

Edith Umova



This is me in this photo. This photo was taken by a street photographer in Tallinn in 1985.

After finishing school I completed a course for an accounts clerk. My specialty was operator of computing and keyboard devices. I liked this vocation. There were huge computing machines that seemed like miraculous equipments to us then. It didn't take much effort for me to get trained. I had learned playing the piano, and my fingers were well-skilled.

After working for six years my condition started getting worse, and my doctor said I had to get another job. I went to the DOSAAF [Voluntary Society of Assistance to the Army, the Air Force and the Navy], a paramilitary society of the Soviet Union. I worked as an inspector at the amateur drivers' course. I was responsible for the document control and issuance of drivers' licenses. I liked this job and worked there till 1991, when the USSR broke up.

In the late 1980s my mother fell ill. I worked in the DOSAAF then. My workplace wasn't far from my home, and I came home to serve my mother lunch and sit with her a little. This was during the Soviet rule, when medical care was free of charge. Doctors and nurses from the polyclinic visited my mother to give her an injection or other necessary procedures. They cured my mother then, but a few years later she fell ill again. The Soviet Union collapsed, and things became more difficult. However, we finally managed to take my mother to the hospital and she recovered again. However, then one disease followed another. She had heart problems, or biliary calcula and then pneumonia. I no longer worked and had time to nurse my mother. My mother was at home and then in the hospital.

I guess it was only then that I felt myself as adult. Of course, I had some assistance, but I had to rely on myself and make decisions. My mother was ill for eight years, and spent her last days in hospital. She was bedridden, and it was hard for me to lift her from her bed to change the bed sheets. The Jewis