

Olga Bernstein With Her Second Husband Grigoriy Levin



This is a photo of me and my second husband Grigoriy Levin. This photo was taken when we were visiting our son Konstantin in Berlin, 1995.

I worked at the evening school, taught geography. My husband went on a spree in the early 1960. When I got to know that he was seeing another woman I said: 'That's it. Get packed and out of here'. I divorced him. I was alone for a long time. I retired in 1975. I receive a pension, but I don't know how I would live if it weren't for my children.

Since 1978 I've lived with my second husband Grigoriy Levin. He was born in 1916 in Uman [about 200 km from Kiev]. We are some distant relatives. Grigoriy finished a military pilot school. He was a military pilot and served in different locations. I've known him since 1940. He was at the New Year party with his brothers at our home. Then we went different ways. In 1974 we met in hospital by chance. I was visiting my relative and he came to see his wife. In 1975 Grigoriy's wife died. They had no children. By the time we met he was a pensioner. He lived alone for a long time before he began to visit me. We've been together for 25 years. Our children love us and we love them. They help and support us as much as they can. We have a much better life now when we are old. We were always hard up. Our children have grown up and became good specialists. They support us. We are eager to socialize and we like coming to Hesed. Whenever they invite us we are happy to go there to socialize with people. We attend lectures about Jewish traditions, mainly before holidays. We also celebrate Saturday there. We've learned to celebrate it at home. We like it. We didn't know many things before; the regime stole much from us. That we studied in Jewish schools doesn't fill in the gaps, but it was this way at this period of time when they destroyed churches and synagogues.

We have friends. Unfortunately, we don't meet often; they have walking problems and so do Grisha [Grigoriy] and I, but we talk on the phone in the morning and in the evening. We love life and perhaps our long life - I am 83, and he is 87, perhaps this love of life and that other people come to see us and do not forget us, perhaps this has been given to us from above. We do many things about the house. I can lie down to rest and then get up and continue the housework. Grigoriy goes shopping. We do our cooking and washing, we do everything together. This helps us to live longer.

I was in America in 1994, I lived there three months and my husband and I have visited our son in Germany a few times. My relatives ask me: 'Why are you staying?' I say: 'I want to be buried near Mother, there is place near her!' I want to live here where I was born and studied.