This was the big difference.

**INT**: To whom could you run to help you?

**IZZY**: I asked my mother.

**INT**: What did she say?

**IZZY**: What could she say? So this is the difference. I learned on my own when I had to survive, how to survive. If not, nobody would be behind. And it happens.

**INT**: Do you think you were a strong child or a nervous child, or a scared child?

**IZZY**: Scared. I was scared. I never grew up to be strong until l932, l936, when I wanted to go to France at sixteen years of age and I was caught in Germany. And then I became strong-minded. This is it. I have to start for myself.

**INT**: Were you a happy child or a sad child?

**IZZY**: I was always happy. Sense of humor, always. I was never trying to sit back. I was always trying to be a combanate.

**INT**: Did the nights scare you?

**IZZY**: No. This I cannot tell you because I cannot even recall as a child because I was fed well, I wasn't hungry in the orphanage...

**INT:** You weren't lonely.

**IZZY:** ... and I wasn't lonely. I was with friends. And I got up in the morning happy, and I went to school happy, and I came home with happiness, because when we came home, everybody has to sit down, and you could hear a pin drop. You take your homework, and you couldn't do anything else before your homework was made, and then you went down. In the summertime we played basketball, we played soccer, and we were occupied.

**INT**: Did you ever run away?

**IZZY**: No. There was no need, because I knew I haven't got where to go. Even we were punished, what's the use to run?

**INT**: With what words would your friends describe you?

**IZZY**: I have friends, but not from Florida, from the orphanage, but I mean friends from Bendin. Last year a friend just married a Philadelphian, from the survivors, his second marriage, and when he came over to me -- we have a ball in Florida every year from the Bendin region -- and when he came over he kissed me. And I find friends that they don't know what to do for me. And I was in Washington at the Gathering where I found a friend, he is in California. He didn't know when he saw me...

**INT**: So what was your nickname?

**IZZY**: Combanate.

**ANNI**: He was trying to make himself from nothing something.

**IZZY**: I was trying always to see that I am not in the corner, in the middle. That I can see everybody.

**INT**: But that's not the description of a child who was a scared child. You said, "I was a scared child."

**IZZY**: No, I wasn't that scared. I was good, I was good-natured; I was soft.

**ANNI**: Scared mostly from the Polish people.

**INT**: But to be normal is to be scared of danger. But you weren't a nervous child.

**IZZY**: No. Never nervous. I was always good-natured, and I always made always very quick friends.

**INT**: You were always judging the situation, always in the middle and looking around.

**IZZY**: I will never let myself to be cornered. And if I am in a good place, I will never insult, I will never curse anybody. I learned, the orphanage gave me the best education, unfortunately, that what would happen to me.

**ANNI**: Also the army.

**IZZY**: The army, this was at the very end.

**INT**: You were in the army before?

**IZZY**: No. I like discipline.

**INT**: Are you a disciplined man today?

**IZZY**: Yes.

**ANNI:** Very much so.

**IZZY:** I like discipline.

**ANNI**: Everything has to be done ahead of time.

**IZZY**: I'm very much on time and I conducted a business.

**INT**: What kind of business did you have?

**ANNI**: Decorating.

**IZZY**: And I conducted a business for the few years I did it and...

**INT**: A few years.

**ANNI**: Twenty-five years.

**IZZY**: I had a cleaning store. I was doing tailoring. I worked in shops. But I did the best to my knowledge, to my abilities. I was never nervous with a customer. I had a big store. I helped the customer, I loved children. I am a big lover of children. I love children.

**ANNI**: Oy, vey, I haven't got that kind of thing, to tell you.

**INT**: Do you want to tell me about your father and his background?

**ANNI**: This was my father. My father was in business. He was for many years back, and I have to show you a picture, because I have a picture in here. My sister sits on this wagon, my father used to take stuff from the station to stores.

**INT:** Delivery.

**ANNI:** In horse and wagon.

**INT**: The delivery of products, big shipments?

**ANNI**: Yes. My sister sits on top of there. My mother was a housewife.

**INT**: How much school did your father have?

**ANNI**: My father's school? Very little. My mother, too. Only in Jewish educated. Yiddishe mentschen.

**INT**: But Poland had mandatory education, no?

**ANNI**: But not only that. Why real Orthodox Jewish people didn't want to hear a word of Jewish? I could never speak Jewish, Polish, in the house.

**IZZY:** I want to tell you something.

**INT**: So also Orthodox.

**ANNI**: Yes. My mother wore a sheitel and everything.

**IZZY**: I want to tell you about mandatory, how blind people were at the time. Maybe they spoke a few words in Polish, but when it came to election, they were bought for the election. They would be given a dinner...

**ANNI:** I don't remember this, Izzy.

**IZZY:** Well, I remember. Or taken to the bath, given a bath and given a dinner and give them the ballot in the hand to throw it in. If she would know what she was signing,

**INT**: This is in general. But your family, too. They didn't learn to read and write Polish?

**ANNI**: No. Not Polish. Everything in Hebrew.

**IZZY**: But your father spoke Polish.

**ANNI**: Yes. He dealt with people, but he couldn't write. Not the Polish. Everything was written Jewish. In Yiddish.

**INT**: So they were Hasidish?

**ANNI**: Yes. Hasidim. My mother wore a sheitel.

**INT**: What kind of Hasidish, do you know?

**ANNI**: Orthodox.

**INT**: What kind of Hasidish, did they have a name? Bendinish Hasidim or something?

**ANNI**: Ich weiss nicht, I don't know. My bubbe had a sheitel, she lived with us.

**INT**: But you could be Hasidish and misnaggedishe. Was there a rebbe?

**ANNI**: Yes. No, nicht a rebbe. Just a rabbi.

**IZZY**: Eine Rabbi.

**INT**: Were you a Hasidic group?

**IZZY**: No. Orthodoxy.

**INT**: So you were misnaggedishe. You didn't have a rebbe that your father would follow like the (?) Rebbe or the Korosover Rebbe.

**ANNI**: Maybe my parents, I don't know.

**INT**: Tell me a little bit more about your father and his family, and the kind of man he was.

**ANNI**: My father had a bubbe, I don't remember zayde. He had six children. How many children did the bubbe have? Six?

**IZZY**: More than that. My father comes from a big family. Four brothers.

**ANNI**: A very close family. My bubbe lived with us and my mother's bubbe, my mother's mother. Seven children.

**IZZY**: And my family had eight children.

**INT**: Your father was one of eight?

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: What kind of man was he?

**ANNI**: A wonderful man.

**INT**: You were close with him.

**IZZY**: What did she know? She was born in l926, so how could she know him?

**INT**: So from l926 to l939...

**IZZY**: Is fourteen, thirteen years. I could have known more than she knew. But she didn't have the chance to know her parents.

**INT**: You were thirteen when you were separated.

**ANNI**: No, fifteen. l941.

**IZZY**: She is more emotional about her parents than her younger sister because her younger sister didn't even know her parents. They were two years younger.

**INT**: There were two of you.

**IZZY**: No, four brothers. A family of six.

**INT**: So let me see. You had one sister older, four years older, and she was your full sister, and then...

**IZZY**: Two half-sisters from the same mother.

**INT**: And how much younger than you?

**IZZY**: One was eight years younger, and one was almost ten years younger.

**INT**: And you come from eight?

**ANNI**: Six. Four brothers and me and my sister.

**INT**: And were you younger?

**ANNI**: I was the older one -- no, the brothers were older. I was before my sister, I was born in l926, and she was born in l928.

**INT**: So she was the youngest.

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And your older sister was married with children before the war, right?

**IZZY**: Yes. She married in l936. Four children.

**INT**: How was her marriage?

**IZZY**: It was a good one, it was a bad one.

**ANNI**: He didn't want to make a living, he didn't want to work...

**IZZY**: He lived through the war. He died in Israel.

**ANNI**: But he was not a provider.

**IZZY**: He was a lazy man. He was a painter.

**ANNI**: They wanted to take her children away from her.

**IZZY**: But she didn't want to give up her children.

**INT**: So your father was one of eight, and his work was delivery of products, and very religious. And your mother?

**ANNI**: My mother was a wonderful person, and was a housewife, and took care of everything in the house. Not rich, poor.

**INT**: And she was one of how many?

**ANNI**: A half-sister in Canada and a brother.

**INT**: So one of three? So in her family somebody died, too? She had a half-sister? So her mother or her father died and remarried.

**ANNI**: I really don't know. If he was married or not, I don't remember that stuff.

**INT**: And your family was comfortable.

**ANNI**: My father worked and did the best he could, but you know, the children got older, then they started working. My mother had a half-sister in Canada, and she tried to help us out with taking two children to Canada. So two of my brothers went to Canada in l930 and l935.

**INT**: Are they still there?

**ANNI**: Yes. We were all going to go, but the war broke out and we couldn't make it.

**INT**: So the mother's half-sister took out the two brothers.
So would you say the family was middle-class? Like what we are here?

**ANNI**: Yes. Working, but more like lower-middle class. Very intelligent and very good-natured and everything, but they couldn't make enough of a living. We lived in very poor conditions. One little room like this, six people. You can imagine what it was. So it wasn't easy. I remember very little. I remember all kind of things in the house, and the way we were bathing in a wooden tub. But we were poor. But my mother always used to see that there should be food on the table. And as hard as she worked and everything. Came the Shabbas, on Thursday she started cooking and everything. And we were lucky, we had a bakery in our building, where we lived, and they used to help us out. Anything left over, she used to say, "take home and bake something yourselves," and she baked in there. But she helped out sewing a little bit, she was a seamstress.

**INT**: So even the people who worked, it was hard, unless you had a business with money. You were either rich or poor.

**ANNI**: Plenty of rich people. But see, my father worked with an uncle, it was worse working with an uncle than with a stranger. Because somehow it never adds nothing, and he was always afraid to go away from this place, he will never get another place. It was hard for us. But somehow whatever we had we made, and that's it.

**INT**: So your family belonged to a shul.

**ANNI**: Oh yes, sure.

**INT**: And anything else? Were they Zionists, were they, did they belong to anything else, were they involved in anything else, or just taking care of the family?

**IZZY**: I belonged to Hashomer.

**INT**: My mother did too.

**ANNI**: Me, too. As a child. We used to go in uniforms.

**INT**: Hashomer? Hashomer is not religious. You mean Mizrachi?

**IZZY**: No. In Bendin you could go to a Hashomer Hatzair and it wasn't that it wasn't religious. It didn't took you away from the home.

**ANNI**: It was just about Israel. It was about aliyah and all kind of things that I remember.

**IZZY**: I remember my friends the rich people. Shabbas was nicht gewen . Mizrachi was Mizrachi.

**INT**: My mother was with Mizrachi.

**ANNI**: Mizrachi was very Orthodox.

**IZZY**: The left is gewen the right is gewen the Freiheit. Bendin, was most beautiful youth, accordingly survival, after the war, and the statistics in Bendin was an uprising, like in Warsaw. But it wasn't that successful. They were caught and they were bombed out. But Bendin has the most beautiful youth.

**ANNI**: And most of them survived. Because they were not too rich, and they could hold onto things. They knew. The rich ones went fast. They couldn't make it. But the ones who struggled, who didn't have much, they struggled and they made it somehow.

**IZZY**: They just built a shrine in Modiin, Israel, on the way from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The original people, I have the tape, you should see something. Unbelievable.

**INT**: Did Ann Weiss talk? Is there a strong Bendin organization in New York?

**IZZY**: Yes. I just went for the yearly meeting.

**INT**: So you don't remember a lot because you were very young.

**ANNI**: I don't remember too much.

**INT**: Do you remember if your parents were loud people or soft people?

**ANNI**: Very sensitive people, quiet and sensitive people, and always did favors for somebody else.

**INT**: And you could talk to them, and you could run to them with your "boo-boos", and the girl who made fun of you, and your doll broke...

**IZZY**: Who had a doll?

**INT**: I was thinking that they have dolls.

**ANNI**: No, I had one made out of clay, and I took it in the boiling water when I took a bath, and it disappeared.

**INT**: So they didn't have dolls.

**IZZY**: They had toys. But I always dreamt in this country to build up a train, with a platform, but the kid grew out, kein ayin hora, so fast, that there was no time.

**ANNI**: You should see my sister. She never had a doll. And in the concentration camps she was only (?) with my mother. She has a collection of dolls, now.

**INT:** Now, as an adult person.

**ANNI:** They talk, and make a kuss, and they sit, all kinds of dolls, because she said she never had a doll. Now they are all going to her daughters.

**INT**: Where did she live, your sister?

**ANNI**: In Canada.

**INT**: Are you going to be near her? Were you near her here, was she in Philadelphia?

**ANNI**: No, Alabama.

**INT**: Oh, you were separated.

**IZZY**: The younger child survived the Holocaust, '28. '29. '30, '3l, '32, was the least to survive the Holocaust. At least a child was born, by coincidence in the camps.

**INT**: My brother was 41.

**IZZY**: No we're talking about before the war. You're not going to find l93l, l930, by coincidence, or by coincidence a child is born in the concentration camps. I should give her that

book from Israel. The story was that the emotion enough, the tears, but when you count from l928, ‘29, ‘30, you talk to a person who never shed a tear.

**INT**: I don't understand what you mean. If you were born in l926.

**ANNI**: My sister, l928. But there were girls that were born in l929 and l930. That's it.

**INT**: And no one after that is alive.

**ANNI**: Right.

**IZZY**: After l930, you're not going to find that anyone survived in the Holocaust.

**INT**: Because the Nazis killed them.

**IZZY**: Right. But those children, they never shed a tear, they didn't understand even they left from the mother, they didn't understood the missing of the parents until they came out. When her sister met her, and we came together, and we made the first yizkor, I cried. In Degendorf, we had a yizkor. She cried, her sister didn't cry.

**ANNI**: She doesn't cry. I cry more than her.

**IZZY**: She doesn't cry.

**INT**: You're saying because they were too young to know and they buried it inside?

**IZZY**: Right. But now it's coming out from her. Now she reminds herself more.

**INT**: Because she was l3. That's not so young.

**ANNI**: Not so young, but...

[TAPE ENDS]

**INT**: So you're saying that your sister starts now to...

**ANNI**: To let loose.

**INT**: With pain and tears.

**ANNI**: With pain and everything. She is more sensitive than she was because what did she know? We went to camp together, and we didn't know, she always cried about my mother, and I had to be the strong one.

