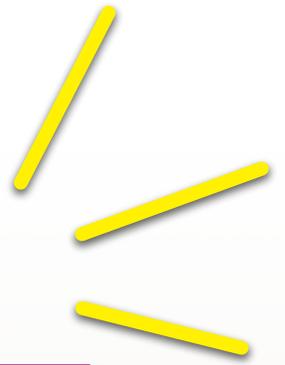


HEAL



Hope and Encouragement After Loss

Issue 10 - Fall, 2024



This issue was sponsored:

לעילוי נשמת חי' חוה בת חיים זאב הלוי

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From Our Hearts

Dear Friends,

As the month of Elul goes by, we are all thinking about the year that has passed. We have felt so much pain and experienced so much unknown. None of us thought we would be here together; some of us just joining while others are returning. Again. Rosh Hashana just passed us, and we long to ask Hashem for so many things. We long to cry out, "Why? We do not have answers: Only You do, Tatty."

As the holy day of Yom Kippur comes, we want to stand before Hashem and beg Him for clarity. However, it is likely that many of our minds wander, even as we yearn to connect.

We say the words in the *tefilla* of *Unesaneh Tokef*: "מי יחיה ומי ימות," "Who will live and who will die" Who, if not us, can proclaim that we have seen life and then seen death? We saw the heartbeat and then it went silent. We felt the kicking and then it went still. Who, if not us, can stand before the Throne of thrones and proclaim that we understand? Hashem has chosen life for my baby, and then decided it was his/her time to be taken. We know that we do not know what this coming year will bring, but we can tap into the power of this special day from a place of understanding.

For many, *tefilla* can be difficult. Some look to Hashem with questions, and some are angry with Him. These strong feelings only show our love and the depth with which we want to connect with Him. You don't get angry at someone you don't love. Because a relationship with Hashem is meaningful to us, these intense feelings bother us and make it hard to connect. Let's realize that we are pained by this distance because we care. Try calling out to the *מלך מלכי המלכים* and say, "You are our King, but moreover, our Father. Help us and judge us for a year of *שמחה*. We long to connect, to feel, and to grow. Help us heal so that we can become the best servants that we can be. Most of all, let us rejoice with good news this year, *בקרוב!*"

Have a *חגי חתונה טובה* and a *שנה טובה!*

Please feel free to reach out if you ever need anything. 

HEAL  The HEAL Team,
Chaya, Shira & Ettie

Upcoming H.E.A.L. Issue: Winter, 2025

From Your Heart



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I really appreciate the hard work you put into this project. Hashem should help you be *mechazek* many more families, and there should be no need for such *chizuk* anymore. There should be only *simchos* by all of Klal Yisroel. *Amein!*

C.B.

Thankyou so much! I got so much *chizuk* from reading the magazine.

C.S.

The read was so validating that I sent all my acquaintances going through miscarriage and baby loss to sign up as well. May you always be on the giving end.

B.F.

The "I Don't Know Prayer" (Issue 9) is a winner! It reminded me of a song I heard in Yiddish:

איך ווײס גען איך ווײס גען... גען ווײס איך זאל איך ווײס
"איך ווײס גען איך ווײס גען... גען"

(I don't know, I don't know... I know that I don't know... But You do know!) This short *tefilla* is so refreshing, so humbling, and so comforting! Thank you for this practical, doable *tefilla!*

B. Friedlander

Looking through past magazines, I noticed a picture of a baby's feet in one of them and I know this can be very triggering for a lot of people (not for me right now, but it could have been in the past), so maybe try not to include any? Thanks for all that you do!

Name Withheld

Thank you so much. I'm so touched! WOW AND WOW AGAIN! This song is really unbelievable! Having gone through IVF, which is a miracle in itself for a pregnancy to occur, makes it so relatable! Thanks again, and may you be benched with a *kesiva v'chasima tova!*

M.G.

The magazine is truly remarkable, wow! It's incredible that you put this together! You should only be on the giving end and this should be a tremendous *zechus* for you!

Hug in a Box

The song is incredibly beautiful, thanks so much for sharing!!! I love music, and the lyrics speak to my soul...

F.S.

Enable us to reach more grieving women with messages of validation and hope! Contact us to sponsor an upcoming ad in the Mishpacha Magazine.

Partner with us in our efforts to offer comfort and hope to those who are mourning. Donate today!

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Inspiration

You
relax
on a
plane
even
though
you
don't
know
the
pilot.

You
relax
on a
ship
even
though
you
don't
know
the
captain.

You
relax
on a
bus
even
though
you
don't
know
the
driver.

Why won't you relax in life knowing
that Hashem is in control?

A New Year Again

So we're back here again. Another new beginning. Rosh Hashana. This time of the year often conjures up a variety of mixed emotions such as hope and fear. Maybe we put in the effort, made the *cheshbonos*, and *davened*. Perhaps we even said a lot of Tehillim. Last year, we were absolutely sure that we would be in a different place this year. Spoiler alert: we're not. We are let down again. Again we are in the exact same situation and circumstances we were in one year ago. How can we truly reconcile that? How can we come into Rosh Hashana with the sense of *simcha* that one really ought to have for *yom tov*?

For me, I first make peace with the fact that this time of the year causes an inner turmoil and upheaval of sorts. When we keep on hoping and then seem to (yet again) come crashing down, it is going to awaken feelings of

discomfort and even pain. Often it seems easiest to just switch off and disconnect from it all emotionally. It is the easiest way to cope, and at times we are so frozen by the enormity of what we're going through that there really is no other option if we want to remain sane (been there, done that).

However, in all honesty, if we are going to truly get over the pain we have to go through it. We can't just bottle it up. We must give ourselves the compassion, understanding, and time to experience the grief and loss that we are feeling as we come into Rosh Hashana again with shattered dreams. Another year went by and the world seems to have moved on, but we are stuck. It's perfectly fine, says I, to take the time to acknowledge the sadness and bitterness in our lives. We can (and certainly should!) vocalize this to Hashem. At times the pain feels far too much to

carry, but we know we must feel it in order to move forward.

Each year, I try to not pile on too many expectations. Just as we are unconditionally kind to our friends who may be faced with adversity of some sort, we should speak to our own inner selves with kindness and empathy. Understand that beneath our physical exterior, when standing in front of Hashem, we are all beloved children. We may not know how to formulate our thoughts into *tefillos*, but the sound of the *shofar* with its often-haunting cry says what our mouths and hearts may not be able to express. As we listen to it this year, let's remember that the *shofar* will connect us to this day. Hashem knows exactly where we are, and we can be present in the moment with trust in this.

For years, I had come into Rosh Hashana with a sense of anxiety about being judged again. I would

It's perfectly Fine



think, “Am I finally good enough? Will this be the year that I have finally ‘done enough’ to tip the scales and merit what I really want?” Then it occurred to me that I am equating the phenomenon of being judged with the way I understand judgment in the physical world. However, in the spiritual world, it’s simply not the same. Hashem is not a harsh and cruel judge. Hashem is our Father, He understands us intimately, He knows our daily struggles, and we must believe He wants us to succeed. We need to remember that it is a *mitzva* to have a delicious *seuda* and wear beautiful clothing on this day as well. It is a *yom tov* after all.

Finally, let’s emerge from the *yamim nora'im* this year as bigger and better people. I heard a beautiful insight once that is easy to keep in mind on my journey, not just at this time of the year. When Yaakov was being attacked in the middle of the night, he did not let go of Eisav’s *malach* until he agreed to bless Yaakov. This is a wonderful lesson. We always want to receive more blessings. We don’t want to remain numb and paralyzed in our own pain. We want to emerge with clarity, feeling more loving and empowered. We want to use our life experiences (and tears!) to become more sensitive, compassionate,

and invigorated.

We will never know why we must go through what we do. There comes a time that we must accept that in this world we may never know the “why.” Without that knowledge we will not ever eliminate the pain, but as *yidden*, our focus should always be on looking towards the future using the lessons we’ve learned from the past. We must keep on moving forward to emerge more blessed. We want to enter this new year with a sense of anticipation, knowing that even though on our exterior we may look the same, we are not. We have gained a tremendous amount by living our lives and going through all our personal challenges and disappointments. Indeed, we have intrinsically changed, and when we change, we may be impacting those around us in tremendous ways. We may be a shining example to them of living life with *bitachon*. We don’t understand Hashem’s ways, but we will continue as we always have. One day we will be able to look back on our lives with a sense of pride, knowing that the turbulence we experienced did not deter us from living a ‘Hashem-centered’ life with true *simcha* and serenity..

Inner Expression

Michal B.

