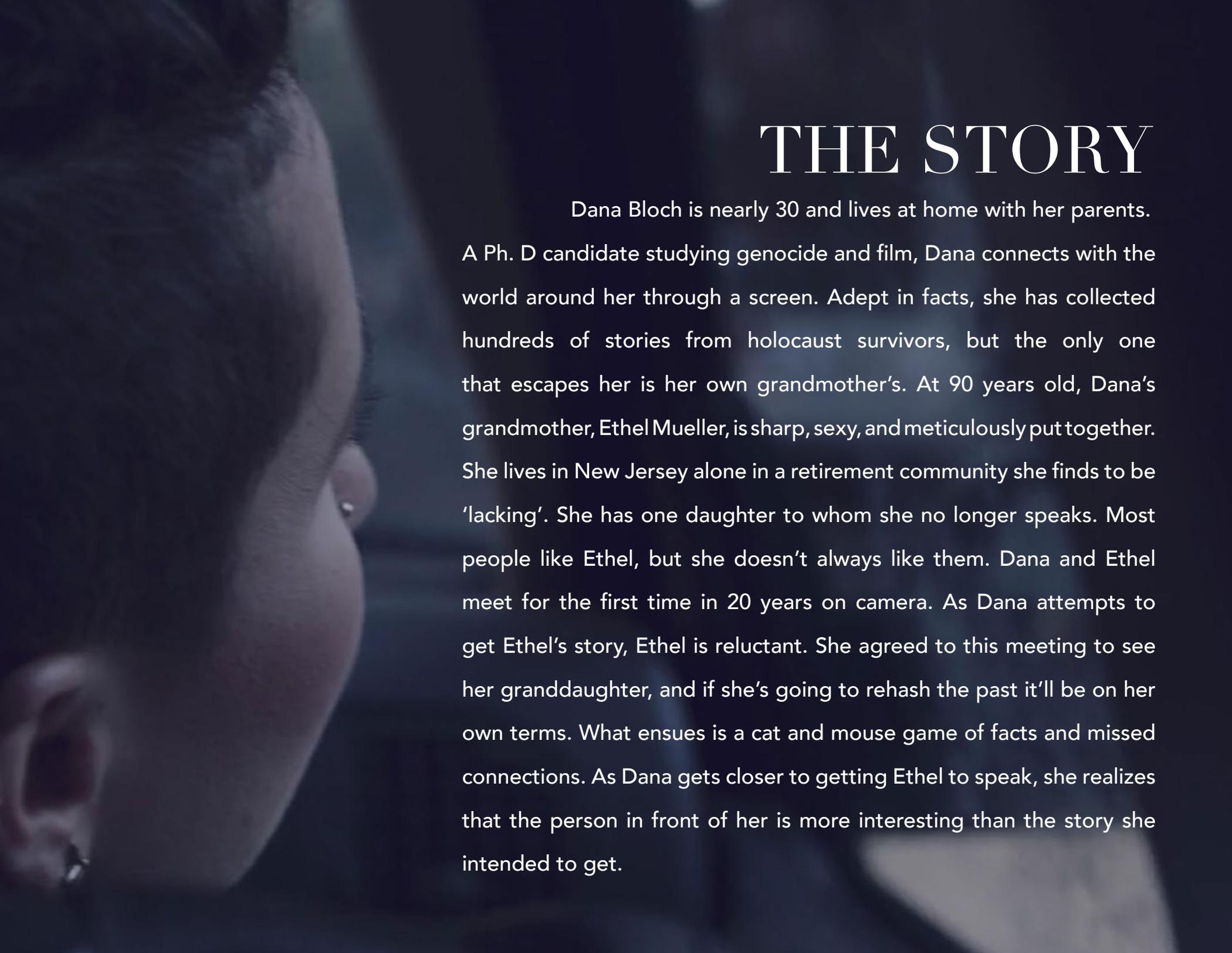




OMIA

"OMIA" DIRECTED BY DANIELLA RABBANI. WRITTEN BY MELISSA JANE OSBORNE
LYNN COHEN DANIELLA RABBANI TIBOR FELDMAN ELIZA FOSS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DANIEL S. BIKIN DANIELLE ELIAV AN EVENING SQUARE PRODUCTION EDITED BY JESSE RIUTTILLA



THE STORY

Dana Bloch is nearly 30 and lives at home with her parents. A Ph. D candidate studying genocide and film, Dana connects with the world around her through a screen. Adept in facts, she has collected hundreds of stories from holocaust survivors, but the only one that escapes her is her own grandmother's. At 90 years old, Dana's grandmother, Ethel Mueller, is sharp, sexy, and meticulously put together. She lives in New Jersey alone in a retirement community she finds to be 'lacking'. She has one daughter to whom she no longer speaks. Most people like Ethel, but she doesn't always like them. Dana and Ethel meet for the first time in 20 years on camera. As Dana attempts to get Ethel's story, Ethel is reluctant. She agreed to this meeting to see her granddaughter, and if she's going to rehash the past it'll be on her own terms. What ensues is a cat and mouse game of facts and missed connections. As Dana gets closer to getting Ethel to speak, she realizes that the person in front of her is more interesting than the story she intended to get.