**INT**: So in the camp she cried. She was with you.

**ANNI**: Yeah, they separated us. We couldn't...I tried the best to be together with her.

**INT**: And then she stopped crying after the war. Was that hard for you, that she wasn't emotional?

**ANNI**: Very hard for me. I thought I'm not doing the right thing.

**INT**: Being emotional.

**ANNI**: No, to guide her, you understand.

**INT**: So all these years you worried about her, that she didn't let it out.

**ANNI**: Yes. I have brothers, they didn't know us. I was four years old when they left.

**INT**: So they left very early. What year did they leave?

**ANNI**: l930, and l935. One I didn't even knew. One I was four, by one I was eight. And they're not close.

**INT**: How did they know to get out so early, in l930?

**ANNI**: Because I told you my aunt took them out. To be able to just...We were all going to come to Canada.

**INT**: Oh, this was just: "Come to the golden medina."

**ANNI**: Yeah. Not to the golden medine, just to get away, because...my aunt was there, she said it's good to come, I'll take your two children and maybe we'll take some more.

**INT**: So it wasn't Hitler, it was just: "Come."

**ANNI**: No, this was l935. Hitler started l936.

**INT**: So you had to get to know them all over again.

**ANNI**: Yes. But they are not close.

**INT**: With each other.

**ANNI**: With each other, or with us. Because when we came in l947 and they came to see us and everything, but up until now they are not close. They don't know us.

**INT**: Are they close with the aunt?

**ANNI**: The aunt is dead now.

**INT**: Did they relate to her as a mother?

**ANNI**: No, not close, the aunt was not close. The aunt only wanted from them a lot of work.

**IZZY:** She used them.

**ANNI:** She used them a lot. She used them very badly.

**IZZY**: She brought them down for the purpose of using them.

**ANNI**: And they are heartbroken, they have a grudge, they have something about what my aunt did to them. She was somehow scaring them that she was going to send them back because they don't go to school, or she put some money down for them, collateral, if you don't go to school, then we take the money and send you back. And this was for them scary, very scary. And somehow they grew up, and one helped the other, then one, the younger one living with my aunt and then try somehow, he moved to an apartment and he took the other one with, you know, and they worked hard and stuff like that.

**INT**: So it wasn't like a mother/child relationship.

**ANNI**: No, she was never that way.

**INT:** A little like your experience.

**ANNI:** She was never like that.

**INT**: So how would you describe yourself as a child? What do you remember about you, when you were growing up? Shy, outgoing, happy, sad?

**ANNI**: I was happy, I always liked to play with children, I always liked to be with people. I was also aggressive, I was also a tomboy. I could do anything, you know. And things that...first of all, you know how it is in a Jewish family, in an Orthodox family. Don't go there, don't go here, watch yourself and don't do things that you will get hurt. And it was a different situation. The boys, my mother had a little more easy. But the girls, at the end after four boys she had two girls, so she was holding them like a soft egg, or something. But somehow we went to school in the morning, and we had hard nights and it was wintertime, the windows were all covered with ice, and we had no heat, so we had in the morning a little tiny stove, and we warmed it up to be able to get up in the morning, because it was so cold to get dressed, and the thing, what do you call it, from the stove?

**IZZY:** The chimney pipe.

**ANNI:** ...chimney pipe it was sometimes exploding, it was hot, it wasn't pleasant at all. It wasn't easy. It was a very hard life.

**INT**: Did you work, did you help?

**ANNI**: Oh yeah.

**INT:** All the kids helped.

**ANNI:** Yeah, all the kids, yeah, sure.

**INT**: Did the boys learn in yeshiva?

**ANNI**: No, they didn't go to yeshiva.

**IZZY**: The oldest boy learned in the same cheder I went before I went to the orphanage, the Talmud Torah. On the second floor. I remember him. He was like my protector.

**ANNI**: I went to Bais Yaakov and my sister went to Bais Yaakov.

**INT**: So you went to a full-day Jewish school. And you learned math?

**ANNI**: No, we didn't go a full day Jewish school. A school, English like.

**IZZY:** Public.

**ANNI:** Public school, and then we went home from school, we went like children go here.

**INT**: Like Hebrew school. And your brothers went after school and you went after school.

**ANNI**: Yes, after school.

**IZZY**: I remember before I went to the orphanage, when I went to cheder, if anybody did something wrong to me, I used to call her brother to protect me. He was five years older.

**ANNI**: We're related.

**IZZY:** We're related.

**ANNI:** My father was one of her brothers. You know that, don't you? Did you know that?

**INT**: So you knew each other?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**IZZY**: I knew her, she didn't know me.

**ANNI**: I didn't know him.

**INT**: How could you know her and she didn't know you?

**IZZY**: I was six years older.

**ANNI:** Not too often he used to come.

**INT**: So?

**IZZY**: She didn't know me very much as I knew her. I knew about her family more than she knows herself.

**INT**: Why?

**ANNI**: He used to come and I didn't pay attention.

**IZZY**: I used to come up to their house, I used to sleep sometimes in their house when my stepfather used to chase me out.

**INT**: So you used to go and sleep in the house. But you didn't know who this big boy was.

**ANNI**: I knew that he was a cousin, but I didn't pay attention.

**IZZY:** Not much pay attention.

**INT**: So your fathers were brothers.

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: So your father lost his brother.

**IZZY**: My father couldn't die until her father came. He sat on the bed, and then he died. He sent for him.

**ANNI**: Last words and...

**IZZY**: My father was the youngest out of three.

**INT**: Out of three boys. Because they were one of eight.

**IZZY**: My father was the youngest out of three boys.

**INT**: So you knew each other, a little. You know her.

**IZZY:** I knew her.

**INT:** But you didn't pay any attention to him.

**IZZY**: I remember when she was born. I remember when her sister was born.

**INT**: So when you asked this boy to take care of you when you had trouble, you knew he was a cousin.

**IZZY**: Yes. It was the only protection I had. When he left for Canada in l930, he had made himself a small little sled, self-made, he gave it to me as a present. He left it, you remember.

**INT**: So was your uncle, Annie's father, did he try to have a relationship with you?

**IZZY**: Yes. They always took care of me. And they reminded me of my…the yahrzeit every year, my father's yahrzeit.

**INT**: So you spent some time there. But you didn't go there for Yom Tov, or Shabbas.

**IZZY**: No, because by seven years of age I went to the orphanage. But I came on a Yom Tov, when my sister made a bris, a simcha, so all the mishpocha helped out. Which I wasn't a mishpocha together.

**INT**: So did he stay close with your mother?

**IZZY**: No, he was a good brother-in-law. My mother never relinquished the family. She was more closer to my father's family than to her own. I remember my mother used to always have a chat, a talk with her mother. If it came to certain things.

**ANNI**: She had, do you say it, had...

**IZZY:** More trust.

**ANNI:** More trust.

**INT**: But they weren't very close because of this man.

**IZZY**: The family was close. My mother never left my father's family.

**INT**: But it was hard for her to be very close because of her second husband.

**IZZY**: When my sister married the two brothers, my father's brothers made a wedding for my sister.

**ANNI:** She had nobody.

**IZZY:** She had nobody.

**ANNI**: He was a very poor provider.

**IZZY**: So the two brothers made a wedding.

**INT**: And you remember that? A little?

**ANNI:** I don't remember; very little I remember.

**INT:** Because she was four years older than you.

**IZZY:** She was four years older, she was ten years older than her.

**ANNI**: I don't remember too much, even his mother very well.

**INT**: So life at home was hard, you didn't have heat...

**IZZY:** No peaches and no cream.

**INT:** ...but it wasn't really one room, was it? No bedrooms, everyone slept in the same room and ate in the same room.

**ANNI**: We just had a little entrance to go in, that's all.

**IZZY**: Is this the first time you hear about it?

**INT**: No. I just want to make sure, because sometimes the living area is one area, but there are bedrooms.

**ANNI**: No, one bed this way, one bed that way, one bed that way, and in the middle the table, and this was the whole thing. And the outhouse was outside. And we had a bench with a schissel to wash ourselves and water to cook and stuff like that and that's all.

**INT**: Did you feel poor growing up?

**ANNI**: Yes I did. You see other kids.

**IZZY:** No luxury.

**ANNI:** I went with the rich children to school and I used to do homework in their homes. I was smart, too, and a matter of fact, the brother survived, she didn't survive, and I always...maybe Kahn, what's his name?

**IZZY:** Joe Kahn...

**ANNI:** Joe Kahn, he also is in the old age home. So we used to do homework with the kids, the girls, the sisters and the big man, they had the factories. I saw a lot of nice, good things. I used to babysit in the house. They had the cheese factory. And I used to sit in the house and it had a refrigerator. And a bathroom, and a radio. I never saw these things. This was something, with three rooms, four rooms, this was a palace, and I used to sit there babysitting, and I took in everything. I said, "My G-d, how could people live like this? How do we live? Why?" But this is the way...

**INT**: So did you resent it?

**ANNI**: I don't think so. I was never jealous of anything. Even now. I have everything. But I'm just saying, some people, they are jealous for this, jealous for that.

**INT:** So you weren't jealous?

**ANNI:** No, I'm not the jealous type.

**INT**: Did you begin to dream to have a house like this?

**ANNI**: I was a dreamer. I came to this country and I was a dreamer, and I always said, "Oh my G-d, I'm going to have a car, I'm going to have a business, and I'm going to work hard and I'm going to raise the children and everything the way I want it."

**INT**: What kind of dreams did you have as a kid?

**ANNI**: Dreams, dreams, I'm dreaming now. All kinds of dreams. Dreams that I'm going to accomplish things and my children are going to become educated, this is those dreams that you have. I want only for the children.

**INT**: Because some kids will sit and dream, they'll have fantasies. Some kids don't.

**ANNI**: I always have, even now I'm thinking: "Oh, I'm going to decorate this, I'm going to do this and G-d willing I should live and be able to enjoy it, and to get there." That's the way I am.

**INT**: So you were like that as a kid. You'd sit in the house with the cheese factory and you dream about the house you would have.

**ANNI**: Not only that. I used to work hard with the business and everything. In Europe I worked very hard before I went to concentration camp.

**INT**: What kind of work? You were a child.

**ANNI**: The war started '39. The building we used to live, the building was very big, the rich people lived in the back; we had a room there. We all lived there. And they opened this building for the Nazis and they made a factory. And to be able to hold my sister, I had to work. And to be able to hold my mother, my father had to work. We had to have papers. So I worked hard. This was before the ghetto. We still lived in the building. So I went to work with another girl, a friend of mine, and we did cleaning. We cleaned the whole building after the people left. The toilets...

**INT**: You chose to clean, or they said: "You will clean."

**ANNI**: They wanted me to clean. I had to do it to be able to live in the house there.

**INT**: And you knew that that would also take care of your sister. If you worked, your sister would be safe?

**ANNI**: Yes. Not safe.

**INT:** She would stay with you.

**ANNI:** Until the ghetto, yes. Until everybody went.

**INT**: So it was a big responsibility.

**ANNI**: Yes. I had to work and my hands were all bloodshot in the wintertime. Stairs and toilets and spitting and everything, and it was filthy dirty and sweeping and everything. I had to do it, me and this girl. We had to heat ovens, five story building with ovens; those big ovens with the tile. This is what I used to do with her together.

**INT**: When you were thirteen. You said in l939 it started. So before that, you used to dream, and you used to play, and have friends.

**ANNI**: We used to go to friends' homes. We used to do things.

**INT**: Who were you closest with in your family? Who did you snuggle up with and tell stories about?

**ANNI**: I don't remember that. That's what I miss.

**INT**: You don't remember. Do you remember your little sister?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: But you remember being aggressive. You lived life.

**ANNI**: Yeah, full. We did our best. There was no other thing. This was what you had to do.

**INT**: So you didn't go to school beyond age thirteen. That was it.

**ANNI**: Yes. That was it.

**INT**: But you did go to public school and then Bais Yaakov?

**ANNI**: Bais Yaakov school.

**INT:** No, but you went in the morning to public school, Bais Yaakov...

**ANNI:** Yes.

**INT**: So everything started very young for you.

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: What is that book?

**IZZY**: That book. Read it and find out what it is. It is a very touching story. His mother and his sister...

**ANNI:** Don't tell her.

**IZZY:** You have to read it. I received 36 books from Israel. To whom they gave the book, they promised they would send a donation to those people. I promised the people in Israel, I was the first one to send the donation, and that's when they asked me how you feel, because this is to be the (?), and the man who wrote this book...

**ANNI:** Is a son of a survivor.

**IZZY:** ...is a son of a survivor, and he never knew...

**ANNI:** What it is.

**IZZY:** The mother never talked to him. But he has a sister in America.

**ANNI:** He just knew.

**IZZY:** ...and he found out from his mother at the latest, that his sister was...

**ANNI:** ... from a Nazi.

**IZZY:** ...from a Nazi, from an officer, by force. He went back to Poland, and he found that kapo, that goy, and he killed him in Poland after the war. He marches in Auschwitz, l985. This is an interesting truth.

**ANNI:** It's a small book.

**IZZY:** Read it if you have a chance, and give it to me back.

**INT**: You have extras of this?

**IZZY**: I have the last two books.

**INT:** Do you want this back?

**IZZY:** If you want to send a donation to Israel, you can have it. I'm not telling you what to send.

**ANNI:** You can send a dollar, five dollars.

**IZZY:** Send whatever you feel.

**INT**: So this is a biography.

**IZZY**: That's more than a biography. I give it to American people most. You see what I'm involved in? I try to learn, memorialize this Holocaust. Go read this.

**INT**: I know. I read about the two of you in the newspaper all the time. Are you involved with the...

**ANNI and IZZY:** Yeah.

**IZZY**: We went to a dinner in June. We were in Washington. It's very important.

**INT**: Okay. [Talks about making a new appointment with them.] But before that, for a few more minutes, tell me a little bit more about anything you remember about you, before the war, and your feelings and your thoughts, and what philosophy you had and what you believed in and...Did you have a best friend, did you have a girlfriend that you told everything to?

**ANNI**: I don't think so.

**INT**: Your sister was two years younger. Were you best buddies with your sister?

**ANNI**: Yes. I had friends from Europe, too, but I don't know if they were such close friends. But you separate, you don't remember. It's not friends, like a friend you have now, or something.

Even now I don't have a close friend. Not that I don't trust people. We have a lot of friends we play cards with, and from all these friends, from fifteen people, I don't think there's anybody who's very close.

