

Istvan: The Past - Transcript

(I can't guarantee this includes all small words and sounds spoken.)

Words within [] and in *italics* are spoken by the interviewer.

Part 1

Well, it's, it's um, well it's America, you know very interesting place. I've only been once but err it was pretty impressive coz it was right around 9/11. That was in 2001 when I visited. And err it was both shocking and frightening and...but even before 9/11, I spent like a month I think there. So I went on a scholarship, a conference and some research. I did some research at erm, at the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC. And err that was an interesting time. So, you know, the city was both very erm everyday, you know people were...I had different expectations of America based on my, you know, in the movies that I'd seen. [*but was it very different from the movies?*]...Very different. Well the city itself is very different from all the high-rises that you, coz basically building height in Washington is capped at the level of the, that memorial thing. The stick that sticks out of the ground. So you're not allowed to build skyscrapers or anything. And the centre is all government buildings. So it is very different i think than any other

city. But I didn't go to any other cities so. [*And so you spent all your time researching there?*] ...Yeah and making friends and meeting people and then getting scared to death with the attacks on 9/11. [*Did you see a noticeable change in the atmosphere after 9/11?*] ...Absolutely, yeah. Everybody just err umm flipped out the American flag after 9/11 and they were just, you know, angry, in shock. Either praying on the streets or you know, demonstrating their Americanness. It was a very big diff...very big shift in in yeah. [*Were you happy to come home? How long did you spend there in the end, a month?*] ...It was about a month and a half [*And were you happy to come home in the end?*] ...Err yes and no. I actually would've liked to stay. And I think if it were not for the events of 9/11 I might have seriously considered sticking around but then I could hardly get on a plane. I came back on the first Swiss Air flight and you know for a week or so it was just touch and go. You didn't know if there were gonna be any flights and when they were gonna be so. I was happy to get home safe. [*Yeah, yeah*]

Part 2: Used to

[*Ok, so the second part is, can you tell me something you used to do but don't do anymore? Why did you change and do you have any regrets, for example?*]

Yeah..I used to smoke basically. I was a smoker. For about 16-17 years. I have no regrets coz I enjoy smoking (Both laugh). [*Do you regret stopping?*] No, I don't regret stopping. I started having, you know, symptoms basically, it was affecting my health. So it was very tough to quit. It was, what do they call it, cold turkey, I think. [*You went cold turkey?*] Yeah, yeah. So I basically just put it down. It was very tough for a couple of months but I never regretted [*Were you asked by somebody close to you to stop, I mean or was it just a personal decision?*] ...Just a personal decision. I'd actually read a book on quitting smoking and it impressed me so much. [*Was that Allen Carr?*]...Nope. It was a different guy and a different method and err it just worked, yeah..for me.