OUR STORY

We as a generation document everything; we connect through “likes” instead of conversations. We ‘repost’ instead of listening, instead of seeing those around us. In this film, we want to explore an intergenerational conversation, and what it means to stop and really connect in the face of your past.

WHY THIS STORY NOW?

When I was a child, my grandparents wouldn't share details of their survival story with the family. My grandfather would try to open up here and there, but I would quickly protect him from his memories and change the subject. I didn't know then how healing it might have been for both me and him. He's gone now, and I'll never know how he managed to make it through the Holocaust, or, perhaps more importantly, how he built a life and family after losing everything. As an adult, I still have so much to learn from my grandmother, who is now 94 years old. I'm coming to understand that I can't make her tell me, but that doesn't stop me from feeling like I must know what she went through. I want to know her better, and I want to know what strength might exist in me through her. I, like many in my generation, often find the world to be an overwhelming place, even as I swim in abundance. This story is about the third generation survivor's guilt and the realization that connecting in the present may relieve the pain of the past.

~Daniella Rabbani (Director)



IS THIS A HOLOCAUST FILM?

OMA is about family, the narratives we create, and what lies in between. This is a short film about a woman who has survived the Holocaust. While the Holocaust is one of the many defining moments in her life, it doesn't make up the totality of who she is. Whatever our backgrounds, the narratives of each generation shape the next, whether they are given voice or not. While the Holocaust has a prominent impact in both of our characters lives, our film asks; What's at stake when sharing your truth?

~Melissa Jane Osborne (Writer)

DANIELLA RABBANI

Story by / Director / Dana

Daniella Rabbani is actress, filmmaker and musician. The New York Times says, "The sassy, raspy voiced Daniella Rabbani will leave you twirling in the streets". You may twirl from such TV appearances as The Americans (FX), Laughs (FOX), Triangle Fire (PBS) or in films like Appropriate Behavior (Sundance Film Fest/ HBO) or Be Here Now-ish (TriBeCa Film Fest/ Ora TV). She's performed Off Broadway and around the world headlining at Jazz at Lincoln Center and others. Her directorial debut film, OMA, is currently on the festival circuit and her digital series COMING! is a Sundance New Voices Lab finalist. More at DaniellaRabbani.com.



New York Observer

"I particularly admired Daniella Rabbani's sympathetic, utterly alive performance"

Pittsburgh Post Gazette

"Comic relief came in the form of Daniella Rabbani... the living embodiment of fun, often sensuous music."

Yahoo News

"Rabbani is a third generation Holocaust survivor... She comes to share songs and stories in a language that was heard all over the streets of Warsaw."

LYNN COHEN

Ethel

Lynn Cohen is an American actress best known for playing Magda in the HBO series *Sex and the City* and the 2008 film of the same name, as well as its 2010 sequel, and Mags in *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. She has also played Judge Elizabeth Mizener several times on *Law & Order*, and has appeared in the movies *Munich*, *Vanya on 42nd Street*, *Synecdoche, New York*, and *Eagle Eye*.



MELISSA JANE OSBORNE

Screenwriter/Associate Producer

Melissa Jane Osborne is an actor and writer who has worked with Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Samuel French Festival, NYFringe, EST-LA, Killer Films, The Barrow Group and Stella Adler Studio of which she is an alum. She is a two time O'Neill National Playwrights Conference semi finalist. Her work in new media spans from writing on the first web-series The Burg, to creating the first interactive scripted iPhone game Campus Crush for the Episode App. She is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, a member of the Barrow Group's FAB Women, and IAMA Theatre Co. Her graphic novel the Wendy Project is being published by Papercutz, Super Genius in July 2017 and is currently being developed as a television series. Her first feature film is set to be produced in Fall 2017.