**INT:** With either one of you.

**ANNI:** Yeah, I don't think so, with either of us. Not that I should have a friend that I could trust, and I can tell, and I can do things and go together and be together. But not a very, very close friend. I don't know why this is. I trust people and somehow I... but it's very hard to trust people today. Somehow, I don't know why, if you trust somebody and the other party is not fair, is not close, somehow it doesn't work out, to have a real close friend in this time of life. That's why I have a very good friend and we were together after the war. She's also from Bendin and she lives in Florida now. And my sister lives there, and her and we made a lot of friends there. The survivors, it's wonderful, you get together and meet people and everybody is so friendly, and you try to get into the group and you make friends. And you do things.

**INT**: Are there a lot of survivors in Boca Raton?

**ANNI**: Yes. South Miami survivors.

**INT**: Yes, but that's very far, Miami and Boca Raton.

**ANNI**: These are from South Florida.

**INT**: Miami Beach is far away from where you live, like an hour.

**ANNI**: Not quite an hour.

**INT**: So it's a whole different...

**ANNI**: Completely different, much nicer and everything. Yeah, it's nice, very nice. We'll see how it's going to work out. You know the kids are here and everybody.

**INT**: So you'll visit here.

**ANNI**: Yes, I'll have to come back and visit and...

**INT:** Stay with the children?

**ANNI:** Yeah, sure. It depends how it's going to work out. But me and my sister are very close.

**INT**: Were you always close?

**ANNI**: We were always close. In concentration camps and...

**INT**: Why does she make you cry? Why are you sad about her? Are you sadder about your sister than other things?

**ANNI**: No. The bread that she had, somehow she gave me some, and she didn't eat that much, those little things...

**INT**: The memories of how you took care of each other?

**ANNI**: Yeah.

**INT:** Do you feel that you really took care of each other (break) What you remember is taking care of each other?

**ANNI:** Yes, I took care more of her. She was young and she was always so thin and sick, and stuff like that. Then I had developed in the concentration camps rheumatic fever, and we took care of each other. We had all kinds of friends from camp. When I was in Israel now, I had an awful lot of friends that we met when they came to the memorial.

**INT:** You were in Auschwitz, right?

**ANNI:** Pardon me?

**INT:** What camp were you in?

**ANNI**: I was in [name of camp]. I was not in Auschwitz.

**INT**: So you have very strong feelings for her and about her. And the memories with her. Are you very different from your sister?

**ANNI:** Pardon me?

**INT:** Are you different from your sister? Different personality?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Were you always as children different people?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: How were you different when you were children?

**ANNI**: I don't know.

**INT:** You were aggressive. Was she passive? Was she...

**ANNI**: No. I don't know how to explain. How do you explain, Izzy?

**IZZY**: Her sister was a different type.

**INT**: Before the war.

**IZZY**: Before the war, I don't remember that type, because when I grew up and I began to use different habitats, environments, atmosphere, unless I came into the family, because if my father would have been alive, maybe I would have been...

**ANNI**: It goes away, it slips away.

**IZZY**: Then I went on my own, and so I cannot remember what happened in their house.

**ANNI:** I don't remember at all.

**INT**: But you remember that you were different, and certainly after the war you were different.

**ANNI**: I was more aggressive, she was not strong. She never ate. My mother used to go with a teppele, with essen and used to feed her all the time, and I remember that kind of thing, and maybe I was also jealous because of that, like maybe my mother took more attention to her, but maybe at the beginning, but not very often.

**INT**: You were stronger and she was weaker.

**ANNI:** Yes, she was weaker.

**INT:** And you were aggressive. Did you have to help her a lot, did you have to help her with her homework, and help her with her friends, and help her get dressed?

**ANNI**: No, I don't remember nothing like that. Very little remembering about that.

**INT**: Anything else interesting about you before the war? Of either one of you before the war?

**IZZY:** I told you.

**INT:** You told me the facts. Tell me more about the emotional story.

**IZZY**: I can't recall. I was very hardened after I came back l936 when I was stricken by a German in Germany, and I came back and I began to realize what's going to happen.

**INT**: So you went to Germany before Germany invaded Poland?

**IZZY**: Yes, in l936 I wanted to go back to Paris. I was born in Paris. I took a cousin with me, but she's now in Brazil.

**INT**: So you went to make a life in Paris. It wasn't war yet. It wasn't war yet in l936.

**ANNI:** The Germans started that time.

**IZZY**: Germany was already with Nazis. l936.

**INT**: And they had the Jewish laws.

**IZZY**: They didn't have the Gestapo yet, but they had the Brown Shirts, and they were already beginning, and I was caught and I was brought to the police station, and a German slapped me in my face and he said to me, "We have enough Jewish pigs in here. We don't need anybody else, and go back. And tell your Jewish people that we're going to [follow] them." And when I came home and I used to tell them they thought it was a joke and that I bring propaganda.

**INT**: How come you got stuck in Germany when you were going to France?

**IZZY**: I was caught. What do you mean?

**INT:** But you wanted to go to France.

**IZZY:** I was caught in Germany.

**INT:** You were caught by a German in France?

**ANNI**: You had to go through Germany to get to France.

**IZZY**: I was caught in [Brestlav]. I was caught by a German officer. I had no papers. I told him the truth that I am going to Paris. If I would have had papers, I would have gone by train.

**ANNI**: To go from Poland to Paris is not too far by train.

**INT**: I know that.

**IZZY**: Three years ago in Poland we traveled by train from Vienna to Zurich. But the emotions, who can...

**INT**: Do you think that in many ways you are today the person you were as a child, the same person you were as a child?

**ANNI**: No. I remember going to shul with my mother. Yom Tov used to be in shtiebel that we used to go, and I used to sit with my mother. It was such a wonderful life, I was such a different...

**IZZY**: Our recollections from the past are really a sad and happy story. Because when I used to go to my balabotim and her grandchildren used to come to her, and she used to put oranges on the table for her grandchildren, and I used to smell and I took sick, because I couldn't get an orange.

**ANNI**: She wouldn't share with another child.

**INT**: How old are you talking now?

**IZZY**: I was fourteen, fifteen.

**ANNI**: But still, he worked there, but still they didn't share.

**IZZY**: I had breakfast, and she buttered my bread and I had to hold it up to see if it's a shine on the bread. She used to take from the chinek and add a little water to the soup. This was my story of my life. And I don't regret it, because I thought it was my destiny. It was supposed to be that way.

**ANNI**: We're not bitter. Never bitter, never envious. G-d gave everybody what he has to have.

**IZZY:** And I'm not jealous.

**ANNI:** Thank G-d we are healthy, and that is the most important thing.

**IZZY**: We're not jealous people. I'm not jealous of anybody. I'm not...

**ANNI:** Jealous type.

**INT:** Angry?

**IZZY:** I'm not angry at anybody.

**ANNI**: This is the problem with us that we forget.

**IZZY**: I always have pity, and then I want to tell you the story of what our life is. It was a very rich man in life, and he never gave tzedakah. But he was rich. He could have bought Philadelphia. But when the day came, he went, they put him in Gehenna.

**INT**: Who are you talking about? A story? A midrash.

**IZZY**: And they were trying to cut the meat from him, the pieces of flesh.

**INT**: You're telling a **nice** story.

**IZZY**: So he went and he called back his son in a dream. And the son began to dream that the father began to appeal to the son to do anything he can on this earth that they should put him in Gan Eden. So the son went to the rabbi. And nobody could have helped. And he said that first to the angels. And he said, "I told my son to give away anything he possesses to get me out of here, put me in Eden." So the angel told him, he says, "It's a little bit too late. When you came in here, you should have brought all the receipts."

**INT:** From the past.

**ANNI**: And we have all the receipts now.

**IZZY**: So now you know the story.

**ANNI**: It was a very hard life. That's why the survivors... there are some people, a lot of people in different countries, different places, different cities, that were rich. They had factories, they had people working, they had all kinds, but somehow, it stays with you.

**INT:** The bad times.

**ANNI:** The bad times. My G-d, why did we suffer so much?

**INT**: So what do you mean, that you can never be completely happy?

**IZZY**: No, we lay in bed, I myself, and I talk to her sometimes and I lay in bed and I get up and I say, "How did I live through?" I slept in my own waste. I died every night. I dug the grave and I slept in the grave. And if two people slept with me, I got up and they were dead. So how did I survive?

**INT**: Is it how, or why?

**ANNI:** How.

**IZZY**: Both questions. I question myself and I cannot answer.

**ANNI**: And why, is because he is a good man.

**IZZY**: I meant to be here. Rabboneh shel Olam that I should be here.

**INT:** For a specific purpose or just...

**INT:** For the purpose to be a witness, and tell the story about what happened. But I say, even when I was in the first line during the war, and I went back from the first line to the kitchen for my meal with my little whatever they call it for food, and I went with soldiers, and we went four, three at a time and bing, I got. So here I sit and I say I give up. And wherever I go, I wake up in the morning and "Oh Mama, and, Oh Daddy," the kids are crying over the parents, they were

swollen up from hunger and I'm laying between dead people. And I get up. I look away. And this hardens you.

**INT:** Hardens you.

**ANNI:** Strong.

**IZZY:** It makes you strong.

**ANNI**: Don't be afraid. Survive. That's why, what do you think of Israel? That's what it is.

**IZZY**: And then I began to feel I am a Jew. And then we begin to hear, in the Underground to find out what's going on with the atrocities, with the destruction, then I became violent, violent about men.

**ANNI:** To do something, a violent, do something.

**IZZY:** To, to...

**ANNI:** Revenge.

**IZZY:** To revenge.

**INT**: And you did.

**IZZY**: Not enough. That's why I went to the Polish army. I felt I didn't do enough in the Underground. That's why I went to the Polish army.

**INT**: There was no more Polish army.

**IZZY**: Yes. There was a Polish army coming back with the Russian officers. At the end of the war. That's why I enlisted myself in Lublin, in Majdanek. The prisoners used to sleep on the same bunks where I slept going into the army. And out in the 200 yards, 300 yards away was still a grave shaking when I came into Majdanek. The ground was shaking because they didn't have a chance to cremate them.

**INT**: Do you also feel you survived to tell the story?

**ANNI**: Oh yes. I want people to know. We always told our kids all the time. Since they were little. I don't know if they could participate that much, but...

**IZZY**: I have a film downstairs. From "Genocide," and from Hitler and from Nazis and from Mengele, from Lodz.

**INT**: Do you have a copy of them?

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: Do you have a video of them? How did you get a video of them?

**IZZY**: I'm the only one got a video.

**INT**: How did you get a video? Because I didn't make it to the theater. It was only here for a week.

**ANNI:** It's not easy to see.

**IZZY**: I wouldn't let you watch it.

**INT**: What do you mean? I watch everything. Will you let me watch it?

**ANNI:** Give it to her.

**INT:** Give it to me. I'll give it back.

**IZZY**: Please. This is treasure.

**ANNI**: It was just given to him. Nobody has it.

[Break in the tape]

**INT**: I'm going to ask you, Izzy, and I listened to the Gratz tapes, so I know the story of your war experiences. So without going through it again, you hooked up with your cousin, or your two cousins, at a certain point when you were in the camp in Russia, and you escaped and you went back towards...you were with your cousins.

**IZZY**: No, without the cousins already. Cousins were left. We separated. We hooked up, we got separated in the concentration camp in Siberia. Then when I was by myself, then I escaped. They were behind. I escaped into wandering back into, trying to get back into the Polish territory, this was Polish territory pre-war time. And I wound up struggling my life through, I wound up in the ghetto in Rovno and I was in the ghetto a very short time, and rumors began to go around that the ghetto is going to be liquidated. So I found myself a few partners to make another escape, and we escaped into the forests. From then on...

**INT**: In choosing the partners, when you were with your cousin, and then in choosing these partners, what made you decide to go with your cousin, or to go with these people? Did you see them as strong people?

**IZZY**: I wasn't with my cousin. I was no more with my cousins. When I left the camp in Siberia I ran away. I was not with my cousins. My cousins were behind already before I left. In

the camps in Siberia they separated us already. We were together for a little while. Then we were separated. And that's what made me to escape. Maybe I would never have escaped if I would have been with them together. But it made me desperate to escape. Because I was a chosen prisoner. I had a pass to walk around free twenty miles square kilometers with a pass, and I used to walk in the hospital in the camp. And they needed me for certain things. But for being on good behavior and my nature, the doctors liked me and gave me a pass. I had twenty kilometers square territory to walk around without any guard behind me. And I used to walk out of camp whenever I wanted and come back into the camp, and that's what made my connections for the escape.

**INT**: You said, if you were still with your cousins, perhaps you wouldn't have escaped. You would have felt a commitment.

**IZZY**: I would have felt a commitment and I would have felt I have somebody close, and family, company, thinking that I am with somebody. And it never would occur in my mind to run. For what?

**INT**: So on your own you felt that.

**IZZY**: Oh yeah, on my own. And we got a few fellows also, about two, three fellows. But we separated immediately after the escape. I got acquainted with truck drivers, workers, people, drivers, and we made a deal how to make mine escape, what to do, and it wasn't easy to trust, but I was being helped by Russian people to help me to do that. And they used to have trucks that used to run on wood, on burning wood, which formed a steam, a gas compression, that's how the motors run, even the boats, tugboats, used to run on steam. And in the back of this cabin in the truck, they had a big box with the chopped wood, special woods, which was burning in the big can, or bin, built up like a water heater. And this was burning, and this compressed gas from the wood, which gave the power to the engine. This was a success in Russia, because gas was scarce; but wood they had a lot of.

So we built a platform in the truck, and I was laying over there for four days. And the wood was on top of me. And he made the rounds. In Russia, if you move out from one state to another, it's very hard for them to find you. Communication was very poor, and it's still not the way it's supposed to be. But those years, fifty years ago, they found out immediately when you made the escape from a camp, they put out dogs, within the territory, within the limits. But after you went out, and then when he dropped me off I was on my own.

**INT**: You said they liked you in the camp, they gave you a pass. What do you mean, they liked you?

**IZZY**: I was liked, I was very liked.

**INT**: Was that the story of your life?

**IZZY**: I have a sense of humor, and it gives me a lot of courage to survive. When I was in the camp, and we used to work for ration, we were given ration, bread on the scale. You worked for a quarter kilogram to two kilogram up and if you worked more, your foreman marked you off that you made a l00% so you'd get the two kilogram bread. And my foreman used to keep me back from work, because once a week I gave him my portion of bread. I used to know how to do that. And when he put everybody to work, he said, "You go lay down. Take a nap." And I said, "I can't, because if they find me, we both lose our positions." He said, "You are a smart fellow. Hold onto those guys, just hold onto them they shouldn't fall. Help them out."

