

Sosana was born in a small town in [Czechoslovakia](#) in December 1926, the third youngest of seven children. Her early life was challenging, even before the outbreak of World War II. Sosana's mother, Eileen, passed away at the young age of 27 when Sosana was only three years old. Following her mother's death, Sosana was raised by her father and her maternal grandparents, whom she adored deeply. Despite the hardships, Sosana experienced an abundance of love and care during her childhood, and her grandparents were exceptional caregivers. Sosana recounted that she was fortunate never to face antisemitism growing up. Although there were no yeshivas in her town, she attended public school until the onset of World War II.

Sosana's father, Herschel, was in [Slovakia](#) during the Holocaust. Tragically, he was taken and killed in 1942 at the age of just 43. After Passover in 1944, Sosana, along with her siblings and grandparents, was forced into a ghetto in [Uyghur, Hungary](#). At one point, someone came from Budapest to take their mother out of the ghetto, believing she might be safer in a larger city. They asked if Sosana would like to go with them, but her grandmother insisted she stay with the family. Sosana remained with her grandparents and siblings in the ghetto until 1944.

When Sosana and her family left the ghetto, they had no idea what lay ahead. Sosana initially believed the Nazis would force them to work. Unfortunately, they were sent to [Auschwitz](#). Upon arriving at Auschwitz, Sosana endured unimaginable humiliation. She was forced to undress in front of male guards, her hair was completely shaved off, and she was made to wear clothing that did not belong to her. Afterward, she and her family members were barely recognizable to one another. In [Auschwitz](#), Sosana stayed with her sister, but they were separated from the rest of their siblings and grandparents. [Dr. Josef Mengele](#), the infamous SS physician, sought to separate Sosana from her sister as well. They were eventually parted, not to be reunited until after the war. Sosana later discovered that her sister had spent the remainder of the war working in a German ammunition factory.

From Auschwitz, Sosana was forced onto a train and sent to [Bergen-Belsen concentration camp](#). There, she was reunited with a cousin and assigned to grueling labor, cutting down trees in the forest and carrying them on her shoulders. Despite the harsh conditions, Sosana never gave up hope. She always believed she would survive. One day, Sosana and her cousin fell ill and felt too weak to work. They were sent to see a female Jewish doctor in [Bergen-Belsen](#). The doctor warned them that if they stopped working, they would likely end up on a stretcher, dead. Though initially angry, Sosana later acknowledged that this doctor's advice saved her life. Each morning, Sosana and the other prisoners had to wait at a gate to be sent to work. One day, they stood for hours,

waiting for the gate to open. That afternoon, an American soldier arrived and announced that the war was over and they were to return to their barracks. Bergen-Belsen had been liberated. In the aftermath of liberation, many young girls died due to overeating the food provided by the Americans. Sosana and her cousin, determined to survive, ate only cereal during this time, avoiding the excesses that claimed so many lives.

After liberation, Sosana returned to Czechoslovakia in search of surviving family members. She later learned the devastating news that her grandparents and siblings were killed on their first day in [Auschwitz](#). However, her father Herschel's first cousin and her husband had survived the war. They took Sosana, along with six or seven other girls, into their home. It was during this time that Sosana met her husband, to whom she was married for sixty years. He shared his harrowing story of survival during the Holocaust. Forced into labor, he was later made to endure a grueling death march toward the end of the war. At one point during the march, he decided he could go no further. Despite the risk of being killed by the Nazis, he hid in a pile of hay to avoid continuing the march. For several days, he stayed hidden in the hay without food, water, or access to a bathroom, knowing the Nazis were searching for him. Eventually, he emerged and made his way home. Just a few weeks later, the war ended, and he was free. Sosana and her husband built a life together after the war, a testament to their resilience and hope in the face of unimaginable hardships.

Sosana and her husband had their first child in Czechoslovakia before eventually moving to Israel, where they welcomed their second child. After living in Israel for about ten years, the family relocated to Brooklyn, New York, and later settled in Monsey, New York.

Sosana and her husband never shared the full extent of their experiences during the Holocaust with their children or grandchildren, only exchanging a few details with each other. However, Sosana eventually opened up to her granddaughter after she attended a yeshiva in Israel and participated in a trip to commemorate those who perished in Auschwitz. Sosana's advice to younger generations is simple yet profound: listen to your parents.