ZOE WHITE

Cinematographer

Zoe divides her time between New York and Sydney, collaborating with a diverse roster of directions and production creatives whom share her passion for innovative and effective storytelling. She studied at North Carolina School of the Arts and the Australian Film Television and Radio School, and trained along mentors including Vilmos Zsigmond ASC, Newtown Thomas Sigel ASC, Laszlo Kovacs ASC and James Chressanthis ASC. She has received a Golden Tripod and numerous awards from the Australian Cinematography Society, represented the United States at the Budapest Kodak Cinematography Masterclass, and won the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Cinematography Internship. Zoe shoots all kinds of projects - long and short form - she just completed her third narrative feature, has shot music videos for Sigur Ros, The National, Phantogram and Jessica Mauboy, and worked with clients including Google, Sony, McDonald's, and the Barack Obama Foundation.

MIKE HAYHURST

Producer

Mike Hayhurst is a producer and director for theatre and film. Recent film credits include work on *Lightening Bugs in a Jar* (premiered at Cannes 2015); *The Trip to Bountiful*; and *A Day Late and a Dollar Short* for Lifetime. He spent four years as an Assistant/Associate at Ostar Enterprises (Rizzoli & Isles, TNT; *Beauty and the Beast*, CW; *Company Town*- pilot, CW; *Nothing to Hide*, directed by Neil Patrick Harris at Signature Theater; various Broadway projects).

New York theatre credits include: *Some Dead Bodies*; *King of Bohemia* (MITF, Winner: Outstanding Direction); *Mir*; *Love Thy Neighbour*. Mike was born and raised in the UK where his work included: *Titus*; *The Vikings* and *Darwin*; *Orvin- Champion of Champions*; *Zombie Prom*; *Ubu Roi*; *Burying Your Brother in the Pavement*. He was Assistant Director to Rupert Goold on his productions of *Hamlet*; *Faustus*; and *Paradise Lost*; and an Associate Director for *R.I.P.P. &'08* (Norway); *Crackers?* (Singapore and UK). He was also Plinther #733 in *One & Other* by Anthony Gormley (Trafalgar Square, London). www.eveningsquire.com

DANELLE ELIAV

Executive Producer

Danelle Eliav (Executive Producer) is an actress, producer, writer and director in theatre and film. Danelle is currently on the festival circuit with *Menashe* which premiered to rave reviews at Sundance and Berlin. Her short film *The Girl and the Spanish Boy* attended festivals worldwide, and won the Golden Sheaf Award for Best Drama at Yorkton Film Festival, the Rising Star Award at Canada International Film Festival and the Audience Award at the Festival Art Déco de Cinema, São Paulo, Brasil. She also participated in the Reykjavik International Film Festival Talent Lab 2012. Danelle produced Livia De Paolis' feature film *Emoticon ;)* which she also acted in alongside Carol Kane, Sonia Braga, Michael Cristofer, Daphne Rubin-Vega and Christine Ebersole.

LAUREN AVINOAM

Lauren Avinoam (LA Publicity) has worked at TIFF, Nashville Film Festival, Ouat Media Distribution (Oscar Winning Shorts Distributor), Let's Talk Entertainment (with clients including: Penn & Teller, The Late Dr. Maya Angelou, The Late Joan Rivers and more.)

Since 2009, she has been involved with the festival strategy and sales for 2 Oscar winning, 2 Oscar Nominated and 8 Oscar Shortlisted films. Films on the LA Publicity roster (guided by Lauren Avinoam) have screened at over 120 festivals internationally (including 85% of Oscar Qualifying festivals in the USA) due to her programming connections and insight into the festival market including niche and genre festivals.

JESSE RUUTTILLA

Editor

Jesse Ruuttilla is a filmmaker and actor. Notable credits include director (with Charlotte Hornsby) of Sunflower Bean's Easier Said, editor and VFX for Big Sean and Kanye West's All Your Fault, and a melange of credits on the features Elevate, Summer of Blood, Helvetica, and Redlegs.

SEED & SPARK

Seed and Spark is the crowdfunding campaign OMA is using for funding. It allows filmmakers to crowdfund and build their audience at any stage of a project. It allows projects to accept both contributions and rentals via a wishlist. Seed and Spark also partners with iTunes, Netflix, and Amazon to distribute the film after its festival run.



PANAVISION GRANT

We are thrilled to announce that from thousands of submissions Oma was selected for the PANAVISION NEW FILMMAKER'S GRANT. Panavision is the leading manufacturer for lenses in film and television, their equipment has been used in the production of everything from Spartacus, to The Breakfast Club, to Jurassic World. They have received numerous Oscars and Emmy's for their work in camera innovation, creating state of the art cameras that we will now use to film our project! Based on the merit of our script, and previous work of our team Panavision has chosen us to use their state of the art equipment free of charge. We are so honored to partner with Panavision, grateful for their gracious contribution to creating Oma, and proud to be part of their amazing history!



