

Maria Zabozlaeva



I, Maria Zabozlaeva, at the embankment in Netania, Israel. This photo was taken during my visiting my brother Michael in 1998.

I finished the Pediatric Faculty at the Medical College in 1953. Upon graduation from Medical College I worked as a doctor in a children's hospital, nursery school and was a district doctor.

My husband Yuri and I kept moving from one place to another where Yuri's military service required. In 1952 our daughter Sophia was born. From Balashov we moved to Cheliabinsk [about 1600 km from Moscow]. My husband finished his service in Feodorovka village Kustanai region [over 1700 km from Moscow] in Kazakhstan where our son was born in 1957. I named him Fyodor after father my husband.

We returned to Saratov in 1961. In 1961 I went to work in the apartment of postnatal pathology in children's infectious hospital #2. In 1962 - 1964 I finished a residency course and became a neonatologist. I worked there from 1961 till 1995. Our chief doctor was a Jew and so were many of my colleagues and I didn't face any negative attitudes at work. I had a happy life with my husband. We liked going to the cinema, theaters and concerts in the Philharmonic. We had a car and went to Mineralnyie Vody in the Caucasus on vacation. In 1968 we traveled to the Baltic Republics and Leningrad. In 1977 we made a tour of Western Ukraine and Moldova. We visited Kishinev, Yassy, Morshansk and Lvov. We had few friends and celebrated Soviet and family holidays with them. We had parties and sang Soviet songs and Russian folk songs. We didn't sing any Jewish songs.

Like my mother, I tried to have no political subjects discussed in the family. Of course, we heard or read in newspapers about the 'spring in Prague', dissidents and departure of many Jews to Israel in early 1970s and that many Soviet citizens were deprived of their Soviet residency, but I didn't share my opinions about it. I believe that people always do what they think is right. My husband died in 1973. I've never considered moving to another country. I cannot imagine living without my family, friends or acquaintances. I had many Jewish colleagues and we always supported each other. We enjoyed working together and never had any problems due to our Jewish identity.

I do not take part in public activities in the Jewish community. I make contributions to the synagogue on holidays. They have a special charity box: tzdaki. The same with Hesed. I have always had their support and assistance when after surgery I needed help and Hesed sent me an attendant to look after me. They always send me gifts and greetings. I understand that I didn't do anything big for them, but they still help me just because I am a Jew. I didn't feel my Jewish identity at work or at home. Our Jewish way of life in the family ended when grandfather Semyon died. However, our mother always tried to have celebrations on holidays, but we never spoke Yiddish at home. I didn't face any oppression. Probably because I had a Russian husband. However, I am glad to have this feeling of my Jewish identity, I'm now proud as a Jew.

In 1995 I went to Israel at the invitation of my brother Michael. I traveled all over the country: Eilat, Beer Sheva and Haifa. I was greatly impressed, though I was very unhappy about Tatiana's condition. I accompanied her to hospitals and clinics and gave moral support to her. I stayed three months in Israel when I realized that I was eager to go home. I knew then that I would never come to live in Israel, regardless of how willing was Michael to convince me to move to Israel. I have grown roots into my homeland.