Tears well up in my eyes as I think of the days that
have passed,
With memories that flood, with a lifetime that will
forever last.
A hope and a dream that melted away,
Taken from the highest of highs to the lowest at bay.
Sadness engulfs with tears that race by,
For a vision of what-ifs that did swiftly die.
Taken to the deepest part to look in,
How can this change and turn a frown to a grin?
Surreal days that continue to fill my mind,
Of the overwhelming mess and what new things
the doctors may find.
There's no looking back, though the pain does ache,
A heart that is broken can mend now and make-
A new start, for once again we shall see,
Hope that is turning the corner for me.
No one knows what the end will look like,
But if we don't take the step there won't be a hike.
An endless mountain that threatens too much,
Only just step by step can we conquer it such.
And then, once we've past the hurdle of a stone,
We must forge on and remember we are never
alone.
Even when we slip and slide,
Even when Hashem can hide,
We know it's in the ultimate best,
As hard as it is, this wavering test.
The tears continue to flow down my cheek,
As you, my son, from up above you peek.
Down upon us you see your mommy cry,

And wonder what can I do to make the pain say
goodbye.
I can't be beside her though she craves me near,
I can't wipe away tear after tear,
I can't know how the pain eats away,
I can't know how she makes it through, day by day.
One thing my dear mommy I can do from up here,
I can be the *tzaddik* you hoped for and shed so
many tear(s),
I am close to Hashem as you longed for your dear,
And the greatest accomplishment is now yours to
be near.
I can *daven* and ask for your greatest request,
Please, Hashem, to my mommy bequest,
A sibling for me and a child for her,
So she can once again smile instead of the
tears that blur.
Her smile I miss and her *tefillos* shine through,
But there is so much more she can do.
It's time, don't you think, to end her pain,
And show her the worth that she has to gain.
And the beseeching that she showed before your
throne on high,
Despite all the failures and sigh after sigh.
So my mommy, I ask that when you once again
begin,
Find that inner strength to connect from within.
And when you go ahead, know that you're not
doing this alone,
Because I'll be cheering you on right alongside the
throne. 

It Only Takes One Step

Reflections

Malkie Klaristenfeld

A Tefilla for All

The *pasuk* tells us in Parshas Toldos, 'ישתי יצחק לה' לנצח אתו. Yitzchok entreated Hashem opposite his wife - his *tefillos* were on her behalf. Hashem had promised Avraham Avinu that the covenant would endure through Yitzchok, so he knew he would have children but he wasn't sure that they would come through Rivka. He was *davening*, says the Meshech Chochmah, for his wife. Klal Yisrael was established through the *tefilla* of one Yid for another, and since then, we continue to *daven* for each other.

In Shacharis, we speak of Hashem as He Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in it... עושה שמים ואת כל אשר בו. Who performs justice for the oppressed, gives bread to the hungry, sets loose the bound. עושה משפט לעשוקים, נותן לחם לרעבים, ה' מתיר אסורים. He gives sight to the blind, straightens the bent, and loves the righteous. ה' פוקח עורים, זוקף כפופים, אוהב צדיקים. He guards strangers, strengthens the orphan and widow... שומר את גרים, יתום ואלמנה יודד (תהלים קמ"ז:). And then, we end the *perek* by proclaiming, ימלוך ה' לעולם, Hashem will reign forever.

The full range of human suffering is listed – those who are oppressed, hungry, imprisoned, sick and lonely... And for all of these, there is just one solution: to turn to Hashem. Our King is the One Who can help, and so we are obligated to *daven*. Not only do we *daven* when we find ourselves in a situation described here, but we *daven* for everyone who may be experiencing any of these.

Our *tefillos* are written in *lashon rabbim*: רבאנו השיבנו. They are a collective plea for every member of the family called *Knesses Yisrael*. The power of a *tefillas rabbim* isn't just the power in numbers: when surrounded by other people, your *tefilla* carries hope for them as well, making it that much stronger.

That is Yitzchok Avinu's lesson and gift to us. ✨

Mrs. Malkie Klaristenfeld is the founder and director of Knafayim, holding space for the silent pain of shattered hopes and dreams.

To sign up for weekly *chizuk* messages culled from the *parsha* of the week, email Knafayim, info@knafayimwings.org or visit the website at knafayimwings.org. Available by email or text.



Finding Joy Again

Have you been struggling to find joy again after experiencing a loss?

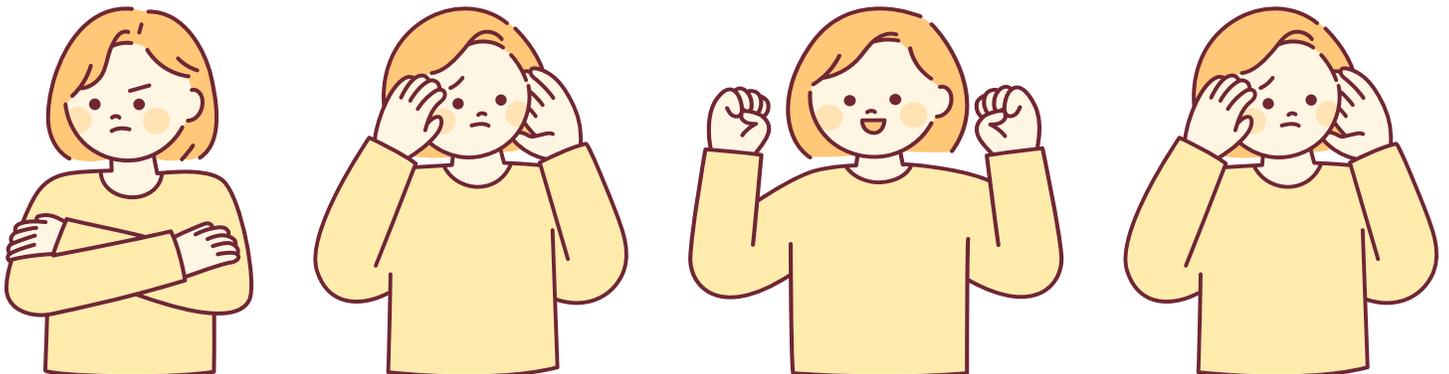
You are not alone. For many people, finding joy doesn't always come easy after experiencing a devastating life experience. It is completely normal to feel sad and uninspired, to do things that previously took little effort. The question is, how long will the sadness endure? How can we get out of this phase and rediscover joy and purpose in life?

The truth is that there is no magical switch that will make us snap out of it from one day to the next.

Joy after loss isn't something that happens on its own, but rather something we need to actively and continuously create for ourselves. Like a muscle that must be exercised daily, joy after experiencing grief is a practice which requires effort and intention.

In addition, when we feel stuck in our sadness, it may be an indication that there are emotions that still need to be processed. Finding joy again isn't about avoiding or hurrying to move on from the pain, but about learning to acknowledge and accept our emotions as they are. If we suppress painful emotions, by default, we also suppress happy emotions. Allowing ourselves to process all our emotions without judgment is the pathway to true happiness.

Below are a few suggestions to help create new interest in life. It is important to begin small and focus on one day at a time.



You don't have to do it alone. Find a friend or relative with whom you can share both your struggles and your progress. Creating accountability by having a shoulder to lean on can help create motivation.

Establish a daily routine which includes the time you wake up as well as the time you go to sleep. When we are sleep deprived, we often are more irritable and sensitive. Creating a schedule and getting enough sleep is beneficial to help regulate emotions and improve our overall well being.

Spend time in nature every day by taking walks, soaking up the sun, bird watching, or simply gazing at the night sky. Nature has magical healing powers, and it is scientifically proven to boost our mood. Push yourself and get outdoors; your body will thank you!

Journaling can help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Jot down three small things you're grateful for each day. Acknowledge and celebrate small victories, even if they feel insignificant. First, it can be small things like brushing your teeth, making your bed, or simply the act of getting dressed.

Self-care is vital in the healing journey. Massages are great, however, it's also in the little things that we do each day that make a difference in the long run. Some ideas include daily exercise, baking, painting, listening to music, reading a book, purchasing small gifts for yourself, etc. Make time for small activities that speak to your heart and spark joy for you. Perhaps there was something you loved to do when you were younger that you can bring to life again?

To conclude, finding joy after a challenge takes conscious effort. By taking small steps like reaching out to a friend, creating a daily routine, remembering self-care, spending time in nature, and journaling regularly, we can slowly allow happiness to enter our lives again. It isn't about forgetting our pain but about learning to live with it while also welcoming new moments of joy. 

Chaya Hott is a certified Grief Educator, Trauma Coach, and writer. She specializes in supporting and guiding Jewish women as they navigate baby loss due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant loss. Call Chaya for a FREE 30-minute consultation today. 718.310.8678.

Been There

Tzippy W.



My Yoga Journey

It started on my mat in the gym. I was lying there at the end of a yoga class, feeling all my muscles and joints melt into the ground. These are the effects of stretching, balancing and using my strength. My eyes were closed and the room was dark and quiet, besides for the soft music playing in the background and a guided meditation from an amazing yoga teacher. In this state of meditative relaxation, I was flooded by memories.

