

HEAL



Hope and Encouragement After Loss

Issue 1 - Fall 2021



From Our Hearts

Dear friends,

It is with immense gratitude to Hashem that the first “HEAL” magazine came to fruition. It was born out of a void to fill our hearts with chizuk and support after the initial shock of a loss.

Friends and family are urging us to move on. They hate seeing us sad and would love for us to forget, to live life, and just be happy. However, we cannot and will not forget. We will forever remain with the void in our hearts; although the intensity of the pain lessens with time. We will, however, move on; embrace the challenge, and place a smile on our faces.

A friend of mine phrased it so eloquently, “The only way to get over the grief is to start grieving!” Give yourself the time and place to grieve in order to heal. Grief experts are now suggesting that loss is not something we “get over” or “are seeking a cure from”. Rather, it is something we learn to live with and find an appropriate place for it in our lives.

We are presenting you with “HEAL”, an acronym for ‘Hope and Encouragement After Loss’. We are here to provide you with an assortment of poems and essays on various topics that come along with loss; ranging from physical, emotional and spiritual themes, to grief, tears, dreams and hope.

Your opinion is valued and your submissions will enable us to **בעזת שׁי** continue bringing you comfort for difficult days.

You may not be able to read all of them at once, we ask you to please be kind to yourself.

Wishing you and your family continuous joy, blessing and nachas.

Chaya, Ettie & Gitty

Contact Us:

For all submissions, questions, or comments [Click Here](#) . Or you can Email healandhope1@gmail.com. Waiting to hear your voice!

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Faithfully Grateful



"I am a prisoner of gratitude. I have so many things to thank Hashem for!" These powerful words were repeated by R' Uri Lati, renowned inspirational speaker. I try applying them to my life. I gained weight? Baruch Hashem! I have what to eat. My motherhood journey is challenging? Baruch Hashem! I'm happily married. I am pained by people's comments? It means I am alive and healthy, and that I am in touch with my feelings. It brings us to look at life with a whole new perspective! Our quality of life is increased by searching for what to be thankful for.

Hashem is ready to give us whatever we pray for, yet very many times we don't see the answer right away. Why is that? Our loving Father has many channels through which to deliver salvation. Sometimes, He chooses the channel of gratitude. Without us being grateful for the challenges we endure, we cannot receive the yeshua. Being grateful for every single thing we

have in life, including our challenges, is like building a pipe straight to heaven. Through that pipe, many yeshuos can be delivered.

A story is told of a couple, Yaakov and Miri*, living in Yerushalayim. Many months passed since their marriage, and they were yet to be blessed with a child. Every treatment offered to them was tried, yet their hopes were dashed time and time again. The doctors gave up, saying that they tried every possibility, breaking the fragile hearts of husband and wife.

Years passed. Thirty long years of suffering, of intense longing for a child, and Miri chanced upon some reading material. She read about the importance of truly thanking Hashem for everything He does, specifically for this particular nisayon. Her hope was sparked, and she took it very seriously. Thus she began thanking Hashem for her childless state. At first she cried. Oh did she cry

when thanking for this great nisayon! It took tremendous strength to thank for a challenge she didn't want to own. Yet after a few months she was able to express thanks to Hashem with true simcha and gratitude. She learned to appreciate the test Hashem gave her.

At that time, they tried a treatment again, and wonder of wonders! It was successful, and she was expecting triplets! The same treatment that failed numerous times in the past brought about salvation now. She became pregnant the same month she started thanking Hashem for her infertility nisayon with true simcha and a light heart.

Nine months later, she experienced the miracle of holding her three babies.

There is no clearer way of defining it. Her thanking Hashem opened pathways that have been previously closed.

R' Shimshon Pinkus said, "thanking Hashem is a Segulah to prevent suffering".

Train yourself to always have a thank you on your lips. By thanking Hashem we deepen our relationship with him, thus bringing down the many yeshuos we long for.

*Names have been changed to protect privacy



My AHA Moment



"My emotional wellbeing depends on my physical wellbeing!"

It was following a few months of severe weakness when I realized that my emotional and physical health are intertwined. When I was upbeat I had more strength, and when I had added strength, I wasn't so sad. My question was, "What is the connection? And which one empowers the other?"

The truth of the matter is that there is a real and valid scientific association between your body and mind. According to Charles Goodstein, MD, a clinical professor of psychiatry at New York University's Langone School of Medicine in New York City, "The brain is intimately connected to our endocrine system, which secretes hormones that can have a powerful influence on your emotional health." Very many people suffer physical pains due to depression or emotional neglect.