And there was a woman doctor, a Russian doctor. I don't know, maybe she loved me. When I walked in to her she said, "Do you want to be off tomorrow?" She gave me a pass. In Russia you had to have a fever to get off from work. I remember one morning I got up with an earache in the camp and it was about 50 below zero. And that was in a different place, not the same where the doctor liked me. And I went in to the doctor and I didn't have fever, I had to go to work. And when I came to work I had a little bungalow, and there was supposed to be a doctor in there if anybody got injured on the construction. So I walked into him, and he measured my fever, and he was a big anti-Semite, a Ukrainian, and he kicked me and he said, "No, you've got to go back to work." And he had a little bit of a foyer to get out, and I sat down, and I remember I covered myself up and I cried, and the tears came into my ear. And I cried so bad, I got better. That's what happened.

But I was very liked. I worked as a tailor in camp before, and then I worked in the hospital. And from the hospital I made my escape, because I was already helping with autopsies. I used to prepare autopsies. I used to cut up the dead chest and prepare everything. People were dead already three days, four days. I used to prepare for them, and at night-time I used to close them up with a band-aid. And at night-time they put six, seven, eight on a buggy, on a horse, and I used to carry them with two more guys to a cemetery. There was a mass grave. We used to put them in there. And going with us to the cemetery was a guard with a rifle. He trusted me, but he didn't trust the dead people. That's very Russian.

**INT**: How did you cope with that?

**IZZY**: I was very brave, sufficient. My story going back on the tapes, I was very strong-minded and very self-sufficient.

**INT**: I heard the tapes.

**IZZY**: That I became sufficient because I was an orphan, and I learned how to defend and protect and go on with life as much as I can on my own.

**INT**: You'd been facing the most terrible of circumstances.

**IZZY**: Any kind of circumstances, I was aware of myself to find a way how to survive. I never let myself be cornered, to stay in a corner. I always was trying to be out. And find a way how to get out of the situation.

**INT**: Did anything ever -- this is a hard question -- did anything ever, in all the war years, did anything ever crack your spirit to survive? Did anything ever make you wonder: Why go on?

**IZZY**: Well, you had moments in life, but I tried to solve them quick, because coming out from the underground. Being in Siberia in that camp, coming out from the underground, enlisting myself yet in the Polish army, I didn't have to do that. I just did it voluntarily because I felt if I didn't accomplish enough in the underground, maybe I'd...

**INT**: When you were in Rovno, and you heard the ghetto was going to be liquidated and you hooked up with some men to get away, why did you hook up with men? Did you believe that if you had other people you had a better chance to survive than being alone?

**IZZY**: No. I wasn't with a man enough together. When we start to run, you run. Everybody had to look out for their own life. But we still are right out in the Underground. We became a small army. At that time we were 36 people in the Underground. We already begin to connect ourselves with other bunkers, and other stations.

**INT**: Why did you do that?

**IZZY**: To survive. Not to let the Germans catch me.

**INT**: Why did you join the Polish army? Why didn't you just get away?

**IZZY**: I was too far from home. I was in Lublin, and Warsaw wasn't yet liberated. My hometown, the other half of Poland, wasn't yet liberated.

**INT**: But you were a free man.

**IZZY**: Yes, I was a free man, I came out; I was a free man. Just feeling as a Jew, when I walked into Majdanek and to the camp in Lublin, and what I saw over there with my own eyes, and I was a free man, I wasn't yet in the army, but I saw that the ground was yet shaking, and I saw the crematoriums, then I said I'm going to go back in the army. I'm not going to stay here. I'm going to do what I have to do. I was raised in my life with discipline and in the orphanage, they brought me to those things that I want to accomplish.

**INT**: But you could have accomplished your own freedom.

**IZZY**: I could do anything I wanted.

**INT**: To go back into the army is to risk your life again.

**IZZY**: I went back to risk my life as a Jew. Not to protect the Polish army. Because in the army I was surrounded with anti-Semites.

**ANNI**: To do what the Germans did to our Jewish people.

**INT**: But many people didn't join the army.

**IZZY**: A lot didn't, and a lot did.

**ANNI**: Whatever their hearts told them.

**IZZY**: I was with plenty Jewish people, Jewish boys coming out from Russia, coming out from the underground, as a matter of fact people that were in Majdanek, in the camps, inmates, they enlisted themselves in the army.

**INT**: For revenge.

**IZZY**: For revenge. This was the opportunity for us. When I was in the underground, I wasn't fighting face to face. I was fighting in the darkness.

**ANNI**: This is something they could not believe. After being in the concentration camps and Russia and everything, could not believe that something like this happened. Hitler came and did something like this and...

**IZZY**: We learned in the underground, we heard in the underground, what went on, what's going on, the atrocities.

**INT**: It's still a choice to once again risk your life. Other people ran away.

**IZZY**: I took that chance.

**INT**: And you knew you were risking your life.

**IZZY**: Believe me that I want to tell you the story, not that I was risking my life, but if you go from the first line for your food, you had to go a mile behind the first line to collect your food and bring it back. I was in the empty aircraft. And it was always (?) being into the ground because I couldn't run like the infantry. We had to take with us a cannon wherever we went. We were seven people every forty yards. And I went with three soldiers to go collect the food, and when we walked back, and bing, bing, the two fall and I walk. I even didn't bend down. I was so used [to it].

**ANNI**: They didn't get him; they got them.

**IZZY**: And go to sleep with the trenches, and we covered ourselves with the tents on top and in the morning I got up and two were dead, three were dead. So G-d was with me. G-d was holding a hand above my head that I should live.

**INT**: Did you believe that?

**IZZY**: I always did.

**INT**: So you stood up and you believed G-d is with you.

**IZZY**: According to the timing in the year, I was a (?) in my life, since age three. According to the timing of the year. I used to take ten trees, and make a minyan and say kaddish. I never missed it for my father. Maybe I missed a day, because we didn't have a calendar, but timing.

**INT**: So you always kept your faith in G-d, and you believed that G-d was with you.

**IZZY:** All the time.

**INT:** What about your Jewish friend who didn't make it?

**IZZY**: That's a very hard question. I cannot. This was the goal. We shared. For me to be alive, to sit in here today, and to tell you my life story, somebody has to relay story. Because if we pass on and if you want to tell the story, and only that tape can tell the story, but you cannot tell the story, because people will ask you, "How do you know? You weren't there." How much you want to take from me now and learn that story, you will never repeat my story, because you weren't there.

**INT**: Tell me the psychological answer. This is a psychological question, not a history question, and not a religion question. I'm not saying you can answer it, but if you can, what allowed you to be able to be one of three men, walking with the food back to the artillery, they're shot and killed, and you're alive and you don't even bend down?

**IZZY**: I didn't even bow. I just walked. Just courage. Courage, courage, hope.

**INT**: Hope for what?

**IZZY**: For tomorrow. That I will succeed. I promised myself being a civilian, and I said it to people. That I will live through Hitler, I will live through Stalin, and I will tell my story to the world. I will tell the story whatever happens. Not only to me, but whatever happens in...

**INT**: So you decided in Siberia that that would be...

**IZZY**: That would be my choice. I had nothing to lose. Because everybody in my family I left behind. The people behind. I don't know if I have any family left. If I would find a cousin, if I would find anybody. I knew that this was the only way for me to risk and take chances. And G-d was with me.

I just told my grandchildren the other day sitting in their house that I was in the underground and we went out in the night-time to get food. And when we knocked at the door, we had to resist and fight for it, and we couldn't shoot, because we would wake up the whole town, and who

knows how close the Germans were, so we had to hold a knife in our hands or a hatchet. Me or you. You give me what I need and I let you live. I walk away. If you resist, I fight for it. And this was the answer to it. Do you think I could let my first shot go from a rifle so easy? I close my eyes. I cry. Because I know I'm going to kill somebody. It wasn't so easy but we got used to it.

**INT**: And after liberation, you went after the Nazis.

**IZZY**: After liberation, when we were liberated I didn't go after the Nazis anymore. I went in the Polish army.

**INT**: But the collaborators.

**IZZY**: No, no. When I came into Lodz with the Polish army, then we went after the collaborators. Went to a tailor and he gave us a list and every night -- and this was very dangerous -- Stalin stopped...if I would have been caught, I would have been court martialed. It was an order from Stalin not to do it, but we did illegally what we could. But we did what we had to do. It isn't easy to kill a person, it isn't easy to shoot, but to save your life.

As a matter of fact, we walked into Lodz and we were guarding the station. And they brought the Germans, wounded Germans on the train from the Pullmans, still what to do the Russians, and we walked in and one German said, "Hier kommen the Juden schweine." And he had a gun yet with him. So what should I do, what should my friend do? Me or him.

**INT**: And then revenge was important. Revenge against the Volksdeutschen, the collaborators.

**IZZY**: When I came back to Poland I didn't want to get involved anymore. When the war ended they send us into an army camp in Poland, and then I had a pass to go home to my hometown. The same cousins, I was with them in Russia. We met by coincidence and we were in the same camp. He's in Brazil now. I wasn't supposed to be free from the army. They wanted to give me a rank, you know, all the fighters. But I didn't want that. When I was free, they counted, and at the last one, I moved over there. My cousin was at home in Bendin. And I made for him a paper.

**INT**: The revenge was important.

**IZZY**: The revenge as much as I could have done it. It was never enough. It was never enough. Not to kill. Not to hurt, but the revenge whatever I found out. Whatever happened to me beside the other atrocities. But to me myself, my family. I came home, my sisters, mother, the whole mishpocha, and we had a big mishpocha, kein ayin hora. And I had a few cousins, not many. Second cousins. We found each other.

**INT**: Your mother had children with her second husband.

**IZZY**: Two girls. I hope one of them lives somewhere because they weren't the same age.

**INT**: And those were the half-sisters you went back for. You said you went back to your mother and said, "Give me the girls."

**IZZY**: No, I didn't go back.

**ANNI:** This was in the beginning. When the Germans came in.

**IZZY:** I was caught. See what the Germans did, the Germans caught people for work. They didn't send yet nobody to concentration camps. Just labor. And I was running, we were living in another town, Dunbrover. My sister was living in Bendin. And when I heard we went through to a goyishe neighborhood, and this wasn't easy. Because the goyim could have killed me. I had to go at night-time, l2:00 at night, l:00 in the morning and the Germans were patrolling. But wherever I went, to a forest, to the train tracks, I tried to save myself. I knew how to go. What to do. But when they caught me, they sent me to a coal mine and I was there four days and I made my risk to run away because it wasn't such a heavy guard.

**ANNI**: But you have to have courage to do that. Others sat there, this is my finishing, my choice. This is my end. He didn't. I could have never done what he did.

**INT**: But why do you think he can do that?

**ANNI:** I can't.

**INT:** No, him.

**ANNI:** Him, he's stronger than me.

**IZZY**: I came home and I went to my mother, and then I ran away, I couldn't stay, and I met in Cracow, those three brothers, the cousins, and in Cracow we got together. That's why we were in Russia together and then separated. See, we together and then separated together. If you find in Russia somebody, it was a very hard way to find anybody in Russia. And I met Bendin neighbors, I met so many friends, and I lost many friends.

**ANNI**: My brother he couldn't find. He is somewhere dead, I don't know where he is.

**IZZY:** I had another cousin with me. We heard from him in Leningrad he was.

**IZZY**: I wish I would have known.

**INT**: You have a brother in Leningrad?

**IZZY:** No, she don't know.

**ANNI**: I don't know. Maybe he married a shiksa, who knows? I don't know. He was alive after the war.

**INT**: How do you know that?

**ANNI**: Because we met people in camp and they saw he was in the Russian army and then he went back to Russia, and from that time on, somebody told us, but that's all we know.

**IZZY**: If I would have known that...

**INT**: So he goes back every year. He has connections in Leningrad.

**ANNI**: We knew that he has two brothers, but maybe so many years. He's in l921.

**INT**: Let me ask you Anni, quickly, just your brothers and sisters. Two brothers I know went to Canada. Just do you remember the years? What year were you born?

**ANNI**: I was born in l926.

**INT**: Your sister is younger.

**ANNI**: l928.

**INT**: You had two brothers who were home with you. When were they born?

**ANNI:** They left l93l.

**IZZY:** No, no, when were they born?

**ANNI**: Morris was born, 75 now.

**IZZY**: The older one was born in l9l5, the other in l9l7, and Shmulek was born l921, and the other one l923.

**INT**: So the two Canada brothers are the older ones, and then these two brothers. One went to a work camp and one was killed.

**ANNI**: Yes. And was killed.

**INT**: The older one went to a work camp in Russia?

**ANNI:** No, no.

**IZZY**: He escaped to Russia, like I escaped.

**INT**: The two older brothers are in Canada. The third brother...

**ANNI**: Escaped to Russia.

**IZZY**: The one we are looking for.

**ANNI**: Went to Russia in l939 and we've never heard from him. And the other one was killed in Germany in the concentration camps.

**INT**: I know that these things upset you, but I know you want to tell the story, you feel it's important to tell. But I want you to know if you ever need me just as a support, I want to be there for you. Now the last time we talked, was it very upsetting for you? Do you suffer after you tell the story?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: I don't want to make it harder.

**IZZY**: She is very soft, sensitive nature.

**INT**: I only want to ask you two questions about the war, and then we're going to talk about liberation. Afterwards we'll talk about the good stuff. You had your sister with you. I heard the story of what happened in the fields. So you had your sister and you went to the work camp. You were how old?

**ANNI**: It was l943.

**IZZY**: You were sixteen, almost seventeen when you went to camp.

**INT**: And your sister is two years younger, she was fifteen. And I know that before that you had a work permit that kept her alive. When you were in the camp, were you together?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And did you feel responsible to take care of her, and how did you take care of her?

**ANNI**: We couldn't take care much, I just tried to take care with chores that she shouldn't do, and she had the Jewish lady.

**IZZY:** The one that took care, the caretaker.

**INT**: Kapos?

**IZZY**: No, they didn't have kapos in that camp.

**INT**: The woman who ran the barracks. The Jewish woman. So you're saying the woman who ran the barracks tried to help her.