An ice cube that's left out of the freezer starts to thaw, drip, and then melt into a puddle of water. Similarly, my whole being was melting, while salty tears flooded my eyes and dripped down the sides of my face. They were tears of pain, sorrow, disappointment, anguish, and heartache. They expressed emotions that had been suppressed and pushed away for a long time but had now resurfaced.

Going back in time, I was married, *Baruch* Hashem, and had two precious boys at the time. Each had

their own unique and difficult birth story, but that only gave me a greater appreciation for them. I was looking forward to my first girl in the family; she would be my princess. My boys, ages four and six, were oblivious to what was ahead, but they would have been so excited to welcome her. It was an auspicious time for me - one that I anticipated with lots of excitement. I had to continue working when I had my older kids, and I knew it was exhausting to juggle work and family. This time, I gave up my teaching job for the year in preparation for becoming a full-time mother so I could enjoy my baby.

I was hospitalized for hemorrhaging at forty one weeks and five days, to be exact. I was scheduled to have a Cesarean section on the coming Tuesday if I did not go into labor until then. It was Friday night. I was rushed into the operating room immediately to save me and the baby. Her heart rate was fine. After giving birth through emergency Cesarean section, placenta rupture was noted, including lots of blood loss and blood clots in the uterus. It wasn't a simple surgery, as my uterus needed to be sewn back

together in more than one place. I was in the recovery room while a whole crew of nurses and doctors were surrounding me, monitoring blood loss, taking vitals, and trying to make me as comfortable as possible in this condition. And then he walked in: the baby's doctor from the NICU.

My baby was taken there right after birth because she had drowned in lots of blood and the suctioning done in the operating room wasn't enough. Her heart was beating but she was suffocating from all the blood she had swallowed. She was carried to the NICU in critical condition, fighting for her life, but I was unaware of the severity of the situation. On the operating table, I caught a glance from the nurse holding a tube in her mouth, and I saw her tiny feet kicking in frustration, but I did not hear her cry.

Now, the doctor had news to share and he wanted to make sure I was in good hands. Lots of nurses started surrounding my bed and literally held down my arms and legs, with two nurses over my head. I knew something bad was going on with my baby, but in my wildest dreams I did not envision what was about to be said. He lowered

his head and uttered flatly, "I'm sorry but she didn't make it. We tried everything." Then, he added a few short sentences about the procedure he did, the suctioning, CPR, and shocking her heart again and again. He was drained from working for an hour straight without success. The shock and trauma felt, to my weak body, like freezing cold water poured over my head. I couldn't open my mouth to ask or say anything. I was thunderstruck!!! There are no words that can describe the scene in the room. The air was choking me and felt tight around my neck. Nurses with sad faces were massaging me. Speechless, I let my tears roll. I cried and cried. I felt like I was watching a play, and suddenly I was acting as the main character on center stage.

My journey began with a denial phase. I thought to myself that very soon she would be here with me. I was physically weak and I needed a long recovery. I kept thinking that, for now, I needed to recover and then I'd take care of my baby. But when the initial period slowly ended and I was getting better, reality kicked in. By then I was completely alone and left empty-handed. My heart

I caught a glance from the nurse holding a tube in her mouth and I saw her tiny feet kicking in frustration

that was yearning to love my baby wallowed in pain and grief. My body was botched up, and I was twenty pounds overweight. I was in a terrible place. I had very little emotional support, since I had no idea how to connect to my feelings. I didn't know how to deal with my grief and pain. I had no idea how to just feel and be with myself. My coping tools were disconnection, distraction, and making myself really busy so as not to sit with my thoughts and face myself. In addition, the old-school attitude was stressed in my upbringing: to be strong, to forget, and to go on with life. With tremendous strength, I worked hard to go on with life. I got busy with other things so I didn't have to think too much. My painful story went untold, as I wouldn't allow anyone to share that pain with me. One day, I decided to pick up the photos of my baby from the hospital. They had told me I could do it anytime, but when I left the hospital, I didn't think I'd ever need it. I connected to my baby through those pictures, looking at them

secretly in my bed.

Only then did I let my tears roll freely. She was gorgeous with dark black hair. She weighed 10.6 and looked like a doll. I was afraid to talk about her for the fear of what people would answer or think about me. I missed my baby terribly. To the outside world, I looked like I was doing great, but inside I was shattered, depressed, and grieving. It was hard for me to hold it all in, but I pushed my emotions down and said to myself, "Not now." I noticed that I was very easily annoyed, extremely vulnerable, and easily angered, but I just ignored it and went on. I distracted myself and occupied myself with other things. I took a heavy summer job with little kids, out of desperation and fear about having too much time for myself. I couldn't bear the thought of staying home for so many hours alone while my boys would be at day camp. (I gave these kids all the love I had stored in my heart for my daughter, and when anyone commented I just shook my head... But if only they would have known

the truth.) When I was offered a teaching job, I jumped right in.

After a while, I felt that I had too much time in the morning since I taught in the afternoon. I decided to join a gym both to tackle the issue of my weight and to occupy myself. At the gym, I didn't know anyone well, and being in my vulnerable state, I did not make any friends there. I used to work out all by myself, some days on the exercise machine and some days in the pool. When I worked out alone, I had more time to think and I was forced to get to know my body better. I interacted with my limbs and my muscles, and I noticed all the tension I was holding there. It came from the agony I carried. Some days I would come home from the gym and just cry; working out would emphasize the tension in my limbs and bring my trapped emotions out.

Nothing compared to the time when I joined a yoga class; at the beginning of class, I was a little uncomfortable with the stillness and the idea of looking into myself and checking in on how



I was doing, but I soon became acquainted with every bone, muscle, and joint. I tested my flexibility, strength, and balance, and deep breathing helped me get to know my inner organs as well. The stillness, the quiet, the stretches and the relaxation poses at the end of class were an emotional experience - one that my body and soul had longed for. It touched me. I was connecting to myself. Even though life was busy and distracting, yoga was the time spent only on myself, my body, my thoughts, and my feelings, and soon I was hooked. I joined four yoga classes a week and couldn't get enough of it. It opened me up to a whole new world.

There were so many benefits, and here I was, making time for myself. I learned to listen to my body's whispers, acknowledging the trauma it went through. I began to understand the grief and loss that impacted me, my family, and my future. I finally got my shape back, and I felt and looked better. From here on, my life took a different route: a route to healing.

Once I started feeling more comfortable with the idea of listening to my body, I tried out other things as well which eventually brought me into a much better state. I felt lighter, more at ease, balanced, and happier with myself, but it didn't happen in one day. It was a long process, and it is one that I am still in. There is constantly room for advancement. There are many different ways of releasing emotions, regulating the nervous system, and eventually, healing. Some methods are: cranial therapy, somatic experiencing, kinergetics, NB, meditation, TEB, breathwork, and seeing a therapist or life coach. One or many of these can really help you break out of your shell and move toward healing. When done fully, yoga is definitely a way of healing, as it incorporates breathing and meditation as well.

After about four years of joining yoga classes in the gym, Covid hit and the gym closed down. We were stuck at home. For me, being cooped up wasn't a problem since I did not want to

socialize too much, but not doing yoga wasn't an option. I started taking zoom classes. I looked for free online classes and tried out different types as the world began accepting a virtual format. I came across an online yoga teacher training course that was affordable and had good reviews. I jumped right in. With my passion for yoga and personal benefit from it, I decided to start teaching yoga and spreading the light to others.

As of now, I am teaching several classes a week. I am so happy to be the one helping women and girls feel better and more connected. I often get comments like, "Wow, I really needed this," or, "I got to know my body," and "I started feeling like myself." This gives me a great feeling and it is exactly why we do yoga..

I hope all readers enjoyed and utilized the yoga techniques I shared in the past few issues, and I appreciate the opportunity to share my journey and my healing. Now you know why I love doing and teaching yoga. ✨



Answers on the Mark

Chumi Friedman

As the *yamim noraim* approach, I can't help but feel that I've already been judged this year. How can I go into *yom tov* feeling ready to accept Hashem's new plan for this year, when all I feel and see is what occurred this past year?

-Wants to Accept

Dear Wants to Accept,

Many years ago, I was driving home from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to Brooklyn, New York. Before I began this four-and-a-half hour drive, my sister told me that at some point along the highway, there would be no street lights and not many cars. Since I was starting out while it was afternoon and still light outside, I didn't think about what that would mean. There I was, driving along and enjoying my solitary ride, when all of a sudden I realized it was starting to get dark. "Okay," I thought, "I'm still good." As this part of the highway didn't have a lot of traffic, there also weren't any

cars near me.

It continued getting darker.