This works the opposite way around as well. When we neglect our physical needs, our emotional state suffers. It's a cause-and-effect scenario. Caring and providing for our bodies may be time-consuming and hard to implement, but neglecting it may create untold damage.

Points to ponder:

Diet- Eat a healthy and balanced diet.

Exercise- It greatly improves the mood!

Unwind- Socialize, treat yourself, and take a few minutes to relax.

Be resilient- After falling, get up and continue walking. Don't give up!

Sleep- Get a healthy amount of sleep in order for your brain to function properly and to reduce moodiness.

Therapy- If you are not managing on your own, realize that there is help out there.

My dear friend, take care of yourself! You are an important human being! Nurture your emotional health as well as your physical health, as they are intertwined and depend on one another.

Answers on the Mark

When talking about my loss to others, people often tell me, "at least you have other children". But hey! We are talking about LOSS here, not infertility. I am grieving this child, the child that grew within me yet remains but a dream. People sometimes think that because I have other children, the pain from my loss isn't as deep. Why do People assume that?

Grieving my Loss

Dear Grieving my Loss,

A loss at any stage of a pregnancy can be very painful – "even if" we have other children. I put those two words in quotations, as it is a thought that we and others sometimes have. You know, the "I have a child (or children) so I don't really have a right to be upset."

That is not true. Pain is pain and our pain must be acknowledged. And our pain should not be based on what other people think we are entitled to feel.

Why do people assume that if we have a family, the loss of this pregnancy, this child, is not as painful? As I said, they think "at least you have..." As if each child, each potential child, isn't a world for himself. Honestly, though, maybe it doesn't matter why they think so. They do.

The question is what can you do.

1. Make sure you have people in your life who support you, with whom you can be open about your feelings.
2. Learn to say, "It doesn't matter how many children I have. I wanted that one as well. I dreamed about him (or her) and what our lives would be like."
3. Stop focusing on what other people say. While this is hard to do when it's our family, taking a step back and acknowledging that they don't understand can be helpful.
4. Reach out to us at A Time for support and guidance.

Chumi Friedman
Director, A TIME/HUG
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Been There

By Libby as told to Gitty*

Life was as busy as ever, fending to my three little ones, busy with cooking, laundry and shopping. My days were hectic, with me feeling accomplished and fulfilled.

December 4, 2015, was a cold winter day, yet in my heart I was warm. I was finally expecting, after struggling to become pregnant for a few years. Everything seemed to go on the right track. At a routine ultrasound appointment, my doctor placidly told me that unfortunately there's no heartbeat anymore. It felt unreal. I was already 16 weeks pregnant, what happened?? It was the first time I've gone to my prenatal visit without my husband as this was supposed to be a regular 'all good' visit. Instead, my dreams were shattered. I was devastated.

Grateful to the one above, I was pregnant again a short time later. I was overjoyed, yet extremely anxious. My thoughts were constantly revolving around my baby, hoping and praying that everything should be fine this time. When I started hemorrhaging at home at 11 weeks pregnant, I was utterly shocked! This was not meant to happen! I was supposed to have another baby and try to forget the previous loss! This time the pain lingered, and getting on with life was so very hard.

Fast forward a few months, and I was B"H pregnant again, carrying twins! My joy accelerated at high speed. In my mind's eye I saw myself walking down the Avenue with my twins; two precious neshama'lach. Double carriage, double joy, appreciating their existence forever!! Two babies, sort of "to compensate" for the two pregnancies I have lost! I was riding on euphoria, yet terribly anxious at the same time. I constantly went to the doctor for ultrasounds to see and hear that this is really happening. At 12 weeks pregnant, the doctor unceremoniously informed me that there were no heartbeats. The babies I longed for and dreamed about 24 hours a day were not alive.

Winded Journey

I lost my babies. Darkness descended and there was nothing that could take me out of that deep, bottomless pit of despair. I couldn't think of a single coherent thought to be strengthened with. I was hurting so badly! I felt about to give up this struggle. It's not worth the pain I'm putting myself through. It's just too hard and impossible. Having a baby felt like a distant dream one can only hope for. I was living a nightmare.

There is something about the adage "time heals", as there I was, ready to try again despite my previous conviction that this won't happen. And then, a positive pregnancy test! I allowed myself to dream, to hope, and to pray for this pregnancy to be smooth sailing. The excitement and elation lasted for one week. And then it was over. Although this happened early in the pregnancy, I was crushed! My hopes and dreams were ripped to shreds. My life was crumbling apart, and the pain was unbearable. This time I told myself that I'm never going to try again. The pain of losing is just too hard to bear. I felt shattered and alone. Who can understand the pain I am in, and the yearning I have for another child?!?!