**ANNI**: Aufseher. An Aufseher, you know.

**INT**: An overseer.

**ANNI**: Yes. So she did some work for her, but we still had to work in the factory. Me and my sister sewed the shirts for the Nazis. So everybody had a part. I made the sleeves, and I made the collar, and she put the whole thing together, and there were other girls doing pockets and stuff like that.

**INT**: But you felt the responsibility to watch out for her.

**ANNI**: She was very lonely because of my mother.

**INT**: So she leaned on you and you helped her.

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Did you believe that you were going to make it?

**ANNI**: I don't know, our thoughts and our thinking and our belief and our prayer to G-d were that because we had two brothers in Canada that maybe we would survive. And I had somehow when we left my mother gave us a little address where they lived, Jasper, and if you came to Edmonton....

**INT**: And you found them through...

**ANNI**: Through the Red Cross.

**INT**: So your hope was to be reunited with your brothers.

**ANNI:** Right, right.

**INT:** And you kept a belief in G-d through this?

**ANNI**: Oh, yes. If you are raised this way. You're raised in a family, you know, an Orthodox stuff like that...you just follow it. Instant. You follow it and you believe that maybe someday...And many times you think, "G-d, why did G-d do this, and why did G-d do that? Why? What's the reason? What's the purpose in taking away such beautiful people, such religious people and everything?" There was a purpose. I cannot question G-d. It was something. This is the way we had to take everything in life.

**INT**: Did you feel that you could lean on your sister too?

**ANNI**: Yes, with certain things that we shared together a lot. She helped. She told me this and she told me that, that she was young, but we shared a lot, we shared things, even a piece of bread.

**INT**: So you really helped each other.

**ANNI**: Oh, yes. All the time. I could have lost her otherwise. I wanted to be together with her and tried from one spot to another to get into the line to be counted and this is what happened, that thank G-d I was together with her.

**INT**: It gave you a reason...

**ANNI:** To be together with her.

**INT:** ...to live, to try?

**ANNI**: Yes, to live. And then we had a lot of girls from our town that they were older than us, and they helped us educate. They helped us, and on Sunday, no books or nothing, but somehow they were much older than us and they...

**INT:** Had the koach?

**ANNI:** Had the koach. Not only the koach, there's nothing to do, there are young children that were fifteen and seventeen, and just coming out, only finished sixth grade the schools, and we had to do something, so we did anything. A piece of paper was there, a pencil was there in their mind. So whatever was in their mind, and whatever they knew from before, they gave us.

**INT**: Was that part of surviving, do you think?

**ANNI**: Yes, I think so, I believe in it.

**INT**: So you also knew some other girls who tried to help.

**ANNI**: Oh yes, our camp was very close. All of them helped.

**INT**: It wasn't each person out for himself.

**ANNI**: No. This was a different situation. People are different in that position. It comes to food, it comes to that. This was a little tough. But somehow, clothes we didn't have, and one to the other to be jealous of something, there was no such thing. But somehow we were close. We were a close family. We tried to be in those circumstances. Until from Auschwitz a load of people came in from Budapest so then it got a little tougher. Because they didn't know Jewish, and we didn't know Hungarian, you know, and it was tough. It was very hard. They thought that we wanted to hurt them, and stuff like that and we tried to help them.

**INT**: So you didn't feel that your sister was a burden.

**ANNI**: No, never.

**INT**: You felt that she helped to give you to strive.

**ANNI**: We were so close. Nothing would take us apart. But that's why we're so close. We're close even now. She would do for me and I would do for her.

**INT**: Okay. I want to talk about your brothers. Let me just ask you that the tears you have when you talk about it, how do you...

**ANNI:** How do you take them away?

**INT:** ...cope with it, what do you do? Do you read a book?

**IZZY:** She reads books.

**INT:** No, no. I don't mean about the war. How does Anni deal with her tears? When I leave today, what happens?

**ANNI**: Like what? What do you mean?

**INT**: When I leave today and the interview is over, do you just go on and you make dinner and...you feel relaxed.

**ANNI**: Yes. I go on. From the beginning of my years. Maybe they have people who are not as sensitive as me, they can talk; they can do anything. I don't know. I'm so sensitive. I see everything in front of me.

**INT**: Is it getting worse as you get older?

**ANNI**: Yes, I don't know, I need my parents more than ever.

**INT**: But when the interview is over, do you go back to normal living?

**ANNI**: Yes. It's just that I always dream, I always think, I'm a really big thinker, thinking this, it makes me upset, and gets my sugar up.

**INT**: But people would protect themselves. People who are so sensitive wouldn't do an interview.

**ANNI**: I didn't want it. I did it because of you. I didn't want it.

**INT**: You did the Gratz interview.

**ANNI**: I did it with pain, too.

**INT**: Why did you do the Gratz interview?

**ANNI**: I don't know.

**INT**: So you say to him, "You go, you go and do it. I'm going to stay home."

**IZZY**: The Gratz College was a different situation. I asked her to do it. It's for our children. Our grandchildren. One of my granddaughters had the tapes for a couple of weeks. She studied the tapes.

**INT**: Do you worry about Anni talking to me? Are you worried about her?

**IZZY**: I worry about her, she's my wife. I worry all my life about her.

**INT**: Are you worried that she's talking to me? Do you want her to...

**IZZY**: No, if she feels to talk, let her talk. It's better for her. It's better than to keep it inside. Let her cry. The doctor told her. Once her doctor told her crying makes you good. Let her get it off her chest. There's a lot on her chest.

**ANNI**: But it's already so many years.

**INT**: My mother cries every time.

**IZZY**: So we'll never get rid of it. This is already in us.

**ANNI**: Not everybody.

**INT**: Not everybody cries. You said your sister doesn't cry.

**IZZY**: She has no tears.

**INT**: Can you explain that to me? You have a lot of tears and your sister has no tears? Can you explain this to me?

**ANNI**: I don't know, I really don't know.

**INT**: Can you explain this to me? You know both of them.

**IZZY**: It's very hard to explain the nature...

**ANNI:** ... of a person.

**IZZY:** But it bothers her sister. She begins now to recall. For years she didn't recall anything.

**INT**: You mean she blocked out the memory?

**IZZY**: For years she didn't talk about it. She remembers more details now than she [Anni] does.

**INT**: But for years, no.

**IZZY**: But now everything comes out of her. We just went on the cruise with a woman, they were in the same camp, older than them.

**INT**: Your sister went on the cruise?

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: And so your sister could talk then?

**ANNI**: Yes, she spoke, she told a lot of things that I didn't remember, things that I wasn't there with her maybe. She remembers a lot.

**IZZY**: She didn't talk about it until now.

**INT**: Did she remember?

**IZZY**: She remembered, but now it's coming out. She's just recalling.

**INT**: With tears?

**IZZY**: No tears. Her sister doesn't cry that easy. She does. Probably she does.

**ANNI**: Maybe she does, but not in front of me.

**INT**: Do you think that's because the two of you are different people?

**ANNI:** Yeah, we are.

**INT:** Or is it because your experiences are different?

**ANNI**: No, we're different.

**INT**: Always, as children?

**ANNI**: I don't remember as children, but I know that I'm different than her. I was strong.

**INT:** As a child.

**ANNI:** I was very strong as a child. And I could do anything and I could accomplish anything, and I was never afraid of anything. I could walk in the middle of the street in the darkness and I knew that G-d is with me. Nothing is going to happen to me. This is my policy. I'm followed from G-d.

**INT**: So you didn't run home crying if somebody hurt your feelings?

**ANNI**: No, never.

**INT**: Did your sister?

**ANNI**: My sister, maybe, yes. My sister was very thin and my mother took care of her a lot. And she couldn't eat. And she follows her with a teppele all the time, "Essen, essen." And when she came to the concentration camp, she was so skinny she couldn't do chores and stuff like that. I did for her because I didn't want her to pick it up.

**INT**: So you don't understand why after the war she shut it off.

**IZZY**: Let me, let me...psychologically, you should know about that. When a child, fifteen years of age, seventeen, nineteen...I hardly knew my mother.

**ANNI:** Me, too.

**IZZY:** I was separated in an orphanage for ten years away from my mother.

**INT**: You were seven years old.

**IZZY:** No, I was away in an orphanage.

**INT:** Anni was fifteen.

**ANNI**: But I still don't remember. I remember good things that she did. She was a very marvelous woman. She was a giver. She didn't eat, but she gave people. And this is what I remember her. At home we were poor.

**INT**: But that doesn't explain why Anni cries and her sister doesn't.

**IZZY**: But it doesn't matter. Nature changes. Due to life.

**ANNI**: What do you think?

**INT**: I don't know your sister.

**IZZY**: You sit by the television and you watch that people used to tell stories about their parents, their father was a drunk, their mother was no good; they threw out the children. Memories. This was a lot of memories when they were taken into a concentration camp. The first thing what was cut off from them was the mouth, the food, and the hunger takes away all the attachments. You want to survive, you want to live. You're thinking about, I'm going to sleep hungry and I'm waking up hungry. What else can you think about? And I was twenty-three years of age. I cried after my mother. I remember I stayed with a Russian woman before I was sent to a camp. And she said to me, "Iz gut se weine; cry." Twenty-three years of age.

**ANNI**: I'm going to be sixty-five and I'm crying.

**IZZY**: When you take away a child fifteen years of age, they never learned enough what a home is, what a life is at home. When?

**INT**: So you think that Anni's sister just shuts it off.

**IZZY**: She was shut off. She now begins the last few years, three years. She started to come up with...she knows more than anybody else.

**INT**: Let me ask you just a few things about your sister.
How old is she?

**IZZY**: She is sixty-three.

**INT:** So she was born in...

**ANNI:** In l928.

**INT**: And she also didn't get very far in school, right, because the war cut it off?

**ANNI**: Yes, sure, even less than we, maybe. Two years, a year and a half.

**INT**: Has she done any work in this country? What kind of work?

**ANNI**: She was a seamstress. Working here in Philadelphia.

**INT**: Where does she live now?

**ANNI**: In Florida.

**INT**: And where was she before?

**ANNI**: In Alabama. She lived in Canada, Toronto.

**INT:** Canada to Philadelphia?

**ANNI:** To Philadelphia, to Alabama.

**INT**: Why did she go to Alabama?

**ANNI**: Her husband transferred from a big job.

**INT**: Oh, she met him in Philadelphia?

**ANNI**: No, in Canada.

**INT**: And now she's in Florida.

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And the work she did was being a seamstress?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Did she work when the kids were young?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And she's married. Is she currently married?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Her husband's still alive.

**ANNI**: Yes. She's married five years less than me, I'm forty-five, so forty years.

**INT**: And how many children does she have?

**ANNI**: She has a son and a daughter.

**INT**: How old? Do you know?

**ANNI**: How old is Brian, Izzy? Two years after my son. My son's going to be, '52, he was born '52, and he was born '5l.

**INT:** So he's going to be 51.

**ANNI:** '5l born.

**INT:** And the daughter?

**ANNI:** And the daughter is 29 or 27, she's going to have a baby now. No, no. She's 29.

**INT**: Oh, so l96l. She was born much later. What kind of work did her husband do?

**ANNI**: A ladies' tailor. A designer, tailor.

**IZZY**: A tailor.

**INT**: And that's what took him to Alabama?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And financially, did they become comfortable?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT:** Holtzman is a third cousin, Holtzman is Goldman. See, I told you. My family's name is Goldman.

**IZZY:** I knew.

**INT:** And I filled that out, too. So they were comfortable?

**ANNI:** Yeah.

**INT**: Are they involved religiously, Orthodox, Conservative? Were they involved Jewishly, religiously?

**ANNI**: Conservative.

**INT**: And do you know if they were involved in any kind of organization?

**ANNI**: Yes, B'nai Brith, what else is involved, Izzy?

**IZZY:** B'nai Brith, Association of Jewish Holocaust. He's a member.

**INT**: So he's also a survivor.

**ANNI:** Yes.

**IZZY**: Sure he's a survivor.

**INT**: Sure? Why? Some people married Americans.

**ANNI:** Yeah.

**INT:** And you've always been close, and when she was in Alabama you called a lot? And did you visit?

**ANNI**: Oh yes. We were very close.

**IZZY:** Together. We're very close.

**INT**: And with her husband, too.

**ANNI**: Yes, we were close, with the children, with everyone.

**INT**: On the Gratz tape, you said that when you came to this country, that things were very hard for you emotionally?

**ANNI**: Yes, at the beginning of the years.

**IZZY**: We weren't accepted that much by the Jewish people in the United States, except HIAS, the Family Service. But the atmosphere of the Jewish people at that time, they didn't even want to rent to us an apartment with a child.

**INT**: This was in Philadelphia?

**IZZY**: In Philadelphia. We weren't accepted.

**ANNI:** l948.

**IZZY:** They didn't realize where are we coming from, because they had the good years and six million Jewish people [died] and they made here good years.

**ANNI**: Many of them I spoke with, they didn't know, they never saw a movie what happened to us, they never read a paper.

**IZZY**: They weren't much sympathetic to us. The American Jewish people. Except the Jewish Family Service, HIAS.

**INT**: So how was that hard for you? You said on the tape that you had an emotional breakdown in the early years. What was that about?

**ANNI**: I don't know, maybe I was young, nineteen, I had a child, and coming to America we had nothing, we came with only seven dollars and you had to start a new family, and everything, and you went to work right away, and somehow it was left from before many emotional things. Many things that are still not healed. So somehow I put myself together.

**INT**: So you worked with a doctor then. Were you in the hospital?

**ANNI**: Yes, they didn't know what it was, so they thought my glands are no good, and that's why I'm emotionally upset.

**INT**: They didn't give you a medicine for depression.

**ANNI**: No. Not at that time. Then I went to my own doctor.

**IZZY**: This is our brother-in-law, Leon Gross. He was in Buchenwald.

**INT**: So your sister is Gross?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**IZZY:** But then she goes back to Holland.

[Short discussion of book Izzy lent to the interviewer]

**INT**: So at that time the doctor tried to help you but you pulled yourself together.

**ANNI**: Myself. Everything myself.

**INT**: Have you worked with a therapist since then?

**ANNI**: I used to go to a doctor, my family doctor in South Philadelphia, and he used to help me, and made me talk, and I kept talking and talking and talking and everything came up about my parents. And then I came out of it.