At some point, I looked in the rearview mirror and all I saw was pitch black.

I don't know if I can explain the shock to my system. I had to remind myself to breathe. I looked at the rearview mirror again and it was very scary seeing absolutely nothing - not the light of another car, not a light on the street, not even stars in the sky. I realized that if I was going to make this part of the trip successful, the only thing I could do was look forward; I couldn't look back. You see, when I looked forward, I was able to see the lights from my own car shining on the highway, and that gave me

peace until there were street lights again.

This year has been an incredibly difficult one for Klal Yisrael - on a communal level, on a national level and, for many of us, on a personal level. We are tired and sad, and we feel so much pain. How can we even think of moving forward? How can we even hope the new year will bring *bracha* and *simcha*?

And yet, each of us will sit down on the first night of Rosh Hashana and ask the Ribbono Shel Olam for the gift of a *shana tova u'mesuka*, a good and sweet year. We do this with a sense of hope and possibility. We do this by focusing on the road ahead and the lights in front of us. We do this by not

Emunah Insights

As I walk up and down the street, I marvel at how so many women are privileged with the innocence of not knowing how their bodies work. Baruch Hashem for them, they have not known the hardship of miscarriage, stillbirth, or losing a baby. Yes, I envy their ignorance of knowledge in this area. I look down at myself and try to think of my challenges from the perspective of *bechina*. Hashem made our human bodies in the most perfect way. When a miscarriage happens, we may feel like Hashem and our bodies “disappointed” us or let us down. However, when we look deeper, it really just goes to show that our bodies did what was best. They looked inside and saw how this child would not be healthy. They choose to “discard” it. Though it doesn't bring comfort, as we all long to hold that child, we can marvel at Hashem's *chachma* and knowledge. He has created a system to “let go” of the so-called bad and shows us how our bodies work. Our bodies don't disappoint us; they are the vessels to bring forth the greatest *bracha* imaginable. Hashem doesn't disappoint us; He is perfect and all He does is good. We must realize what a *nes* our bodies are and what good they do for us. The next time you're feeling down about your body, just remember that you know more than most people. You do not know by choice, but Hashem wants you to know what a miracle you truly are. 

-Leah Oratz

looking in the rearview mirror or allowing ourselves to be afraid.

None of us knows what this new year will bring. None of us know what each new day will bring. Yet, we greet each new morning with *modeh ani*, words of gratefulness and acknowledgment. The *pasuk* ends with the words, *rabba emunasecha* - how wonderful is Your *emunah*. We thank Hashem for having enough faith in us to grant us another day and another chance. Let us begin this new year by giving Hashem another chance. Let us look forward and not backward. Let's try to focus on the possibilities that come with new beginnings.

That doesn't mean we ignore our pain; our pain is real, valid, and has a right to exist. Don't ignore it. However, let us commit to spend less time on suffering this year; let us choose to live with the hope that it will bring us *bracha* and *simcha*.

Wishing you all a *gut gebentched yur*, a year of *simcha* and *bracha*, of *yishuv hadaas*, of possibilities and growth.

Shana tova u'mesuka

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Meditation and Inspiration

“The body benefits from movement, and the mind benefits from stillness.” The favorite part of my yoga routine is meditation. It is usually done at the beginning of the class and/or at the end of class while lying on the mat. The amount of time for which one can meditate varies. For some people meditating is hard, and it is difficult for them to just sit and feel without thinking and planning. Those are often the very people who need it most. Some people come to love meditation so much that it is hard for them to transition afterwards. Meditation is a skill that can be learned with practice, and it builds on itself minute by minute.

What is meditation? How can it help you? To meditate is to turn off your thinking mind. It is to just sit or lay with closed eyes and to listen to your body. You don't do anything else. You let yourself feel your chest rise and fall as your breath moves in and out of your body, keeping you alive. It is the act of concentrating on your heart beating and your blood flowing. Tuning into this unbelievable hidden machine, your body, can be fascinating.

In life we tend to use our brains all the time for thinking, planning, and deciding. We live in our brains most of the day without noticing how the rest of our body functions, feels, and keeps us alive. There is so

much going on but we can all get used to shutting off our brain. It may require some hard work, but it is very beneficial to our wellbeing, and it allows us to notice and appreciate life so much more.

Taking time to meditate is a vital part of our health, especially when we need to take time for our own healing. When we are in fight or flight mode, our breath is shallow and quick, our mind works overtime, and we exhaust our already exhausted bodies. That is why we need to take the time to breathe. Real deep breathing will use 75% of the capacity of our lungs and will bring about seven times more oxygen to our organs than normal 'automatic' breathing. We receive so much less oxygen while running and doing. Giving the body this time to breathe nourishes all our organs, improves our health, and increases our energy levels.

While meditating, notice the silence. Notice your heart is still beating, still fighting. You made it after all. You made it this far.

There is much more to a person than what is reflected in a mirror. It doesn't show your inner organs, your heart beating, or your lungs expanding and contracting. You can't see your blood flowing through your blood vessels and arteries. You can't see your bones, your joints, and the muscles attached to them,

or how they stretch to help you move. Meditation is taking a better look inside, like a mirror to see within. "Close your eyes and look inside yourself, live in the moment, live in the breath."

"The most fascinating discovery of your life will be the discovery of yourself." While meditating and tuning into your body, you might feel emotions that were hidden start coming to the surface. You might start feeling pain, stress, or tension in different areas of your body that you didn't notice before. This is the time to acknowledge what you feel, let it wash over you, and let your mind say to it, "I notice you are here." Let your whole body feel it, see it, and just acknowledge it until you feel ready to either let go of it completely or dismiss it for now to come back to it another time.

While real meditation can be done just with yourself in silence, most people will not be able to do it for too long in this way, as it is an advanced level. There are other ways people can meditate, and while some might put on soft or inspirational music, another popular way to meditate is through guided meditation.

Guided meditation is for everyone including a beginner. In a yoga class, your teacher would guide you into a relaxed state and then help you relax every

part of your body. The guided meditation will guide you to breathe in and out, to notice what is happening inside of you, to notice positive thoughts and feelings of gratitude, and to let go of stress and pain. Guided meditation is read slowly in a soft, calm voice and with lots of pausing.

Here is a guided meditation script that can be shortened or lengthened with the amount of pausing you will include. Find a comfortable place. It can be dark and quiet. The best thing is if you can use a yoga mat or you may use a blanket or a pillow to make yourself comfortable. You can do this together with some yoga poses or just as a meditation alone. It can take as short as a minute or two, or last up to twenty minutes. Beginners will not be able to do it for too long, so don't worry if you feel it is hard for you the first time. You can either record it as you read it and then play it when you want to meditate, or you can have someone read it out loud to you slowly as you meditate.

"Remember you are in control of your mind. You don't have to ride on every train of thought." If a thought comes into your head to disturb you from meditating, acknowledge it and let it go. You can even say to it in your mind, "Please don't disturb me now, I'll get to it later," and then let it go. Try to stay

present.

Welcome to the present moment. Take this moment to just be right here with yourself. Before we begin, remind yourself that this time is for you and you alone. Allow no distractions, no worries and no to-do lists to interfere with your time. Take a moment to make yourself comfortable where you are. Maybe straighten your back and straighten your neck and head in line with your spine. Relax your arms at your side and your legs resting at a comfortable distance. You will now close your eyes and unfurrow your forehead. Relax your eyelids. Once you've reached a place of stillness, begin to deepen your breath. In through the nose and out through the mouth. In through your nose and out through your mouth...

As you continue to breathe, travel in your mind from the crown of your head, moving downwards. Feel the crown grow light like a feather, and then continue. Move along to your neck: let it relax, to your shoulders: push them down and away from your ears, release them. Let your upper arms, forearms, wrists and fingers all relax. Start to feel a warm flow of energy running through your fingers and up into your arms and shoulders...

Relax your rib cage and feel it expand as you inhale and contract as you exhale. Envision your lungs like

two large balloons being blown up as you inhale and deflated as you exhale... Now move down to your abdomen, relax all your inner organs, and relax your pelvis. When you reach your hips, visualize two tight locks beginning to unscrew themselves. Relax your legs, knees, ankles and toes. Count down with me from five, four, three, two, one, until your pinky toes. Start to feel a flow of energy coming up from your toes into your legs. As it flows upward it connects with the energy flow of your arms and soon you are feeling your whole body flowing with energy. Envision this flow with a color such as yellow or red...

You are alive, you are here right now, and you deserve to thank yourself for showing up here. Just be. Continue breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth... Let your whole body relax and melt into the ground beneath you as you breathe... You may start counting your breaths: inhale one, exhale two, inhale three, exhale four and so on.... Till hundred.

Deepen your breath and slowly bring your awareness back to the room, you may bring slight movement to your fingers and toes and slowly blink your eyes open.

