

Sam Meister

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Photos by Seema Marwaha

Sam is a 97-year-old widower, retired business man and Holocaust survivor.

I was born in Romania. The day my parents and I were rounded up to be taken away, I refused to go. I don't know why they just let me go. My parents died at Auschwitz. My brother



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was also killed during the war. At the end of the war, only my sister, older brother and I were left.

The love of my life was also sent to Auschwitz. I didn't know she was alive until it was liberated. The Russians sent word she was sick with typhus and taken to Russia for treatment. When she came home after the war, we got married right away.

I arrived in Halifax in 1948. We were assigned to settle in Winnipeg, but we got off the train early in the big city — Toronto — and lived there ever since.

We had a wonderful life, my wife and I. I loved her. We raised two

children and I built three successful businesses. We travelled all over the world together. I was able to speak to her, tell her things. And she always knew just what to do. She died in 2007. I miss her every day.

Marizel looked after my wife before she died and now she looks after me. She has cared for me for almost 15 years. I need her. She has become like family to me and I am also very close with her family. She gives more of herself to me than to her family because I am number one. God forbid that anything should happen to her.

I am 97, but I'm not interested in dying. I don't know why I was spared during the war and I am still alive today. My siblings have all died. I want to live. I want to be here to fulfill everybody's requests. Why should I go out during COVID and take a chance? I'd rather stay at home.

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