PRESS & LINKS

[ABOUT](#)

[CROWD FUNDING CAMPAIGN](#)

[MEET THE MUSE FOR OMA](#)

[MEET LYNN COHEN ON OMA](#)

[CONTACT](#)

[TWITTER](#)

[PRESS FOR OMA:](#)

[New Short Film to Explore Historical 'Burden' Shared
by 3rd-Generation Holocaust Survivors](#)

[Who Has a Right to Write What](#)

[Transforming a Powerful Trip into a Film: A
Conversation with Actress Daniella Rabbani](#)

[DECK DESIGN](#)

SCRIPT EXCERPT

INT. LOUNGE - RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - MOMENTS LATER

Ethel sits in a chair under the lights, Dana focuses them.

ETHEL

Do I look pretty?

Dana feigns a smile, as she shifts the lights. One light drops to the floor with a THUD.

DANA

Fu-ddd!

ETHEL

(smirks)

You look good.

Dana focuses and turns on her VIDEO CAMERA. We watch Ethel on the camera's monitor:

ETHEL (CONT'D)

Is your mother coming?

DANA

Not today.

ETHEL

Hmm...Always working.

Ethel stares at Dana fiddling with light stand.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

You're lucky, you have my mouth.

Dana smiles slightly as she walks behind the camera, she focuses it.

DANA (O.C.)

So before we start I just want to be sure you're clear as to what we're doing here today.

ETHEL

Yes. We're family. We talk.

She smiles knowingly.

RESEARCH

We know that certain things are genetic. That we cannot deny. But new studies have shown us that trauma also has an effect on descendants. As we read in the Scientific American:

“a new study looked at the descendants of the Holocaust survivors. Like their parents, many have low levels of cortisol, particularly if their mothers had PTSD. Yet unlike their parents, they have higher than normal levels of the cortisol-busting enzyme...The enzyme is usually present in high levels in the placenta to protect the fetus from the mother’s circulating cortisol. If pregnant survivors had low levels of the enzyme in the placenta, a greater amount of cortisol could make its way to the fetus, which would then develop high levels of the enzyme to protect itself.”

This means that many descendants of Holocaust survivors aren’t well equipped for starvation, and that they could be more susceptible to PTSD. These descendants could also be at a higher risk for “... age-related metabolic syndromes, including obesity, hypertension and insulin resistance, particularly in an environment of plenty.”

Every moment counts. Every second matters.

Elie Wiesel

READ MORE

Haaretz *“New Israeli study finds signs of trauma in grandchildren of Holocaust survivors”*

“Holocaust trauma includes extreme, difficult experiences, and it bears mention that survivors did everything they could to cope with these experiences. A strong majority of them managed to raise exemplary children and grandchildren, and I am full of admiration for them.”

The Guardian *“The trauma of Second Generation Holocaust Survivors”*

“Despite the horrific nature of the survivors’ wartime experiences, it is surely unreasonable to expect their children not to delve into that past, especially when it is declared taboo. Yet how justifiable is it for the postwar generation to claim, like Goldberg, that their parents’ history also belongs to them?”

Elmer Rich *“The Brain, Body, and Behavioral Effects of Holocaust Trauma Probably Curses Generations”*

“... descendants of the Holocaust survivors, like their parents, many have low levels of cortisol, particularly if their mothers had PTSD. Yet unlike their parents, they have higher than normal levels of the cortisol-busting enzyme.”

Marisa Fox-Bevilacqua *“...the Secret Life my Mother Kept Underground”*

“I had a hard time buying that the overprotective, domesticated Jewish mother and doctor’s wife I knew, forever clad in a corset and stockings, dressed in Nippon silk shifts and Ferragamo heels, her lips painted with generous strokes of hot pink lipstick, Revlon’s Fire & Ice, had been the same person who jumped out of airplanes, fired a Beretta and had smuggled bombs past the British.... But to me, she was like the name of her lipstick – at turns, red hot and chillingly cold, two people fighting within the same body.”

In our process of writing this script we wanted to place ourselves in the position of Dana, our main character. Beyond incorporating the work of our dramaturg Matt Freeman, reading books, and watching documentaries. Out of respect for survivors, we also wanted to hear their stories first hand, in whatever way they wished to share them with us. Before interviewing various survivors we met with Adeena Horowitz of Self Help, an organization that provides services and counseling to survivors, to best understand how to do our research in a way that was sensitive to the population we were trying to serve with this story. We also met with Dr. Patrycja Slawuta a specialist in genocide studies, and third generation survivor herself to discuss her work and how it was inspired by her family background. Beyond our formal research this film continues to open up conversation with friends and family who are third and second generation survivors who have share their experiences with us.