Take your time to get up and go on with your day! ✨

Inspiration

Anonymous

LIFE IS A PIECE OF CAKE

Life is a piece of cake,
 Sounds unreal, but it's no mistake.
 The steps to bake, let's analyze,
 And the truth you will realize.
 Every ingredient in exact measure,
 Is put in to make a bit of pleasure.
 Some cups loose, some cups packed,
 Half of this, three quarters of that.
 Beaten, battered, or even whipped,
 Mixed or folded, sometimes flipped.
 Dumped in a mixer, spun at 360,
 Thrown into a fire, heated to 350.
 Down in the depths of the large bowl,
 It looks like a mess, so out of control.
 But the ingredients aren't asked any question,
 Not for their opinion, nor for any suggestion.
 For there is a Baker running the show,
 Following the recipe, it's the way it must go.
 All that was mixed with its energy spent,
 Will produce a delicacy of heavenly scent.

Individual traits each in their own measure,
 Given to grow, they're really a treasure.
 Some to overcome, some to help overcome,
 Facing each challenge, one by one.
 Life is a blend of ups and downs,
 Resulting in smiles, or possibly frowns.
 Occasionally battered, even spun or beaten,
 Seems out of control, with no rhyme or reason.
 But it's an illusion, the truth is not so,
 Because Hashem is the One running the show.
 Every happening, every event,
 Directed by Him, it's Heavenly sent.
 Adding the ingredients of the recipe of life,
 Mixing and blending, to make the perfect slice.
 Every step is followed, guided from Above,
 By the master Baker, with His infinite love.
 When life is traveled with this thought in mind,
 It pushes us through the daily grind.
 Challenges are embraced, almost as if they're fun,
 So keep calm, and just bake on! 



Humor Me

Y. Freund



Therapy is expensive. My friend, nee "therapist," told me to try retail therapy as it might be easier on my wallet.

I had a friend join me on my expedition to happy, meaningful moments after feeling so empty and bereft of emotions lately. I walked into Bloomingdales, for eons ago I heard that this is the place to go for an amazing experience. An experience it was! I strolled leisurely, fingering the luxury fabrics of all brands and collections. I looked at the rows and rows of designer clothing with the eyes of a teenager, allowing myself to enjoy the moment and forget about what brought me here.

Without batting an eyelash, I swiped my card for the most flattering, chic (read: expensive) Ferragamo shoulder bag.

Cinderella is proof that a pair of shoes can change your life. Perhaps my new shoulder bag will lighten the load on my shoulders.

Although I didn't end up saving any money, I learned something new: retail therapy is therapeutic as well! ✨



Quotes



Wouldn't it be nice if retail therapy was covered by health insurance?

BANK ACCOUNT: EMPTY
GAS TANK: EMPTY
PHONE BATTERY: DEAD
SHOPPING CART: FULL!

I have a degree in retail therapy

PASSING THE TEST

I was about to leave my house to bring my son to his driving test when the phone rang. The caller ID announced my mother-in-law's name and I hurried to find the handset.

"*Hatzlacha* on the driving test!" she said. My mother-in-law had graciously taken my son driving quite a few times.

"Do you think he's ready?" I asked worriedly. "Please *daven* that he should pass."

"I won't *daven* for that," my mother-in-law stated matter-of-factly. "I'll *daven* that if he's ready to be on the road, he should pass. If not, he shouldn't pass."

"Of course!" I agreed. "Gotta run so we won't be late!"

While I waited in the DMV for

my son to return from his road test, I mulled over my mother-in-law's words. Although my son was desperate to pass his test and none of us wanted to go through the whole process again, cars can be extremely dangerous! If his driving would pose any type of risk to himself or others, I definitely did not want him to pass his test! When it comes to a road test, it is clear that we want the driver-in-training to pass only if it's good for him.

I realized that this concept applies to other aspects of life as well.

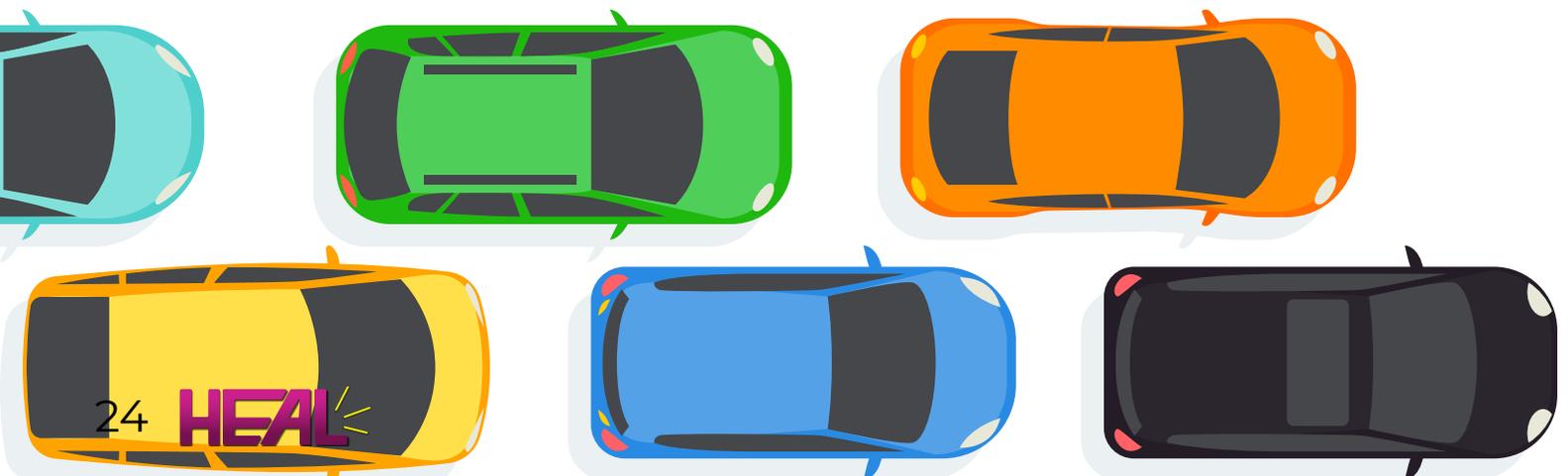
When Hashem commanded Avraham Avinu to bring Yitzchak as a *korban*, Avraham had a dilemma.

It went against everything

he knew about Hashem and betrayed Hashem's promise that a great nation would emerge from Yitzchak. However, Avraham was *mevateil* his *daas* and followed the command of Hashem.

Later, as Avraham stood on Har HaMoriah and was informed that it had all been a test, he turned to Hashem and pleaded, "In the *zechus* that I was *mevateil* my *ratzon* for You, please give my future descendants this ability to be *mevateil* their *ratzon* to You."

The Michtav MeEliyahu teaches that with this request, Avraham was transmitting the *koach* to accept the fact that our desires will not always be fulfilled. He was giving us the ability to forge ahead with our *emunah* intact. There are



times in our lives when we are desperate for a *yeshua* and Hashem does not respond to our requests in the way that we anticipate. It is at that point, says the Michtav MeEliyahu, that the *tefilla* of Avraham Avinu kicks in. That's when we must be *mevateil* our *ratzon* before His and recognize that Hashem is the One Who knows what is truly best for us — even when it's exceedingly difficult to understand.

When my daughter was just under a year old, her favorite food was cooked carrots. One Thursday afternoon, as I stood in my kitchen peeling carrots for my chicken soup, she made her way over to me and began pulling at my skirt. Pointing to the carrot in my hand, she made it obvious that she desperately wanted it. Of course, she had no way to differentiate between a cooked carrot — her favorite food — and the raw carrot in my hand. Recognizing that the raw carrot was a choking hazard for a baby with very few teeth, I was forced to tell her no.

My little girl had no way to understand why her loving mother had denied her simple request, and she burst into uncontrollable sobs. No amount of crying or tantruming, however, could make me reverse my decision. As I tried comforting her, I began to imagine what was running through her mind:

“My mommy has so many carrots. Why can't she give me just one? She's so mean! Doesn't she care about me at all?” Of course, there was a valid reason for my refusal, but there was no way for me to explain it to her. From her immature and undeveloped perspective, I must have appeared as a heartless, cruel mother who didn't care about her child. I started to think about how we often ask Hashem for things that we desire. We want *simchos*, *nachas*, peace, happiness, health, financial stability, etc.

There are times when we can't understand why Hashem doesn't just dole out these blessings to us when we beg Him to fulfill our requests. After all, the whole world is His: can't He spare just a little bit for us? Hashem knows that certain things are not good for us, and that they may even be hazardous to our spiritual growth. Therefore, no matter how much we plead with Him, He will continue to refuse us. In response, we get frustrated and disappointed since our minds can't comprehend His ways.

