

Oral History Kosovo

Narrator: I was depressed after giving birth to my son, so, when my son turned six months old, after he turned six months old, there were two deaths in my husband's family. His grandmother and his uncle, who lived with us. So, they died within a week and my son was little, so one death after another, and as a bride, I was horrified, I had never seen, you know, never had death in the family.

And I was scared and, when the second death happened, people told sad stories, events, and I was depressed. I was very depressed, I went to the doctor, to the psychologist, everywhere. I was breastfeeding my son, they said, "Stop breastfeeding." But I never accepted getting therapy. Once they gave me therapy, I tried to use it. I took the first pill, and I had a headache for three days, I couldn't get up from the bed. I said I will never take it again.

I had that headache after only taking one pill. I said, "No, I will try my hardest to pass this." The only thing that gave me strength was my son. So, it was, when I was at my lowest, every time I remember I got emotional, when I was at my lowest the moment I held him, he gave me strength (voice trembling). So much strength, I don't know, I said that I will live only for him. I was always scared that I would die the next day (cries), I wouldn't be alive. And I felt uneasy, anxious, I can't explain how I felt.

So, I felt like that for around six months. For a month, I only stayed at my mother's house, I couldn't go to my husband's, because the moment I went inside that house I thought I was going to go crazy. I stayed with my son for a month at my mother's, that's why I'm so close to him, and I feel sorry for him about everything, because in moments when I needed it the most, he was the one who gave strength.

I take care of him even today, and sometimes I think maybe he, I thought that I fed him with milk when I was depressed and my son is... I mean breastfed him, and my son is always anxious like... he still had that feeling, he isn't that kind of a child, he is very quiet, but he is scared of everything. So, when my grandfather died two years ago, my son was also something like that but he was a child, he couldn't explain it exactly. Maybe he was scared and didn't have anything, I came after three days, he was looking for his grandfather because he loved him a lot.

He was in first grade but he understood some things more or less, and he would wake up at night and say, "Mother, will you die like *Bac*?" That's what he called his grandfather. I said, "No, Honey, no, people die when they get old." My husband was working, his work sent him to a training about blueberries to Germany, and, at that time, I stayed at my mother's house for a week. When he came

back from school, he said, "Mom, I want to buy a toy, I want to buy a toy." You know, he cried. I said, "Let's go out and buy it." The moment we left the door, it was just the two of us.

I said, "Lon, did you really want to buy a toy, or did you want to go out?" "Mom, I just wanted to get out of the house because I feel like crying, will you die?" So, he had it in his head all the time. We both went crying, when we came back, he would get distracted by the toy, I would still cry. It hurt here, some kind of pain, and I thought to myself, "If I were to die, what would he do?" You know, I was also scared, so much, every morning when I would wake up, I would touch myself, am I alive, am I dead?

Until one night, I had a dream that maybe it was a sign from God (laughs), I had a dream that I flew, I flew and fell into a hole, and I was holding my son and the angels said, "We have to take you." I said, "Don't because my son will go crazy, he can't live, he will go crazy without me." Then the other angel said, "Leave her because her child can't handle it." And they went away and I woke up then, from that moment that fear went away. Maybe God sent me a sign to stray me from this bad habit. But these were two of the hardest periods of time, because people can handle anything, but depression is hard.