**INT**: Were you ever on any medicine for depression?

**ANNI**: I don't remember -- did I, Izzy?

**IZZY**: Yes.

**INT**: Do you now?

**ANNI**: No.

**INT**: So that was a long time ago. And physical problems. What physical problems have you had since the war?

**ANNI**: What do you mean?

**INT**: You have arthritis now. Any other kinds of problems?

**ANNI**: I'm diabetic. I'm on insulin. My heart is good, everything else is good. Except the arthritis is killing me!

**INT**: Well, that's why you're going to Florida.

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Izzy, how about you, do you have any medical problems?

**IZZY**: I have no medical problems. I am in good shape. Lately I gave up the factory and I don't do anything, I'm retired. I don't manufacture anything.

**INT**: Except stories. Did you have any times when emotionally things became harder for you since the war?

**IZZY**: I pushed my problems on the side. I had a business for twenty-five years.

**ANNI**: And then for ten years, another one, a cleaning service.

**IZZY**: But my business, I never came home and told my wife I had a bad day. I came home, I was home. I never mixed in my business problems.

**ANNI**: He is strong; he took care of everything. I cannot cope. I don't know. I'm a funny person. I cannot cope, but he had bills to pay. And somebody maybe called up and said, "You forgot to pay our bill," or something. I can't cope with this. I cannot owe nobody. It's impossible. I get very depressed. My son has colitis, and he can't cope either. He has to have everything smooth, he works, he is happy, and he has to push everything away from himself, otherwise he gets sick. He came home and never told me about anything. I was in the store all the time, I used to help and everything.

**IZZY**: I don't tell lies. We were in the ghetto. Tom Lantos, the Congressman, he writes us a letter.

**INT**: Did you do the bills at home, or did Izzy do them?

**ANNI**: Izzy does everything.

**IZZY**: My home bills, I never kept a checkbook in here, until I retired, until I give up the business. Everything in the store. I took the bills with me to the store. I took everything with me to the store.

**INT**: I want to talk about liberation and then building life here. But first let me ask you about your children. How many children do you have?

**ANNI**: I have three. I have two daughters and a son.

**INT**: How old is your oldest?

**ANNI**: My oldest is going to be 43 in February.

**INT**: That's your son or daughter?

**ANNI**: A daughter.

**INT**: What is she doing? Is she married?

**ANNI**: She's married, she has five children, beautiful kids; she has gorgeous kids, two of them in college.

**INT**: Did she work when they were young?

**ANNI:** Did she work when the children were young? The kids, no.

**IZZY**: She didn't work much.

**ANNI:** But now she works with a doctor.

**INT:** Now she works with a doctor?

**ANNI**: Yes, now she works with a pediatrician. She's a medical technician. But after the children and everything she works with the pediatrician.

**INT**: So how old is the oldest grandchild?

**ANNI**: Twenty-one.

**INT**: And a son, he's doing what?

**ANNI**: He's going to medical school, he finishes in June.

**INT**: And the next child?

**ANNI**: Steven is a year and a half younger.

**INT:** About nineteen?

**ANNI:** Yes, and he goes to George Washington University, and wants to be a pediatrician. He wants to be, he cannot predict. And Nicole...

**IZZY:** Graduated high school, Lower Merion High School now.

**INT:** How old is she?

**IZZY:** Nicole is going to be eighteen.

**ANNI:** Seventeen.

**INT:** Next.

**IZZY:** Next is Zachary graduating middle school and going into high school.

**INT:** Okay. So he is fourteen?

**ANNI and IZZY:** Fifteen.

**IZZY:** And then is Heidi, thirteen.

**ANNI:** Fourteen.

**IZZY:** Fourteen. Heidi is fourteen.

**ANNI:** Gonna be fourteen.

**INT:** She asks you for help and then she corrects you.

**IZZY:** Right.

**INT**: And Shirley's husband does what?

**ANNI**: He has his own bakery route.

**IZZY**: He has his own business.

**INT:** Delivery.

**IZZY:** His own business, not delivery. He buys, he sells.

**INT**: And what kind of person is he? Do you like him?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And what kind of person is Shirley?

**ANNI**: Shirley is a warm person, very nice, warm and giving and caring. Very much.

**INT**: Close?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: Is she the child who wants to listen to all the tapes? And read a lot about the Holocaust? Is that Shirley?

**ANNI:** Miriam, granddaughter she's talking about.

**IZZY:** Dinah.

**ANNI:** The other one.

**INT**: Is she involved in any children of survivors' activities?

**ANNI:** No, she's too young.

**INT:** I'm talking about Shirley.

**ANNI**: Not much. He's an American. I don't know. We cannot ask questions.

**INT**: Who's next? A son?

**ANNI**: Miriam.

**INT:** How old is Miriam?

**ANNI:** She was born in l952.

**INT**: So she's 38. And is she married?

**ANNI**: Yes, she has three children.

**INT**: How old are they?

**ANNI**: A girl sixteen, and a girl fourteen, and a boy ten.

**INT**: So which one is Dinah?

**ANNI**: Dinah is the middle one, the second one.

**INT**: So she's the one, the most interested?

**ANNI**: They all want to take the tapes. They all work on it. This is a project from school that she did.

**INT**: And has Miriam worked?

**ANNI**: Yes, she did work, but her husband is in real estate business, and she helps him out in the business. She also took a real estate course.

**IZZY:** She used to work with a doctor too. All kinds of things they do, no?

**ANNI:** They go from one to the other.

**INT**: And her husband is also American?

**ANNI**: No, he's a Greener. Son of a survivor.

**INT**: And how do you get along with him?

**ANNI**: Good, very good.

**INT**: Closer.

**IZZY**: You mind your business, I mind my business. That's how you get along.

**INT**: That's **one** way to get along. The other way to get along is to check what's in the soup.

**IZZY**: I don't mix in.

**INT**: You don't check what's in the soup?

**IZZY**: No, none of our business. But we're close. I sell the house and he reads the agreement.

[Tape ends]

**INT**: Because his background is European?

**ANNI**: I think so.

**INT:** He is more...

**ANNI:** He is more warm. It's different than an American to a survivor.

**INT**: And then you have a son who's how old?

**ANNI**: My son is l956. How old is he now? 34, 35, 34.

**IZZY:** 34.

**INT**: And what does he do?

**ANNI**: He's a doctor. A chiropractor.

**INT**: He's the one with colitis.

**ANNI**: Yes. They all have colitis a little bit. He has the worst. He has the most. It's a lot to do from us. I think so. Children of survivors have a little bit of...don't you think so?

**INT**: I think so.

**ANNI**: Not only mine, because I hear from some other people, too. There's a book about children of survivors. I should read this. I have to find out where I can get that.

**INT**: And he likes to keep the problems away.

**ANNI**: Yeah, yeah. She helps him. She does all the bookkeeping for him. A matter of fact they're away now skiing until Sunday. And she tries to push him away. He's doing very well, and this is what...

**INT:** This is the way it works?

**ANNI:** She helps him. She's a dental hygienist, but she's not working now because of the children.

**INT**: How many children?

**ANNI**: She has two. One boy and one girl. The baby, how old is he? Six and three.

**INT**: Do you think that your children would be willing to be interviewed?

**ANNI**: No, I don't think so.

**INT**: None of them.

**IZZY**: No.

**ANNI:** I don't think so.

**INT**: Why is that?

**IZZY**: Because they have a lot from us. Because they don't have to tell their story, their life.

**ANNI:** What can they say?

**IZZY:** What can they tell you?

**INT**: But the focus here is...

**ANNI**: Maybe they would. Miriam would. I don't know about Shirley. I don't know about Neil.

**INT**: The story that we want to tell here is how people rebuilt their lives. You come out of the darkness.

**ANNI**: They have a story to tell, too.

**INT:** Yeah.

**ANNI:** Absolutely.

**INT**: We all have a story to tell about our childhood.

**ANNI**: How they lived in a home with survivors, and how things are different emotionally. There's a lot of things to be told.

**INT**: Would they tell me?

**ANNI:** I don't know. I'll have to find out.

**INT:** Would you ask?

**ANNI:** Yes.

**INT:** I'm very nice to talk to. There's one side of the story and there's the other side of the story. I would always talk about my childhood as a very good childhood, but I was very aware of my parents' experiences, and what they went through and how it affected me, and how I thought about them, and how strong it made me.

**ANNI:** Right. Absolutely.

**INT:** So we want to hear the children talk, so if you're willing to ask them...

**ANNI**: I'm going to ask them. No problem. Yeah, we'll find out if they want. It's good, it's healthy.

**INT**: It's the other half of the story.

**IZZY**: Do you believe that? It's healthy?

**INT**: You want the children out of this.

**IZZY**: I don't want them to give an interview.

**INT**: Why?

**IZZY**: I don't know if they want to.

**INT**: Do you protect them?

**IZZY**: I don't protect them.

**INT**: You took your son to Poland, didn't you?

**IZZY**: No.

**INT**: Who did you take with you?

**IZZY**: My wife.

**INT**: You didn't go with your children?

**IZZY**: We go with a group with other people.

**ANNI:** No, the children couldn't make it. I don't know.

**IZZY:** Listen, my son is married to an American Jewish girl. She has nothing to do with the Holocaust. She doesn't even dream about the Holocaust, she doesn't know about the Holocaust.

**ANNI**: This has a lot to do with a child who comes out from a Holocaust home of survivors, and a woman changes a man.

**IZZY**: You have the same thing. Your husband is an American born.

**INT**: Yes, but he has feeling toward what happened.

**ANNI**: But my daughter-in-law, forget it.

**IZZY**: His mother cannot tell him the story, but your mother tells you the story. It's different.

**INT**: Yes, but friends of mine who married Americans, some Americans don't have anything to do with the Holocaust, but some Americans are very involved. They're involved, and they care, they have feeling.

**ANNI**: This feeling, kit men nicht, you cannot buy that feeling.

**INT**: No. It's there, or it's not there.

**IZZY**: So that's the difference.

**INT**: But you sound protective of your children. Leave them alone, don't get them involved, they don't need the interview, right?

**IZZY**: I don't think so. I don't think that they would.

**ANNI:** You mean you're not looking for trouble.

**IZZY:** No trouble. I don't think that they want to do the interview.

**INT**: But what if your children would tell the story of your courage in starting again?

**IZZY**: It's up to them. They don't know much of my courage. They weren't too long in the house. They got married fast, they got out.

**INT**: They got married when they were three years old?

**IZZY**: They didn't think about my courage.

**INT:** They didn't watch you for eighteen years?

**IZZY:** They didn't think of my courage.

**INT**: How do you know?

**ANNI**: That's the way he feels.

**IZZY**: Because we were too good to them. We overprotected them so they didn't have a chance to see my courage. I just talked to them the other day. I was in my daughter's house in Bala Cynwyd. And I told them, to make a living for me was not easy, and circumstances the way they are today.

**ANNI:** Three or four jobs.

**IZZY:** Three of four jobs. I used to go away Friday morning and come home Sunday night, ich hab must arbeten an Shabbas zu meine parnosseh, and I went to the farmer's market, and I did everything, not to please...

**ANNI:** Over-please.

**IZZY:** But to protect.

**ANNI:** Over-protect.

**INT:** Over-protect.

**IZZY:** Over-protect.

**INT**: So you think they grew up saying, oh, life is wonderful?

**IZZY**: No, they know about us.

**ANNI**: From the first minute. We sat at the table and talked.

**INT**: But didn't you think they would understand the courage?

**IZZY**: It didn't go too good in their heads. The relationship and the difference.

**ANNI**: They do know, Izzy, you think so. They **do** know. They remember things. What happened to them. The one who is married to an American is ... and the one survivor, he knows everything. She's more closer to us than the others. And my son, is again the wife. He helps out, he gives charity; he gives everything.

**IZZY**: It washes away. As they say, you're a married woman, when you sleep with a man or a woman in bed, it rubs off from one side to the other.

**INT**: Well, I think you are under-estimating what your children have inside of their understanding.

**ANNI**: That's what they say. We have feelings that they don't think so. It's positive.

**INT**: You talk to your children, and see if they will talk to me. Don't let Izzy talk to them. He'll talk them out of it.

**IZZY**: I can talk to them.

**INT**: Let me find out what they think.

**IZZY**: No, you can call them up.

**INT**: But I need your permission to call them up.

**IZZY**: You can call up Miriam, my mother, my parents, know your parents, they were together in DP camp, who I am now, what I do now, I am interviewing survivors, and I had a good interview with your parents, and maybe you can help us.

**INT**: But you mention it first. I won't do it right away.

Okay. Let's do liberation. You found each other in Bendin, if I remember the tape, and I know you illegally had to get to Germany, because Poland was starting to close the borders.

**IZZY**: No, the borders were closed already. We left Poland. I walked out, and I got my release from the army legally. I made sure that I had my release book that I am not a deserter, and they still had one of my cousins in the army. And when I got my papers that I'm out from the army we went to Kielce and we organized to leave Bendin to go out of Poland. The same night we sent Anni and her sister and other two or three people which were already involved in the family with my cousins, into Katovitz, and me and one of my cousins -- which was a brother of the other guy who was in the army in Kielce -- went to Kielce and they took him out in the middle of the night illegally, and we brought him into Katovitz, threw the uniform away, put on civilian clothes. And from Katovitz they waited for us in (?). And then we had to smuggle illegally through the borders.

**INT**: That's a common story.

**IZZY**: The lucky part was that I could speak Russian and we took something with us, some little things to change clothing, and we left it on the train, and when we came back on the train it was gone. We were left like Adam and Eve -- just covered up with what we had on our bodies. Lucky that I took them through the border guards on the station. Came back on the train, the train moved, we came into (?). And we were homeless again, displaced persons, nowhere else to go, but we found out they had a Yiddish comitat, and we went to that committee, we received a first portion of soup, they gave us sleeping quarters, and we saw the names written on the walls. All over Europe.

**ANNI:** People went through.

**IZZY:** Three cousins, second cousins and we hunt them to Munich. And then to get out from Czechoslovakia we had to cross another border. And we took in, me and my cousin, the one who is in Brazil and those two girls, and we went, crossing another border.