To continue my story, fast-forward one year and my little girl was once again in my kitchen. This time, she was watching me peel potatoes. When she made it clear that she wanted a piece, I scrunched my nose and told her, “Ichy.” She refused to believe me. Relentlessly,

I started to think about how we often ask Hashem for things that we desire. We want *simchos*, *nachas*, peace, happiness, health, financial stability, etc.



she cried for a piece of raw potato while I continued to insist that she would not like it. Finally, when I'd had enough, I thought to myself, "Her teeth have come in and raw potatoes are not dangerous for her to eat. I'm withholding it for her own benefit — because I know she won't like it. If she wants it so badly, let her try it and realize for herself that it's not a good idea to eat it."

I handed my excited daughter a piece of raw potato and, just as I expected, she spit it out immediately, never asking me for a raw potato again. There are certain things that we imagine will contribute to our happiness and we *daven* and plead with Hashem to grant them to us. Sometimes, Hashem says: "You davened so hard that I'll give them to you, but only because you begged. I know that they won't do you any good but I'll let you figure that out on your own."

It is for this reason that the Chofetz Chaim reportedly told his daughter that she should conclude every personal tefilla with the words: "ה' יתאן כח ממשלה לבי לטובה" - Hashem should fulfill all my requests for good: only if they're good for me." After all is said and done, we only want something if it will be to our benefit, and it was Avraham Avinu himself who infused us with this ability to understand that it's in our best interests to let Hashem stay in the driver's seat. ✨

Mrs. Genendel Krohn of Waterbury, Connecticut, is a noted mechaneches, lecturer and published author. Her most recent book is "Ma'aseh Avos."

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Comfort Food

Y.Z.N.

Mini Rugalech

Feeling in need of a quick and yummy pick-me-up?

Try these delicious mini *rugalech* in your favorite flavor! My personal favorite is cinnamon! Is chocolate your calling? Try them both for an appetizing choice!

Ingredients:

- 1 pack puff pastry (package of 36)
- Cooking spray
- Egg for glaze
- 2 Tbsp confectioner's sugar
- 1 tsp water
- Cinnamon Filling: Cinnamon and sugar, or cinnamon-sugar spice
- Chocolate Filling: Cocoa and sugar

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 375°.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Place the puff pastry on the baking sheet.
- Cut each piece in half and each half into two triangles.
- Spray with cooking spray, then sprinkle with cinnamon and or chocolate.
- Glaze with beaten egg.
- Bake on 375° for 15 minutes.
- Combine the confectioner's sugar and water and drizzle over rugelach.

Enjoy! 🌟



Recipe taken with permission from Faigy Reiner.

To see more of her recipes you can reach out and follow 646-254-2635.

Hugging 'Treat'ment

Esti S.

At-Home Facial



A facial is a treatment that typically includes the cleaning, exfoliating, and moisturizing of the face. It helps remove dead skin cells and cleanses pores of dirt and debris, leaving the skin nourished, brighter, and looking younger. Not only these, but it can also have many emotional benefits including:

- Stress reduction: Facials can help you relax and reduce stress by stimulating blood flow and releasing endorphins.
- Mood boost: Facials can improve your mood by stimulating the release of endorphins and oxytocin, two hormones that create feelings of happiness and well-being.
- Mind-body connection: Facials can help you reconnect with your body, especially your face, which can encourage mindfulness.
- Self-esteem and confidence boost: Facials can enhance the health and appearance of your skin, which can lead to a boost in self-assurance.
- Self-care: Facials can be a form of self-love, as well as a ritual of checking in with yourself and acknowledging your needs.
- Positive self-image: Facials can reinforce a positive self-image and cultivate a nurturing relationship with yourself.

You will need:

- Makeup remover
- Foam or gel cleanser
- Exfoliator pad
- Face cloth
- Face mask of your choice
- Sliced cucumbers (optional)
- Hydrating toner
- Replenishing moisturizer

Step 1:

Set the atmosphere with dim lights, soft music, and maybe a hot drink or some iced tea. Start by removing any makeup. Using some warm water, rinse and cleanse your face with your choice of cleanser. Pat dry.

Step 2:

Using an exfoliator pad, scrub your face in a circular motion. Pour boiling water over a face cloth and wait until it cools slightly. Squeeze it out and place it over your face to “steam” for a few minutes.

Step 3:

Now that your face is fully cleansed, use your choice of face mask (e.g sheet, clay, peel off) and follow directions on the package. You can find some great, affordable options at your local drug store or on Amazon. For extra fun, place sliced cucumbers over your eyes and relax!

Step 4:

Rinse your face once more, pat dry, and apply toner and moisturizer. Massage your skin gently. Hopefully your skin feels replenished and smooth and you feel relaxed and rejuvenated!

Enjoy! 

See links below

Exfoliation pad

<https://shorturl.at/NCdho>

Sheet mask

<https://shorturl.at/zpQDi>

Clay/Peel off mask

<https://shorturl.at/XZkHN>

My Thoughts

Rivkie R.

Hello Grief,

Thanks for stopping by,

Now I have the chance

To be open, to cry.

Now I can miss my baby,

Now I can be sad,

Now I can mourn my loss,

Now I can feel bad.

Now I can bring down my facade

Of always being so strong,

Now I can let myself feel,

And for my baby - long.

Thanks for giving me the chance

To hurt and feel the pain,

Because it was getting too much

For my heart to contain.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity.

To let it all out in the open,

Thanks for giving me the time

To express my emotion.

But now, Grief,

It is our time to part,

Time to go on with life,

To keep everything in my heart.

I do need your visit,

To feel pain and to cry,

But after a little while,

It's time to say goodbye.

Time to be strong,

To smile, laugh, and sing,



Time to join society

And all the obligations that it brings.

In truth, that's the 'real me',

The person I want to be,

Someone who doesn't go under

In the face of adversity.

Most of the time I succeed

To keep a smile on my face,

To schmooze and shop and cook and bake,

Make my home a happy place.

But sometimes I need the chance

To feel, to hurt, to cry,

To acknowledge the loss and the pain,

With more than just a sigh.

And so, Grief,

That is the time when,

You'll know to come visit,

You'll know to come again.

But when you make your appearance,

Please make it brief,

Because I want to live a happy life,

And not one steeped in Grief. 🌟

I Did Not (Or Did I?)

Today's theme of the day was "I did not." At the end of the day, a little voice inside me called me a failure. Upon further analysis, I realized that that voice might be speaking the truth, but only on a superficial level.

I am deeper than that.

You see, today, *I did not* do the dishes. *I did not* get around to sweeping the floors. *I did not* have the energy to go to the basement to do laundry. *I did not* make a gourmet supper. Instead, supper was simple: chicken and french fries with a can of corn. Today, *I did not* reorganize the playroom. *I did not* shop for the summer tops I really want. Today, *I did not* do my weekly food shopping. My friend is going through a rough time, but *I did not* give her a little note and treat. Today, *I did not* start cooking for Shabbos. *I did not* bake that heavenly challah I so badly wanted to make, even though everyone knows that it's smart and spiritual to prepare for Shabbos throughout the week. Today, *I did not* work (because I never do). As I crawled into bed at the end of the day, I heard the voice repeating itself in a reproachful tone, "You did not, you did not, you did not."

But I am deeper than that.

You see, today, *I did* smile at my neighbor as she ran out to her car. *I did* listen to my husband's worries

and concerns. Today, *I did* daven from a *siddur*. *I did* think about Hashem and how He is truly the Only One Who gets things done. *I did* call my mother. Today, *I did* speak with each of my children individually to ask about their day. Today, *I did* lie down midday so I could be a well-rested wife and mother in the afternoon. *I did* speak to Hashem and ask Him to help me. Today, *I did* coach my children in navigating sibling rivalry. *I did* *kriah* homework with my slow and steady 6-year-old. *I did* it with a lot of patience! *I did* clear off the plasticware from breakfast to set up for supper. Today, *I did* allow my husband to help me with baths and bedtime.

Maybe because I did not, I was able to do what I did. It may have been a less glamorous list, and I may not have had people oohing and ahing at my accomplishments. (Enviously, by the way.) Maybe no one asks me how I do it all because I simply do not. Yet, as I lie in bed at the end of my day, I feel Hashem reminding me that in the real, important things I am a success.

Ultimately, isn't His the only opinion that counts?