It didn't happen overnight. With lots of support and encouragement, I have decided to give it another try. I was being cool about it and didn't allow my hopes up too high, even when I saw the two lines on the EPT. My anxiety intensified as the weeks passed. I was tense and apprehensive, extremely fearful of losing my baby. I constantly spoke to myself, telling my brain to relax. That worry and fear won't change Hashem's plan! Whatever He has in store for me will happen regardless, I may as well stop thinking that I am in control... Yet my heart didn't want to listen. I was only going to calm down when I hold a healthy baby in my arms.

On a warm summer day, my sweet daughter Leah* was born. I can't stop thanking Hashem for gifting me with another child. She is an inspiration to all, being born after 4 recurring miscarriages. Yes! Miracles continue to happen!

Darkness
descended and
there was nothing
that could take me
out of that deep,
bottomless pit of
despair

*Names have been changed to protect privacy

Comfort Food

Fluffy Hot Chocolate

Jump-start your day with a hot drink!

Cherish the warmth as it rejuvenates your bones and gives you the strength you need for the day.

Prep time: 6 minutes.

Makes 1 elaborate serving.

Ingredients:

2 Teaspoons Sugar

1 Teaspoon Baking Cocoa

1 Cup Milk

Quarter cup miniature marshmallows

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

- Combine all ingredients besides for vanilla extract.
- Stir over medium heat until marshmallows are melted.
- Turn heat off and add vanilla.
- Fill your favorite cup, and enjoy!

Short on time? Don't fret!

- Pour 7 oz. milk into a 16 oz. container.
- Add hot water until it reaches your preferred drink temperature.
- Add sugar and vanilla extract.
- Cover the container and shake it very well. Might as well sing a song and shake it to the beat!
- Fill your favorite cup, and top it with some mini marshmallows.

Enjoy!



Hugging Treatment

Wind up your long day with a warm, hugging 'treat'ment!

Congratulations!

Your overwhelming, never-ending day is actually over!

Now is the time to unwind with a cozy bath. Add some drops of essential oils to soothe your mind and soul. The drops will rejuvenate you and give you the strength you so desperately need. Just let loose and allow yourself to be treated.

Relax and feel oh so refreshed and invigorated after this hugging 'treat'ment!

Treating yourself is inexpensive! These great scents can be found at Walmart for just \$5. Click on the link below.



LAVENDER



EUCALYPTUS & SPEARMINT

Poems

It's Hard

By: E.F.

It's hard.
It hurts.
Unbearable pain
Taking over my thoughts
Every minute of the day
The tears
Always there
How can I move on?
How can I continue?
When everything looks so gray?
But I know Hashem is there
With His hand made plan
He chose this just for me
Even if I can't understand
So I smile through the tears
And try to move on
Cuz I know he holds my hand
Listening to my prayers
And I'm sure that very soon
The sun will shine again
And I'll smile at the world
Cuz I stayed strong.

*I was inspired to write
this poem based on
a thought I read in
the A TIME Chizuk
booklet.*

Guest

By: Tova Roth

I would like to host
People of all kinds
Give them meals
Nourish them to the nines
Care for them
Wash their clothes
Be a listening ear
To all their woes
My recent guest
Left me confused
Lonely and lost
Mixed feelings fused
For 14 weeks
He's been with me
I cared for him
With devotion and security
I dreamed of our future
Of how it'll be
Never thought
I'd lose the opportunity
After he left
I felt I lost it all
I'm trying to survive
This turmoil
This very special guest
Was cared for with love
My aching heart
Is turning to the one above
Please Hashem
Help me overcome my pain
Help me see
The sun despite the rain
My darling guest
Had no name
But that doesn't stop him
From earning his fame
My unborn baby
So tragically lost
I'll never forget you.
U mattered most!

To My Dear

By: E.T.

I will always remember You
My sweet baby
Your ten little fingers
And ten little toes
So perfectly formed
Your little nose
The shape of your eyes
Your soft skin
Little lips
Just like other newborns
Yet so very different
You were so still
So quiet
How I wish I could hold you again
To look at you
To hug you close
But I can't
Not until תחיית המתים
When you will join our family again
However, I do have my memory of you
which I will always cherish
I love you
My precious Baby

♥ Mommy

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Humor Me

The idea of this game was originally taken from an old A TIME magazine and was played on the HUG chat, a Group-Me support chat for loss, by A TIME. We're sharing it here for you to read and enjoy.

