

Liya Epshteyn



This is me during my stay in Israel. The picture was taken in Ashdod in 1990. In 1985 I turned 55. In accordance with the Soviet law women can retire at that age. They did not hold me up at work saying that there are a lot of unemployed young teachers. Of course, now I look at it differently, but I was really worried at that time. When my parents died, I was scared to stay alone in that empty apartment. I was offered a job as an assessor in the peoples' court. I was not paid much, but it was OK combined with my pension. I worked there until the age of 65, as then I was not to resign in accordance with the legislation. People over 65 could work for the state. In the period of independence of Estonia, all employees were supposed to know the state language, that is, Estonian. The employees at the court knew me very well and treated me fairly. They recommended

me for a position of an Estonian teacher in the Tallinn municipal prison. I was supposed to teach the staff of the prison. Now this prison is a museum, but at that time it was a real prison, located in the old fortress. There was an air of despondence. I got unwell. When the doctors said that I had an oncological disease, I left work. Soon, my position was downsized. I went to Israel in 1990. My aunt Rahil and her husband were still alive. Their family immigrated to Israel in the 1970s and we met after almost 20 years of separation. We were so happy to see each other. My cousin Bella and her sons invited me to come for a visit. I traveled all over the country and saw a lot. I was greatly impressed by Israel. This is a country, where each stone is breathing with history. I liked the people living there. They love their country and work on its thriving and fight for it! Let God send peace to this land, let there be no bloodshed and death of people.