As I drift off to sleep, I hear a different voice cheering, "You did, you did, you did." 🌟

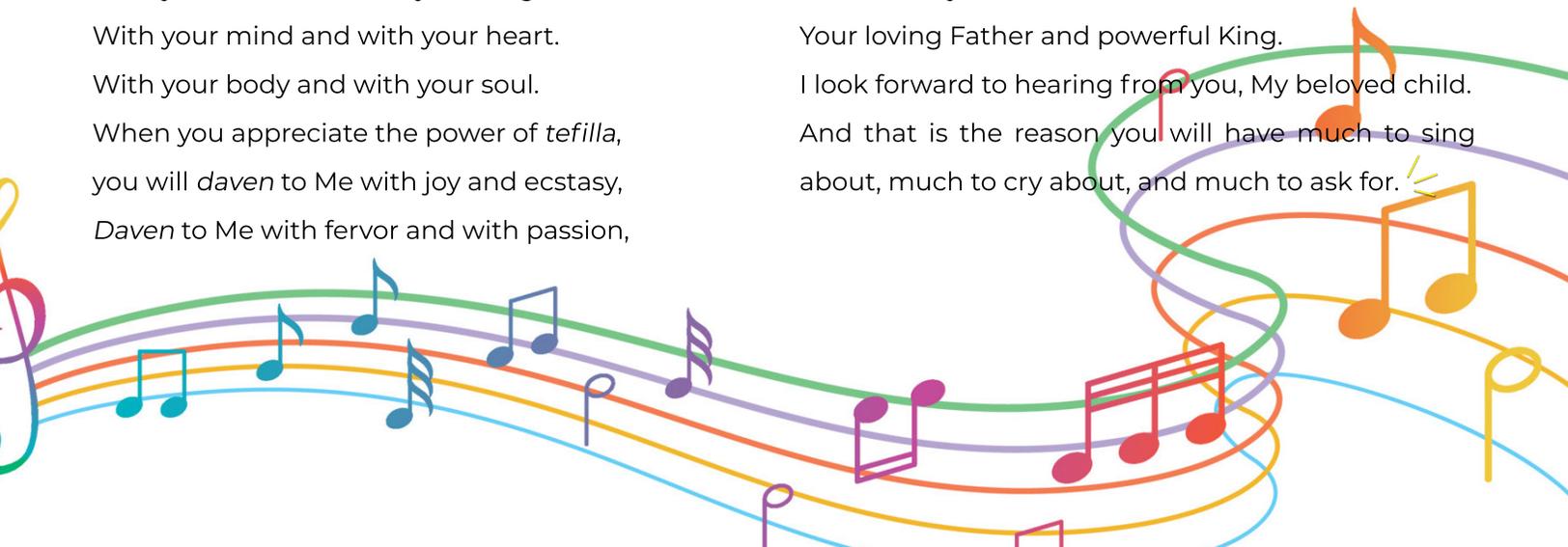
Yes You Did!

Inspiration

Rabbi Zelig Pliskin

Tefilla is the way you talk to Me.
Some *tefillas* you will sing,
Others you will cry.
With all *tefillas* you connect with Me.
When you *daven* with your mouth,
You express what is in your heart.
Let trust, gratitude, awe and love,
Flow from your heart to your lips in prayer.
Daven when you feel close to Me
And *daven* when you feel distant.
Daven when you feel elevated and spiritual,
And *daven* when you feel lowly and unworthy.
Daven when your heart is full,
And *daven* when your heart is empty.
What can you *daven* for?
For guidance and wisdom,
Health and good fortune.
For the material and the spiritual,
For all that you need.
How should you *daven* to Me?
With your tears and with your laughter.
With your mind and with your heart.
With your body and with your soul.
When you appreciate the power of *tefilla*,
you will *daven* to Me with joy and ecstasy,
Daven to Me with fervor and with passion,

Daven to me with awe and wonder.
When is it especially important to *daven* to Me?
When life is painful or difficult,
When you are confused or overwhelmed,
When you are suffering.
Through *tefilla*, you
Elevate yourself,
Enter the world of spirituality,
Expand your consciousness.
Let your soul soar.
When you *daven*,
Meditate on that which is eternal.
Reflect on the meaning of the words you say.
Contemplate the awesomeness of the One Whom
you address.
Increase your love for the One to Whom you speak.
What will you find with *tefilla*?
Serenity and inner peace,
Insight and perspective,
Inspiration and empowerment.
With *tefilla* you will find
Your loving Father and powerful King.
I look forward to hearing from you, My beloved child.
And that is the reason you will have much to sing
about, much to cry about, and much to ask for.



The Power of Tefilla

A.S.A.P.

After reading this,
You'll think differently
About the acronym
"A.S.A.P."
There's work to do, deadlines to meet,
You've got no time to spare!
Yet as you rush the clock to beat-
Always Say A Prayer!
In the midst of family chaos,
"Quality time" is rare.

Just do your best, let Hashem do the rest, and
Always Say A Prayer!

It may seem like all your worries
Are more than you can bear,
Slow down and take a breather- and
Always Say A Prayer!

Hashem knows how stressful life is
He wants to ease our cares,
He will respond A.S.A.P if we
Always Say A Prayer! ✨





Surrendering to the King

Our lives are in the Hands of the One Above

On Rosh Hashana, we reaffirm the great truth that Hashem is King. Hashem is in charge, and we aren't. Hashem determines our fate, and we don't. Ironically, it's liberating to recognize our total dependency because we no longer carry the burden of impossible responsibility. Try as we might to control our destinies, we will never succeed; permission to give up is a blessing.

I get terrified when there is a lightning storm, and I'll do anything to avoid going outside when it rains — just in case. I mean, people die from lightning, you know.

Sure I know. People die from all sorts of things. Tripping on the sidewalk. Car crashes. Terrorist attacks. Slow diseases and sudden heart attacks. This world is a scary place.

Trying to Beat the System

Some people think they can work around the danger by being extra careful. The person who won't go outside in the rain, like the person who refuses to fly in an airplane and the person who wears five masks to walk alone outdoors, is trying to "beat the system." But Hashem has put us in a dangerous world in a state of utter vulnerability with the expectation that we'll go out into the world to support our families, interact with our communities, and take our kids to school — even though none of us can ever count on coming home alive.

I don't go to indoor malls. A lot of crazy things happen in those places. I shop online — it's much safer.

Right. A lot of people think that staying put — in their own home — is the safest thing they can do. I know someone who felt that way too — until a car drove through her living room one day while she was sitting in her La-Z-Boy rocker, reading her magazine. Fortunately, she survived (The house had to be completely rebuilt) but the experience left her keenly aware that you can't hide from the King's decree. This was a woman whose anxiety about her health had overtaken her life before the incident. *"What if this headache is really a*

tumor?” “What if this rash is something serious?” Her obsession with the possibility of dying brought her to the doctor many times each month. “It’s important to check these things out. I know someone who waited too long to see the doctor, and then he died of stomach cancer.”

Sure. Because you don’t want to die. This is a problem for us humans because we are fully aware that we’ll die. We just don’t know how, when, or where. The details are up to Hashem — another thing that we know. But it’s not until we crown Hashem King that we can really know this truth. Until then we might go to the doctor five times a month, “just in case.” We allow the doctor’s reassurance to be the source of our safety — even though we know that doctors can make mistakes. We allow our homes to lend reassurance — even though we know that deadly accidents happen in homes all the time. We’re looking everywhere for safety and reassurance, but the only place we’ll find it is in our own hearts; we won’t be safe until we recognize and acknowledge that Hashem protects us in this world and on the way to the next. The twin concepts of Kingship and judgment (destiny) form the essence of Rosh Hashana and the essence of our faith. It’s up to Hashem.

Live Your Life

So how is one supposed to live amidst all the danger and uncertainty? Normally. One should do whatever people in her time/place/culture consider to be normal activities. Is it normal to get into a car? Then do it. Is it normal to go outside when it’s raining? Then please go. The idea is that you should protect yourself to some extent (e.g. wear your seatbelt, glasses, etc.); don’t do anything that’s obviously risky (e.g. stand under an umbrella alone in a flat farm field during a lightning storm), and just go about life. If the King has decreed that this is your time and place, then it will be, and if it hasn’t been so decreed, then it won’t be. You can’t keep yourself “safe.” And that’s precisely why it’s so relaxing to crown Hashem King. Because you finally acknowledge that you’re not in charge, and after you’ve taken appropriate, normal steps, then everything is out of your hands. When you really believe this, you can finally relax and live life.

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A Mother's Words

S. K.

Although They Said...

I buried you, my child,
And although we did not sit *shivah*,
Oh, how we mourned.
Although people did not visit us,
Or be *Menachem avel*,
I needed their love and care.
Although they said you must have been imperfect,
Oh, how perfect you were.
Perfectly formed.
Although they said, "Get over it,"
How do I do that?
It's not an obstacle on the ground... it's in my being.
Although they said, "You'll have more and you'll
forget,"
I wasn't so sure about that.
Couldn't dare to hope, to try again.
Although they said, "Go out, meet people,"
I couldn't face those
With an infant in their arms.

