

## Zoya Shapochnik



This is me (the first to the left) in the dining room at Hesed during the first Pascal seder. Fira is next to me. I didn't know her very well, she just sat next to me at the table. The picture was taken in Kishinev in 2003.

When I start thinking about my life, I can't say why I'm alone, or why I remained single. First of all, I was very shy and had an inferior complex and secondly, I wanted the maximum. I fell in love with interesting people, who paid no attention to me, and those who wanted to date me weren't interesting in my view. That's life.

Nonetheless, I'm not lonely now. I am a volunteer at Hesed. I work there once a week, hand out medicine and food. I have new friends and feel needed. I hold lectures in the daytime center. Here I hold a lot of lectures on different topics: poets, writers and on the places I've seen. I'm so happy to hear the words of gratitude for things I'm doing for people.

Now my life is multisided, on one hand there was the break up of the Soviet Union. It was a catastrophe for me, who liked to travel all over the huge USSR and who had friends in different parts of the country. Besides, there was a slump in the economy, and all of us became indigent and depending on the 'alms' from Hesed. On the other hand, there was a real opportunity to revive Jewish culture. I'm not a religious person. I don't know either the language or the traditions, and it's too late for me to change my views, but it's good for the youth to be interested in the history of their people and culture. It's so good that they go to the synagogue. A lot of different cultural and charitable organizations emerged uniting the Jews, helping them to survive both materially and spiritually. Recently, there was a festival of klezmer music in Kishinev. We marked the anniversary of Israeli independence in the best palace of Kishinev. The Ambassador of Israel and the President of Moldova were present. The anthem of Israel was played. There were fireworks in the city. I was happy. The only thing I regret is that my parents didn't live to see that.