

# Molka Mirskaya With Children At The Jewish Kindergarten In Kishinev



This is me in the center with children at the Jewish kindergarten, where I worked as a kindergarten teacher. The picture was taken in Kishinev in 2002.

My husband and I didn't observe religious traditions during the Soviet times. However, we went to my parents for Pesach. My mother always had matzah. My mother used to light candles on Fridays, and fasted during Yom Kippur. My parents always spoke Yiddish, so I know my mother tongue very well. I buried my parents at the Jewish cemetery according to the Jewish rite. An old Jew read a prayer.

I always wanted to be close to my kin. I knew that my true name was Molka. When in 1991 Moldova got its independence, and there was a passport exchange, I was given a certificate in an archive and changed my name from Maya to Molka. Now I am Molka again, both in my passport and in my other documents. I like my name Molka more than Maya, because it is connected to my people, my childhood and my parents.

I always took an interest in the fate of our people, Israel. During those years when Israel was spoken about as a hostile country, I got in touch with dissidents and read literature about Israel. I worshiped this country, and dreamt that one day we would live there. My husband was always against immigration. He loved Moldova and Kishinev, so I had to submit. However, my son's family immigrated to Israel in the early 1990s. I often go there. My son works in the field he is specialized in. His wife has also settled in.

Now we live in independent Moldova. Many people took the breakup of the Soviet Union very negatively. But I think there is something positive in it. After gaining independence, we have the conditions to develop our Jewish culture. We have Hesed, the association of the Jewish organizations, which unites all Jewish organizations. I also found my purpose there, working as a health visitor and a kindergarten teacher. I liked my job. My deteriorating health made me leave it. Now I am a Hesed client. My husband still works. He is the head of the automobile department in a

polyclinic. We often attend Hesed's events, celebrate holidays with our Jewish friends. Symbolic as it may be, after gaining independence and getting my original name back, I turned to the Jewish life and remembered my roots.