**INT**: Who did you go with?

**IZZY:** Crossing the border. Her sister.

**ANNI**: Me and my sister.

**IZZY**: Cousin from Brazil, and we went from Czechoslovakia into Germany. And we crossed over the Vistula illegally and we walked a few miles, a few kilometers and we saw a truck loading wood. And I asked the truck, where are you going, he says we want to go to Munich to come to a first station. And the first station was Degendorf. And when the truck came into Degendorf we stopped in the market and we talked Yiddish and fargangen chevra und im geret Yiddish was the Chelmans from Degendorf. And I said, "Amcha?" and they said, "Amcha," and I said, "Where are you going?" and they said, (?) zu a gite kampf, Degendorf. A Bendin Schimmer Guttman, a Bendin. It happened I came into the camp and I met my sister's husband's brother-in-law in the camp. I think your parents know him. Fuchs.

**ANNI:** He was taking care of the barracks.

**IZZY:** His wife didn't live, but he knew who I was. And we speed up in the barrack. And we became Degendorfer.

**INT**: You said, "Amcha"?

**IZZY**: "Amcha" is a Yid.

**INT**: We're part of the people.

**IZZY**: After the war, to say, I'm a Jew, or I'm Zhid, so we understood each other. This was our signal.

**INT**: So you went to Degendorf. Degendorf was a large camp, wasn't it?

**ANNI**: You were born in Degendorf, weren't you?

**INT**: No, I was born here. In l95l. My brother was born in l941.

**IZZY**: Two brothers were in Degendorf, two Holzmans.

**INT**: And a sister.

**IZZY**: But in Degendorf I already worked in the police and I came to work with the Bricha, we smuggled the children out to Israel.

**INT**: It was called Bricha? I'm not familiar with it.

**IZZY**: It was an illegal organization, because the English. And I was told that I wouldn't be able to go to Israel if the English catch me. Because I would be on their black list.

**INT**: So you worked for the police that was your parnosseh?

**IZZY**: Parnosseh, no. I did black marketing like everybody else.

**ANNI**: This was just to help the people.

**INT**: But they didn't pay you? Because my mother did some work. They gave you rations, they gave you cigarettes.

**IZZY**: They paid us, we got DP camp money.

**INT**: Not a lot, but you got some.

**IZZY**: I got in the police. But in the police because I was connected with the illegal I was in the police force.

**ANNI**: To help the children.

**IZZY**: They needed people like us. I was schooled. I was in the army, I was in the underground. They needed people like me. They were looking for people like me. I have pictures. The pictures of Florida. From the army. I have pictures of policemen. We are having a reunion in Florida, for Degendorf.

**ANNI**: Every couple of years.

**INT**: Do the Silvers go?

**ANNI**: Yes. But she died, the old lady died.

**INT**: Did you work in the DP camp?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: What kind of work did you do?

**ANNI**: Oh, in the DP camps, no.

**INT**: When did you marry?

**IZZY**: We married February 3, l946.

**INT**: How long were you in Degendorf?

**IZZY**: Six months. We came in after Yom Kippur. And then we decided to get married. Being a Jewish boy, I told her...

**ANNI**: Izzy, how long we were in the camp, for years?

**IZZY**: We came to Degendorf l945.

**ANNI**: l946.

**IZZY**: l945 to Degendorf.

**ANNI**: Yeah, we got married in l946.

**IZZY**: And I told her, my mother came to me becholom [in a dream], and she told me it's not nice to live chefker, hab chasn. Well, we didn't, she was with her sister, you know, but we decided to get married, and we had one of the largest weddings.

**INT**: And they made freiliche weddings.

**IZZY**: Oh, we were freilich. We began to live in Degendorf. We began to live.

**ANNI**: There were a lot of German Jews. They had their own TV.

**IZZY**: We had shows; we had beautiful, in Degendorf the youth began to wake up.

**ANNI**: I was in ORT, and my sister and me went to ORT right away.

**IZZY**: Dr. Yoluck.

**INT**: Yes. My mother always talks about that. My mother was a baby nurse. That's the work she did. Then she couldn't take it, because she cared too much. She was too sensitive. Then she used to work in the office.

**ANNI**: I cried so much. There were Rumanian people with their children made me sick.

**INT**: Oh, the current situation.

**ANNI**: Yes, they adopt the children. They take them out. American people take them out.

**INT:** Are you okay?

**IZZY:** I'm all right. [discussion of when to end the interview]

**INT:** Tell me the decision to get married. I understand the fact. The fact is you got married. I want to know the feelings and the psychology. How do you get married after losing everybody?

**IZZY**: We have to make a decision to bring a better life.

**ANNI**: It's not so much that. The idea is we were together and nobody is left. Will you go to a mother or a father to ask, there's nobody there. The permission.

**IZZY**: Izzy Silver gave us a wedding. He helped us to prepare.

**INT**: So after losing everybody, there's still love, there's still feelings?

**ANNI**: Who knew about love? You just get together and just sometimes it happens. It's emotional.

**INT**: Tell me what the emotions are. About needing somebody? Wanting somebody?

**ANNI**: Oh, yes, there was always about needing somebody. There was no question about it.

**INT**: Is it love the way young people today talk about love?

**ANNI**: I don't think so.

**INT**: So what is it?

**ANNI**: It was getting together. He knew his life more than I did. Somehow, I didn't know about youth, to be able to choose, to see.

**IZZY**: Establishing after the war a married life was one thing to bring back life together and then to protect each other. To protect.

**ANNI**: He took in my sister, and the effort.

**INT**: Was she jealous that you got married?

**IZZY**: No.

**ANNI**: No, she wanted it.

**INT**: Well, she could be jealous, she could say, "Take care of me."

**ANNI**: No, she was never like that. She was always giving, helping. She's like this now.

**IZZY**: She likes me, I like her all the way. Listen, she gave away her shoes when she left for Canada.

**ANNI**: My brassiere, my everything. She left to Canada, and we were in Munich, and whatever I had money to put in her suitcase and give her to take to Canada.

**INT**: She got the visa first.

**ANNI**: I thought because my brothers would take her in with both hands, more than both hands. My sister-in-law was a jealous person, and my sister came to live, and they didn't even make a bed with her, and she slept with her son. She was a young lady already. She was, how old was she then? Whatever. Even if she came out of the concentration camp she didn't have a period. She got in Canada a period. From all the stuff that they gave us not to have.

**INT**: From the starvation.

**ANNI**: Yes. And they didn't take her in too warmly. I thought that they would do more than this. As a sister. Never mind so many years. Look at those years. But she tried the best. She learned English and went to school and had a job, a beautiful job, and she was still with my brother, and towards the end a friend of hers that they came on the boat together, lived in Toronto and said, come, and you'll meet somebody. So this is what happened. She went there and met somebody and told us to come. Even called my brother to see what kind of boy it is and what she is doing. She had more people to help her.

**INT**: So it didn't work out with either brother.

**ANNI**: My oldest brother's a little warmer, closer, but they are so far apart, so distant, and so much older than us.

**INT**: Was she upset, was she disappointed?

**ANNI**: She was very disappointed.

**INT**: Were you?

**ANNI:** Oh, yes. My G-d, after the war and everything, he should have done more than this.

**INT**: Has it led to bad feelings?

**ANNI**: Yes, it let to bad feelings.

**INT**: Is there any connection there? Do they come to the weddings?

**ANNI**: Yes, everything was fine. He came in l947 to visit us and we took care of all the things. We didn't have anything but we took care of everything.

**INT**: But they didn't help you.

**IZZY**: No. Never.

**INT**: So you would get together for simchas and call but not really close.

**ANNI**: No. I really thought that it would be different.

**INT:** That's what you were dreaming.

**ANNI:** Yes, that's what I was dreaming about. My G-d, to meet my brothers I didn't see since I was four years old when they left...

**IZZY**: We got a telegram on our wedding day from Canada. A captain, a woman, she came and brought us a telegram from the brothers.

**INT**: So they cared enough, but...

**IZZY**: They cared enough but cold shoulders, because it was a different situation. They left young, too. They broke off family love. The aunt...they needed a mother too.

**INT**: Your activities with Israel in Degendorf. You wanted to live in Israel.

**IZZY**: I wanted and I didn't want it because her dream, her sister's dream was the two brothers. In Canada.

**ANNI**: I wanted to be together with them.

**IZZY**: I was black marketeering in Germany. I had to stop, because she made me stop, because she was afraid that I would be caught, I wouldn't be able to emigrate from Germany. So I stopped. Everything I did to fulfill the needs. She says, "I want to come to my brother, so you have to stop."

**INT**: So you regret that?

**IZZY**: I don't regret anything in my life. I am happy I am here. I am happy I did what I did, I am happy I raised a beautiful family and I am happy what's doing for both of us. And my children were here when I was seventy years of age last July. She brought them all together and I told them that reaching age seventy is my biggest gift that G-d could give me. Is when I get up in the morning and I have my wife beside me. And this is the honest truth, and this is what I feel in my heart, and this is what I have to take care as long as G-d will let me, and she will take care of me.

**INT**: So you don't regret that.

**IZZY:** No.

**INT:** So you came to this country. You got the visa for Philadelphia.

**IZZY:** The visa was given us by the HIAS. We still have all the papers. As a matter of fact last year we were with the HIAS and I presented something to them, and they mentioned our name, a

big poster. And we donated to the HIAS as much as we could. We're doing it because they never forgot us. They never forget the people now, "Operation Exodus," what's going on. So we are very thankful for that. We are not sorry. So I don't regret anything, even it was bad, because it was meant to be that way. And that's the way it's supposed to be.

**INT**: So you ended up in Philadelphia, you didn't want to be so far.

**IZZY**: No, in New York they want to send us to Milwaukee, and I was telling that I have relatives in New York and I want to be close, and I'm a tailor, so this was the next choice. They didn't want to let us stay in New York, because they didn't want to have all the Jews concentrated in New York. You know the story.

**INT**: So here, you said it was hard. The Jews didn't accept you.

**IZZY**: We weren't accepted very well from the Jewish average people.

**INT**: You moved out here when you moved.

**ANNI**: South Philly.

**IZZY**: We lived in South Philly. The Jewish Family Service put us in a room and we didn't have the baby. She was still pregnant. When the baby was born we were looking for an apartment, and it was very, very difficult to get an apartment. Everybody who heard a child involved, they didn't want. But finally it was people with good hearts, and we found a little two-room apartment, a kitchen with a bathroom, and from there we moved from a house, and from a house we moved into a cleaning house, and then another house, and from that house I became a decorator and we moved up to Overbrook Park, and from Overbrook Park we bought a home here, and after my life went on and the children grew up so quick, and they left so quick. Why, because we were so involved with parnosseh, and...

[Tape ends]

**INT**: Could we do this a little bit more slowly?

**IZZY**: Go ahead.

**INT**: We're back now being pregnant with the baby. The decision to bring a child into the world, how did you make that decision? What did you think about the world? Why did you let yourself get pregnant? Did you want to be? You came from hell...

**IZZY**: I came from hell and I wasn't the first one to invent that she should become pregnant because people had children before me.

**ANNI**: We waited two years.

**IZZY**: And children were born in the underground, in the bunkers. Life, and future.

**ANNI**: Even in the concentration camps.

**IZZY:** Future and life.

**INT**: Yes, but those were not decisions. If you ask a person, did you choose to have a child...

**IZZY**: Future and life was a decision. I had to make my decision to bring back...

**ANNI:** A generation.

**IZZY:** A generation, a part of a lost generation. The only thing, I didn't want to have children in Germany. This was our decision. Not to have a child in Germany.

**INT**: Why?

**IZZY**: Because I didn't want it.

**ANNI**: The German soil. We suffered a lot. I didn't want the German soil to have my child.

**INT**: I want to hear your words. I can understand, but you have to tell me in your words.

**IZZY**: This was my decision that I don't want to have a child on the German soil. All my past is involved, why I didn't have a child on the German soil. When I went to the Consulate, and I knew that I am going already to America, then she became pregnant, because I knew it would take maybe four or five months -- which it took...

**INT**: So the timing was good. You came on the boat pregnant.

**ANNI**: Oh yes, I was seven months pregnant.

**INT**: What did you think about becoming pregnant and having a child?

**ANNI**: You know, I was young and this is what is part of life to have a child. The coming together.

**INT**: Were you happy?

**ANNI**: Yeah, sure.

**INT:** Scared?

**ANNI:** I loved children.

**IZZY**: She loved children before she had a child.

**ANNI**: All the camps, and the children in the camps.

**INT**: Did you remember my brother in the camp?

**ANNI**: Maybe I do.

**IZZY**: I do remember, and Mintz's daughter, Shoshana, and all the other ones.

**INT**: So you loved children, and it was just part of...

**ANNI**: Yes, part of being married and having a child, and I didn't want to have it on German soil, and it worked out well. My sister left Europe and I came back to our quarter, not the Polish, but the French quarter that my husband was born in, that's where we came and we went out.

**IZZY**: Another thing. Don't forget in our marriage there's a difference of six years. I have the maturity, more the maturity to run life.

**INT**: So you relied on him.

**ANNI**: Yes, my sister too. Together we did. Whatever he did, he did the best. To get out. All kinds of things, kinds of situations.

**INT**: So you had your child here, and it was a hard time for you after your child was born. Was that when you went to the hospital? After your oldest?

**ANNI**: Yes, after the oldest.

**INT**: What did you want for your children? What did you want your children to know about the war?

**IZZY**: They know everything. They don't have to know any more.

**INT**: But you always knew that? You always knew you would tell them?

**ANNI**: Oh, yes. All the time.

**IZZY**: We sat at the table, and if they were three years or five years, and we told the older one eight years of age, only she was telling the younger ones. But we always talked, breakfast, dinner, every time the Holocaust came on top of the table. We talked.

**INT**: You believed that was important.

**IZZY**: I don't regret. It was very important. Maybe we told them too much.

**INT**: Overwhelmed them?

**IZZY**: Overwhelmed them. Maybe we did -- I don't know. Me being busy to create a family life, wasn't an easy task. I was always on the go. But I was home every night, beside going to a meeting, on and off, I was home every night. We did the business seven days a week, go out to appointments, eat, and sit down. Life was preoccupied for us.

**INT**: Well, it was different for Anni. You were home with them.

**IZZY**: She was home all the time with the children.

**INT**: So you had a lot to do with the children.

**ANNI**: I was not home all the time. I was home all the time with the children, but I had chores, I had things, I was to the business.