Anyone in the mood of a game? Let's pose a hardship we experience (humor anytime!) Following the alphabetical order. I'll start with A!

A- ANXIETY. What does the future have in store for me?

B- BATH. I hate them and struggle with letting my kids enjoy them. Really I struggle with all the mess around it.

C- COMMENTS. "Don't you love this stage?? You don't have babies" "Stop trying" "Look how old your baby is. Why aren't you popping pregnant".

D- DEALING with the DUE dates of losses.

E- EXPECTATIONS. Having to live according to everyone's expectations.

F- FAMISHED. Want good food ASAP.

G- GOTTA walk around with a smile even when it hurts inside!

H- HAVING to attend Simchos even though not in the mood.

I- I don't wanna make supper tonight; I can't buy because of severe allergies.

J- JUGGLING a set of emotions where we want to be happy for others and yet feel for ourselves.

K- KID you not, one day no appetite and eating breakfast supper time, and other days not stopping to eat!

L- LAUGHTER may be therapeutic one day and triggering the other.

M- MOURNING my lost dreams. Trying to bring MEANING to our challenges. Hoping for MIRACLES to come! MOTHERHOOD- What we all long for.

N- NEEDLES - the phlebotomist told me I might get scar tissue on my veins from my frequent blood tests!

O- OPTIMISM - What we're all told we should have but are challenged with every day.

P- PAIN.

Q- QUESTIONS! Towards doctors and towards ourselves!

R- RETRIEVALS to try to get more embryos to have kids and hoping it won't miscarry.

R- RELIEF after knowing the entire pregnancy is out when u know it's over (the waiting for it to finish so can continue is torture!)

S- SHOTS. SURGERY. STEROIDS.

T- TESTS. Blood tests. Spiritual tests. Emotional tests.

U- ULTRASOUNDS.

V- VENIPUNCTURE. A fancy word for blood tests that's on all my medical bills...

W- WHY?! WHY me? WHY not? WHY?!?

X- XACTLY. We all have our 'peckl' The shopping bag that Hashem designated for us to carry. Know the story of the Chofetz Chaim allowing a lady to choose one bag from a roomful of bags? Well, she chose her own. 'Cuz even it feels so heavy, this is the one for us... Just to clarify, I am talking to MYSELF!!! And sharing it with you...

Y- YOU YOU and YOU (me) are all yearning for good news this year.

Z- Sometimes we feel ZAPPED, walking around like ZOMBIES, then we pick ourselves up with ZEAL and ZEST.

Quote Me

“THE BRIGHTEST RAINBOW FOLLOWS
THE BIGGEST STORM”

“Challenge yourself to
embrace your challenge”

“Grief is a journey,
not a destination”

Small Talk; Big Talk

In this section we give you, our readers, the opportunity to ask! May it be a question or scenario you want to share to glean insight from other readers. In every magazine we will open the discussion for the upcoming issue.

Upcoming Talk:

“Following a late loss, meeting other people makes me feel awkward and self-conscious. On the other hand, going out and socializing is probably good for me. Should I push myself?”

what are your thoughts on this one?

Which topics would you like to be addressed in our upcoming issues?

Please find our contact information on page 2.

My Thoughts

How Was Your Summer

By: E.T

Now that the summer is ending, I am being asked, "how was your summer"?

I answer with a neutral Baruch Hashem. No one asks me whether Baruch Hashem good, or Baruch Hashem bad. We are supposed to thank Hashem for both the good and the bad. If I would give a truthful answer to how my summer was, this is what I would say:

My summer started off when I thought I would be giving birth in a few short weeks. To my shock I then found out that the baby I was carrying was no longer alive. My husband and I had to break the news to my children, that the baby that they were so looking forward to will not be coming home after all. I then had to go through a regular delivery and I delivered my baby. Coming home from the hospital, I was both physically and emotionally depleted, with empty arms. I then had to recover physically from my delivery and emotionally from the grief. My due date passed with no baby. However, On the way I discovered the chesed and kindness of others. Notes were being left at my doorstep, gifts were delivered, and phone calls were made. I discovered amazing organizations that I didn't know much about, or have never heard of. I received suppers, lunches, and chizuk packets. People were willing to speak to me and give me chizuk, and I connected to a support group to help me feel less alone. Baruch Hashem I have come far.

In short, to answer your question, this summer has been my most challenging summer ever.

Now thanks for asking, and "how was *your* summer?"



We would love to hear from you!

By contributing your ideas, poems, thoughts and personal stories you will enable us to grow and expand so we can be mechazek many others.

Dont be shy! We're waiting to hear your voice.

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