



## OFF-CAMPUS WORK:

*“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you!” John 13*

Usually I share with you the highlights of our work. But actually the very practical work, helping the survivors in their daily lives is still most important to the Ner Yaakov staff, especially because this is how our work started 27 years ago, having no other tools, but a willing heart, my hands and ... a „broom“!

Going on a very regular weekly basis, to the elderly, helping them with cleaning their homes, shopping for them or walking an Alzheimer patient, so the spouse can rest a bit, or sitting by hospital beds — all of this is still the most important part of building much deeper relationships. „A broom can be the key to their hearts!“

I love the home visits, and I will share about these as well, but being willing to do the „small jobs,“ in practical ways —which by the way are often very hard— will not leave the volunteers without a blessing. Do not think it is boring! Many painful, but also joyful matters come out, as we share our lives! Here are a few episodes:

When I brought Teresa the first time to Julia, we were greeted with wonderful home-made tomato soup. We talked about the soup and enjoyed the table fellowship, when Julia suddenly said: „Can I share something with you?“ Of course, we are always happy to listen and learn. After all we enjoyed the fellowship. „When I was with my father in the Ghetto, I looked into a room and saw a small girl with a cut-off-head! She was so young and thin, and until today I asked myself: „Did the Nazi kill her from animosity, or did he have pity on her, because she was so hungry? What do you think?“ All afternoon, as I drove down to Tel Aviv to visit Bella, I could not stop thinking of this “girl with the cut-off-head,” and as deeply disturbing as it was, I also was touched, because Julia recently called Ner Yaakov: her family!

Teresa tells Julia about her brother. „I also had a brother“, Julia said. Teresa asked: „Did he die?“ „No, he was killed!“ Teresa was shocked. Julia’s brother was just „taken from her!“

Teresa is cleaning Julia’s home and she shows her a knitted child’s jacket and says: „In my childhood my sister knitted such a jacket for a German family. As ‘salary’ she received only one loaf of bread!“ Sad and also angry she continued: „It was a lot of work, could they not have given her at least two loaves? When I think about it, it hurts today as it did then!“ About Ner Yaakov Julia says:

„I am a lonely woman and have found in Ner Yaakov a family. If I have problems, I know I can turn to them. It is so important for me and I am so thankful for the volunteers, these very nice young women!“

Mrs. Landau shares: „I do not find words, how to thank Ner Yaakov for the 12 years of help I have received. I appreciate this work and the volunteers who help so in love very much!“

At their weekly time together, as Mrs. Landau shared with Teresa about the Holocaust, she asked. „Mrs. Landau, what helped you in that time?“ Sadly she replied: „Nothing“, but afterwards she said: „Hope, hope helped me!“

Through the last home-visits we met a wonderful survivor, Miriam. One evening she called me and asked, if I could bring her to the Holocaust association. It was my big joy to do so, especially as I found out that she should receive a gift for her birthday.

„I have two birthdays,“ Miriam tells me. After the war it was unclear, when her real birthday was, she did not know exactly and had to first find out! It touches me so deeply as I am more aware, that many who survived as kids, had no one left to find out the most basic details of their own lives. Miriam says: „I have everything I need today, but the pain is still there, like a cut! Now I am already old, but I am still dreaming over again how I have to run away and somebody wants to shoot me. But I also had many miracles!“

This was just a short insight into our „off-campus-work.“ A friend wrote to me: „The work among the Holocaust survivors, I believe, is more than comforting, it is a witness against indifference!“

*“Now remain in my love!” John 15:9b*

Photos of a few survivors Ner Yaakov is helping regularly in their private homes:  
1. Bekka 2. Julia 3. Mrs. Landau 4. Benjamin 5. Lila 6. Bracha 7. Wilfried + Teresa

