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Title: Lois Shikami Interview
Narrator: Lois Shikami
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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AT: 00:38:23 Um one thing I want to ask you, because you had kind of alluded to you, you had mentioned, you know, that you were in prison, you know, at the assembly center listed in, you're still going to be going to prison but it might be better. Um, was that something as a, as a 10 year old that you were aware of or you know, like the fact that you and your family who was incarcerated, did you feel. How did you feel as a child? Did you understand or?

LS: 00:39:10 I didn't like it, but at that age being, being with my whole family, that meant a great deal and with my friends and their families, even if none of us really wanted to be there, we'd rather be outside of camp, I think there was a feeling of security, um, and it was sort of, I must say it was fun, you know, for us kids, we knew it was not a good place for the fam, for anyone, to have to be behind bars. But um, but they did take care of us. I, um, but I think the family thing was most important, even if it meant being in one room and as a 10 year old going onto you stayed there til I was 13. I hated the lack of privacy. Everyone together all the time. And um, but it got better and better as my older siblings left camp to, um, to work or to go to school. And so the weren't as many of us, but still that was not a proper way to grow up. But I loved being with my friends all the time. You just have to go out the door and you're with somebody, one of your friends. And as I was getting aware, becoming aware of boys and by 12 years old, you know, now I was in junior high and we used to have school dances and um, and we'd get permission I guess, and we shove all the, desks to the logs and somebody would bring, I don't know where they got it, but what they call spangle and it made the floor slippery and somebody else, someone would bring records and um, and we played the popular tunes and we danced, you know, we had a wonderful dances on a Saturday night. So it was fun for us kids, you know, we played Monopoly a lot in the laundry rooms. We would listen to hit parade on Saturday nights and, and somebody

would be able to buy, um, a weekly magazine about hit parade and they'd have words to songs and then we'd memorize them on the latest school and back and in the laundry room. And we'd sing all the time. Well, you know, it was like being away at a, at a fun camp for us kids, but you know, but we knew that there was a heavier side to it and I know because my mother was telling me about things and we would hear from others that my, one of my classmate's mother killed herself. She was depressed and and there was a woman next door who used to come over, I don't know for how long of a period, but she would come over and cry and moan to my mother and my mother would patiently sit and listen to her. My mother had a, had a piecework job sewing for a company that made Indian, Indian jackets with tassels and beading and she would sit at the sewing machine and this woman would come every day, knock on the door, come in and talk about her problems. And my mother would patiently sit there and listen to her. So I saw that going on. No, things were not all good. And then when they passed, maybe it was the second year they passed out those forms that families had to sign side their loyalty. And that was, it didn't happen to any of my immediate friends, but it happened to a lot of families where the kids didn't want to go to Japan and yet the parents insisted so they had to leave our camp to go to Tule Lake. And that was horrible. Horrible for the families. If they didn't all agree, you know, if they all agreed it was one thing, but families were torn up and even as kids we realized that you know. And to find out later that yes indeed they did go back. They were sent back during the war. Horrible.

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