**INT**: But you were home much more than Izzy was.

**ANNI**: If I was in the store I came home 3:00 because they came from school.

**IZZY**: I wanted her to be home when the kids come in from school.

**INT**: Were you involved in a synagogue?

**ANNI**: Oh, yes, all the time.

**IZZY**: South Philadelphia and...

**INT**: Always Orthodox?

**ANNI**: Yes.

**INT**: And who decided how to discipline the children? Who disciplined the children?

**IZZY**: I was stronger. She was lenient. She was the one who protected too much.

**INT**: So there were things you didn't tell Izzy when he came home.

**ANNI**: I don't know if I did or I didn't. My son was never hit from him. The girls would take a licking, but him never.

**INT**: Why, because he was a good boy?

**ANNI**: He was a very good boy. He listened to him, he took him to the shul, and into the shvitz, to know what life is.

**INT**: But you patsched the girls a little bit?

**IZZY**: Yes, they used to get it once in a while. Not willing, believe me.

**INT**: I know, I too, once in a while. You want to take your hands back after. Do you think you were too soft on the children?

**ANNI**: I think so. I was.

**INT:** Did they...

**ANNI:** Rebel?

**INT:** No, not rebel, that's much later. Did they want a lot from you, do you think they were spoiled when they were little, that you were too easy on them?

**ANNI**: I was easy on them, I did most of the things for them, and I shouldn't have. Like if something needs to be done in the house, I do it, you do your homework, you go with your friends. I did everything. And they know everything. They know the grosse balabostes.

**INT**: Now. Now that they're married. They don't have trouble.

**ANNI**: They are very much the cooks and bakers, and they do everything, but I was protecting them too much. Sometimes a child rebels at this, I think so. Too much protection. "You didn't let me do this; you didn't let me go on a tree."

**INT**: So did you stop them from doing things?

**ANNI**: I somehow, I did, but he was more stronger, he took them places.

**INT**: Did they go to summer camp?

**ANNI**: Yes. Overnight camps, organizations, B'nai Brith.

**INT:** But you didn't want them to climb a tree, you didn't want them to go out in the rain, that kind of thing.

**ANNI:** But I always say, be careful, drive careful.

**INT**: Were you always nervous about them?

**ANNI**: Yes. I was very nervous. Him too, because we would be sitting by the window when they came home from a date or something. It's emotional.

**INT**: Who made the decisions about the children?

**ANNI**: We both made decisions.

**INT**: Together.

**IZZY**: We made decisions. We talked about it. It wasn't enough time to make decisions in our house.

**ANNI:** What do you mean not enough time?

**IZZY:** They grew out fast and they left early.

**ANNI**: She was nineteen.

**INT**: But nineteen is still nineteen years.

**IZZY**: But you see what happened here. But we didn't want to go into aggravation in our house. And things happened to get aggravated. When a girl nineteen says, "I'm in love," and you want to try to hold her back, to get an education, or she was sick and he was saving her life, and this winds up, I'm in love, I want to get married, nineteen, and this brings confusion and aggravation and misunderstandings between each other, and okay, then the other one gets engaged and she says my wedding next year and all of the sudden she changes her mind and she wants it in six months. The decisions...They didn't go out with boys. My son met a girl, they met in Israel on an ulpan, came back.

**ANNI**: He was only seventeen, he was going six years with her.

**IZZY**: She didn't let him go anymore.

**INT**: So all three children met their spouses young.

**IZZY**: Young, and this is it, finished. And we didn't have a say.

**ANNI**: My son was going to college and everything.

**IZZY**: We didn't have the say to persuade them, go out with different boys, get a different opinion, a different view, a different feeling. This we couldn't persuade, this we couldn't fight.

**ANNI:** They had their mind, somehow.

**IZZY:** Because to fight her, or to fight me, it didn't pay, because they did what they wanted to.

**INT**: Do you think they made wise decisions?

**IZZY**: Their luck. Zeihe mazel. Wie sagt er bei Yidn: Az zei az sehr schlossen.

**INT**: But you didn't answer my question.

**IZZY**: No, I didn't.

**INT**: You don't want to.

**IZZY**: No. Because they made their decision for their life. For them it's wise.

**ANNI**: The middle one is doing very well. She has from everything, kein ayin hora, her husband is a good husband; my son is doing well, he provides his wife. And the older one: [Yiddish].

**IZZY**: They made their decision.

**INT**: I know that, but you're allowed to have an opinion.

**IZZY**: They didn't ask me for my opinion.

**INT**: It doesn't matter. You can have an opinion sitting in a closet.

**IZZY**: I am happy as long as they are happy. They didn't come to me, they didn't ask me for anything. And they're happy, I'm happy. I want to see the best for them and for their grandchildren and for everybody. So I am happy to see that they are happy, that's all.

**INT**: How did you deal with their difficulties? You said you had a daughter who was sick?

**IZZY**: She was sick.

**ANNI**: She was eighteen. She had a pain in the chest. And the doctors said that she had her adrenalin enlarged. So they operated on her.

**IZZY**: She was operated, we gave private nurses, and we gave the best, and then it becomes a different situation. And, "I'm in love."

**ANNI:** She got married. She wasn't even well yet.

**IZZY:** He was in the Air Force, in Vietnam. His father put into my daughter's head that he is going to be in the service, that they will travel all over the world, and she was very naive, and the love...

**ANNI:** Takes over.

**IZZY:** Takes over.

**INT**: Jewish boy?

**IZZY**: Yes. The love takes over, the parents made the decisions and we couldn't stay and fight -- a chassene mit a schwartze...you don't want to lose your daughter, or you don't want to lose your son. So we didn't.

**ANNI**: We made them all beautiful weddings. I made my daughter-in-law the wedding. Her mother didn't want to make it. So we had a shower, a wedding, everybody.

**INT**: How about younger children, and younger problems? How did you react to your children when they came home and they had their own problems: This friend wouldn't talk to them and...you know.

**ANNI**: This we didn't have no problem.

**IZZY**: They had friends. They made friends.

**INT**: The children confided in you, they talked to you. And they're all in the area, right?

**IZZY**: Yes, they live right in Huntingdon Valley, one in Bala.

**INT**: What goals did you have for them? Education?

**ANNI**: The most was education to them.

**INT**: What else did you want, did you want them to live in Israel, did you want them to be religious?

**ANNI**: I wanted them to be right where I live. I wanted them to be more religious than they are, I wanted them to live where I live.

**INT**: What are they, Conservative?

**ANNI**: Conservative, Shaare Shamayim, he takes the boys. He should know what he is talking about. So this I'm very happy about.

**INT**: So you wanted them to have religion, and you wanted them to have school, and parnosseh.

**IZZY**: And they all married into Jewish faith.

**ANNI**: Yes. This is the most important thing.

**IZZY**: That's what bothered me. That's what I worried about. So far, so good.

**ANNI**: This is so many years back, and you're still worried.

**IZZY**: I still worry about grandchildren.

**ANNI**: Survivors am goyim scheutzim and everything.

**INT**: Are the grandchildren in Jewish schools?

**IZZY**: Yes, they go to Shaare Shamayim to the afternoon school, my son and my daughter's children.

**INT**: Shaare Shamayim is in the Northeast.

**ANNI**: Yes. They live in Huntingdon Valley. The older one is in Bala.

**INT**: So you are mostly pleased and satisfied with how you raised your children?

**ANNI:** I think so.

**IZZY**: We don't regret. I don't regret.

**INT**: So you don't have an overwhelming heartache about them.

**ANNI**: About what?

**INT**: Well, some children get divorced. You don't have a deep...

**IZZY**: No, thank G-d for that. No parents want to see that.

**INT**: How do you think, each of you, what did you do with the memories of the war, the memories of your experiences, the memories of the family that you lost -- what did you do with that over the 45 years? What did you do with that? Here you are, it's a new family; it's a new life.

**ANNI:** Life goes on.

**INT:** So what do you do with it?

**ANNI**: You went on. You had no time for this.

**INT**: Did you do it because you were a robot?

**IZZY**: No. Let me explain to you. The past cannot be erased from our minds. The atrocities will not be erased from our minds. During building a new life, raising a family, our minds are with the Holocaust, and as much as we could we relate the story to the children. But as a survivor, and each time anybody had a simcha and we were sitting at the table and eating rib steaks, then the concentration camp was on top of the table. And this is what keeps us going.

**INT**: So do you enjoy the simcha l00%, or 70%?

**ANNI**: 70%.

**IZZY**: We talk about the concentration camps and when the band starts to play, we go up and we dance. And when we come back, "Oy, I didn't tell you that this guy was with me on the same bunk, laying on the same..."

**INT**: Okay. You're a talented man. Be a psychologist for one moment, and you tell me how you could do that. Do you have a switch in the back of you mind?

**IZZY**: I mentioned that before. That it was never erased, and cannot be erased, it will never be erased. That's why I'm on the speaker's bureau in Philadelphia.

**INT**: It **shouldn't** be erased. But how do you cope with that?

**IZZY**: I have to cope with it. I just told my children. I said to my children, I get up at l2:00 in midnight and I say to her in the morning, "How could I live through that?"

**INT**: Do you have nightmares?

**IZZY**: Yes. I have nightmares.

**INT**: Do you have nightmares? Is it better or worse than it used to be?

**IZZY**: Same thing. We will never erase our problem. As much as you can talk to me, and as much you can ask me that question, it's in me, it's in my brain, it's in my body, I am soaked with the past. I am soaked with anti-Semitism. Through all my blood is boiling in me when we listen to the news about Israel. When we hear about that Saddam will drop a bomb on Tel Aviv. It's boiling in us. And if you talk to the next guy he don't care.

**INT**: Boiling with anger, or boiling with fear?

**IZZY**: With fear and feelings and anger. Everything is in us.

**INT**: And you're also angry.

**ANNI**: Same thing.

**INT**: Because it looks like Izzy gets angry and you cry. That's what it looks like.

**IZZY**: We share with the feelings, we share with the anger.

**ANNI**: But if you talk with some of the survivors, they became Americanized and they just pushed things away. I talk to them and, they think that I'm stupid, I'm sick.

**INT**: Like what, give me an example?

**ANNI**: If I cry about something I see on television -- something that hurts me. On the cruise, we went to Jamaica, and some kind of island there, it killed me, the way the kids come around and beg, that they don't have what to eat. I can't go no more like that, see? And people enjoy it.

**INT**: So what do the other survivors say to you?

**ANNI**: They said, "Oh, don't be like this, get harder, don't worry, what can you do, not everything you can take hard."

**IZZY**: We came Tuesday to a luncheon together in our organization, and I just sat down with three men, and here is Israel on top of the agenda. See, until the day I die, my worries about our Jewish life and our Jewish future will be with me. You can't take it away. We suffered too much, we went through too much in our lives.

**ANNI**: And there are people, they will not talk about Israel, they will not give a dollar. They push things away.

**INT**: Are you talking about survivors?

**ANNI**: Survivors. Jews. And Jewish survivors, too, I don't know. But they will not. I don't know, there is something in them. I feel, what kind of person is this guy? What is he, a stone, made from stone, he has no feeling? What is this? I'm talking to him and...

**IZZY:** That's the way it is.

**INT**: Do you believe in the basic goodness of people?

**ANNI**: Yes, I do. There are good people.

**INT**: No matter what religion?

**ANNI**: Yes, that's right. Because me and Izzy we had a flat tire, and a couple came out of the car, a gentile, and they fixed his tire.

**INT**: Do you believe in justice?

**ANNI**: Yes, I do believe in justice. If somebody does something wrong they should be punished.

**INT**: Do you believe that there is justice? Do you believe that people get their punishments?

**ANNI**: They **should** get. Not they get, but they **should** get, and they should be punished. Not like they just raped a girl, and the guy is on the loose. What is this? That's not the way to do it. He should be punished. He should be put in jail.

**INT**: Do you hate Germans?

**ANNI**: Very much so.

**IZZY**: No, that word hate is in different stages. I was asked, I was called up by an Inquirer man and Eugene Ormandy's place was taken by a German in the Academy of Music, the conductor, he's German. And he was during the war a young kid. And I was asked, there are a lot of Jewish people in Philadelphia, and they will not go to the Academy? And my answer was, I don't know them well, I don't know what's best. So he said he wasn't, and his father wasn't in the SS. They were in the Wehrmacht. Well, how can I predict the hate? If I don't know the man's past. If you would call me up and ask about Waldheim, the guy did.

**INT**: Would you go to Germany to be a tourist?

**IZZY**: I don't know if I would. I have friends in Germany. Good friends. We passed Germany. We stopped in Frankfurt.

**ANNI**: I couldn't wait a moment to get in the bus and they should take us away.

**INT**: A German neighbor wouldn't make you...

**ANNI**: But then you have to go back again. The one that was during the war, and the one that was a young age...

**INT**: But you didn't come out with a general hatred of Germans.

**ANNI**: No, I don't think so.

**IZZY**: There were righteous people, good people. She forgot to tell you that an old German used to throw in the trash can a piece of bread for her.

**ANNI**: In the concentration camp.

**IZZY**: An old German. Old wasn't old or young. They lived in fear. They lived in a fear. The German population, the civilized human being, they knew that Hitler was doing wrong. If they

would have caught him, put the piece of bread, she picked it up and anybody would have seen it, he would have been persecuted to go to death.

**ANNI**: I had two big weaving machines. And I was sick, I had rheumatic fever, and I couldn't let the machine go...

**INT**: I know the story, and he fixed it.

**IZZY**: So it's not that I hate Germans. I am afraid of them, but history shouldn't repeat itself. This is what bothers me. I am afraid of a repeating history. This is what I am worried about. But I cannot go out -- kinder vas zehnen nicht gewehen during the war -- I can't go and prosecute that child.

**INT**: What about Poles?

**IZZY**: Poles! I **hate**. If it's young, even if it's a year old, I hate. Because they give them the poison right away. The day they are born, and they start to understand, they give them the word Jew, Zhid.

**ANNI**: They don't need those Jews. Believe me.

**INT**: So you feel the same way. Both of you hate.

**ANNI**: Since I was little I was hurt from them.

**IZZY**: We were in Poland and we were in Kielce, and we were trying where to find out where to go to the cemetery to find the grave, a mass grave of a mass pogrom, and if it would have been an old Pole, and the people that were born right after the war, you ask them a question, the answer was anti-Semitic. Them I hate because they are like a piece of cabbage, dumb. Dumb people. You have the remarks from Walesa. You have the guy who's supposed to run for President. He accused them of being of Jewish descent. So here you go.

**INT**: Okay, we have some forms to do. [Discussion of filling out forms]

(END OF INTERVIEW)