Although they said it's normal,
Happens to so many,
I didn't want to be part of a statistic.
You think I lost a fetus?
I lost my baby.
I buried my child.
Until now I held you
Under my heart,
Now you're in my heart. Forever.
Although they may see me smile,
Just know
My heart is shedding blood.
Although you may see me socialize,
Seemingly "Getting on with life,"
Know that there is a void inside my soul.
Although I thank Hashem
For what I have,
I yearn for what I don't. <

Inner Expression

F.R.

SPLIT MY SEA

I stand here all alone
Facing the deep, roiling waters
They scream
They warn
Stay away-
For those who enter
May drown
Go under
Not survive the day.

But far away
Across the dangerous,
threatening sea
It sparkles
A treasure-
Those who bravely cross
Will be rewarded
A prize with no measure.

Incredibly dangerous waters,
Anxiety
Utter fear-
They scream
They warn
Stay away
Do not dare-
A jeopardy

Do not risk
Time to despair.
But far away
After the endless fearful months
It sparkles
A treasure-
Those who bravely traverse
Will be rewarded
A prize with no measure.
Tatty!
I am scared!
Monstrous waves
Ever so wild-
Help me!
Save me!
I am Your child!
Oh, how I yearn
To acquire the treasure
How I dream-
"A Yiddishe Mamme"
Please Hashem!
Let me join the team!
No explanation
Left in the dark-
No solution

My troubles
A mystery
A bold question mark.
But Tatty!
You are mighty
You are strong-
The ultimate Healer
Can repair all wrong.
I will bravely take the step
Enter the waters
Shut my eyes-
Make the jump
Conquer the waves
And envision the prize.
I will do my all
And you do the rest
הושיע את עבדך!
Help me pass the test
הושיע נא!
Healer of all healers
Split my sea!
Help me cross through it
Safely
Smoothly
אישועתך קויתי! ✨

Small Talk, Big Talk

I have been feeling down and disinterested in doing anything enjoyable. Any ideas for how I can snap out of it?

Blast the music and dance! It will feel weird at first, but as you get into it you'll start to feel better. You can't feel down when you're dancing!

E. W.

Don't force yourself to snap out of it, with time it will come back to you by itself.

F.R.

Do something enjoyable as a couple. Play a game, go away for the night and just make you-time even if you don't want to do it initially. Once you start you'll enjoy it. Also, the fact that you want to step out of it is a big deal in itself!

Y.N.

It might not be what you want to hear, but I'll say it anyway: This too shall pass.... Healing takes time. Hugs,

C.K.

Next Issue's Talk:

A neighbor asked me to take her 2 year old for the night. Had my child been alive, they would have been the same age. It was very hard for me to get the request in the first place, and either response would leave me feeling bad. Any advice or thoughts? 

I found the answer in the question itself! Your enjoyment right now is not to do anything...

When I was "there", I chose to enjoy 'doing nothing' because forcefully snapping out of it would make me snap right back in. The more I validated myself, the more ready I was to tap into ideas that came my way.

My lovely sisters did remind me (yes, gently) about some of my hobbies - writing, playing Boggle with myself (from the weekly publications), doing puzzles, etc., and I'm very grateful to them.

But, like everything post-loss, this also came with ups and downs. There were still plenty of days of going back to 'doing nothing', and I tried to 'enjoy' that too. I reminded myself to validate my emotions and that, "It's okay not to be okay - yet!"

B. Fried

Don't force yourself to get out of it. With time you will get back to yourself.

F.D.

Pomegranate Chicken

This is a complex but heavenly chicken recipe! Although some ingredients are a bit exotic, it is a must-have at every *yom tov* table! Pomegranate chicken is delicious, flavorful and fun to make, and it is very much in the spirit of Rosh Hashana and the *simanim*!

Base Ingredients:

- Package of Chicken Bottoms
- 2 Onions
- Baby Carrots
- 1 tsp Thyme
- Salt and Pepper
- 1 Cup Prunes and Apricots (dried fruit)

Marinade Ingredients:

- ½ Cup Pomegranate Juice
- 2 Garlic Cubes (frozen)
- 1 tsp Lemon Juice (preferably fresh-squeezed)
- ⅓ Cup Balsamic Vinegar
- 2 Tbsp Oil
- 2 Tbsp Honey

Instructions:

- Spray pan with cooking spray
- Put onions and carrots on bottom of pan
- Add the chicken
- Add spices
- Add dried fruit on top
- Marinate
- Cook covered for 2 hours at 350°.

Enjoy! 



Artistic Expression

Anonymous



Sometimes in life all we see is the long, winding road of places left to go. When we look up, we don't look at how far we've come, only what we still need to climb. It's our job to notice the growth too and even on the windy days to hold strong. We can allow our leaves to blow and fall. We might feel crunched by others around us. It's okay to have hard days. We have our setbacks, but we need to know that we can get up and start climbing again. If we don't start the climb, there won't be a hike. These steps lead us to the unknown, but in order to continue, we must take the next step. It will only bring us to a better place of true healing. Our journey is ours to climb, so don't give up! ✨

To share your artistic creation, find our contact information on page four.

Dear Diary

Shira N.

Dear Diary,

It's been one of those days where you think the day can't get any worse and then... it does! So, to start, my doctor's appointment went just fantastic. He stared me right in the face and with a sweet voice went, "I think your BMI is above average." In other words, I'm fat! Fat! Fat! Fat! How I longed to hear an explanation for my losses. Some insight instead. I felt tears well up in my eyes at another disappointment. Another door slammed in my face. Then, when I got home, I answered a call from my friend. "Phew," I thought, "At least I'll get venting time!" But she told me that she's expecting. Ouch. That was bad timing with my very sour mood. There went my venting session. So, I'm sitting here writing. If the day couldn't get worse, don't worry! It did! Someone from an organization called me up to wish me mazel tov on my beautiful new baby! Oh my goodness!!! Did they really?? Like, isn't it your job to help us and keep track of these things????? Big ouch and big mistake. I cried the whole night and thought it worthy enough to tell her my baby died and that she should be careful who she calls. Poor lady. Poor me. I think I need an overdose of chocolate. Consider it done :) Anyway, I'm hoping for a much better day tomorrow.

Until next time,

Tova 

My Thoughts

S. Newman

LITTLE BLUE HAT

Dear Baby Hat,

You were placed on his head for just a short while.

So small. So soft. So beautifully knitted.

You were bought to keep him warm but instead sat on a cold head that turned blue mere minutes after birth. What is your purpose, small little hat? Where

will you go?

I wonder what your journey would have been like.

A small little hat on top of a small little baby.

Now you are alone beside his teddy in a drawer locked away

It's not like you to remain all alone, yet you weren't given a choice.

My sweet little hat, I longed to use you.

We waited together and smiled together, but I brought you home without your partner.

Until next time, dear little hat, and may there be a next time soon,

Your Buyer ✨



Quote Me

"If you can't do great things, do small things
in a great way."

*"Life is a choice between aging and growing.
Aging is adding years to your life.
Growing is adding life to your years."*

**"Success is not the absence of failure, it's the
persistence through failure."**

Did You Know?

Rachel Aron

We're only human, and mundane things like food and clothing have the ability to bring us happiness. The Rambam said that for *simchas Yom tov*, men should eat meat and women should buy a new article of clothing or piece of jewelry. We are told to do things that make us happy so we can tap into the joy of the holiday in this way! ✨



GENERAL INFERTILITY, USA

Dr. Shoshana Karasick

Thursdays, 9:30pm

GENERAL INFERTILITY, INTERNATIONAL

Mrs. Joy Ehrman

Sundays, 12:00pm NY

7:00pm Israel

SECONDARY INFERTILITY

Mrs. Ruchy Rosenfeld

Rebbitzen Malkie Spira, LMHC

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

PREGNANCY LOSS

Mrs. Chumi Friedman

Mrs. Yonina Kaufman, LCSW, PMH-C

Tuesdays, 9:30pm

MOTHERS OF COUPLES EXPERIENCING INFERTILITY

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

MALE FACTOR, WIVES

Sundays, 8:30pm

WOMEN'S FERTILITY AFFECTED BY CANCER

Mrs. Yonina Kaufman, LCSW, PMH-C

Mrs. Toba Wolf

Sundays, 10:00am NY

5:00pm Israel

ENHANCING YOUR MARRIAGE

Mrs. Brany Rosen

Mrs. Suri Moskowitz

Wednesdays,

9:30pm

POST-HYSTERECTOMY

Dr. Shoshana Karasick

Mondays, 9:30pm

UNSUCCESSFUL IVF CYCLE

Dr. Sara Barris

Tuesdays, 8:00pm

MOTHERS OF GIRLS WITH TURNER SYNDROME

Mrs. Joy Stimmel, LCSW

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

GENERAL INFERTILITY, MEN'S GROUP

Mondays, 10:00pm

SINGLE GIRLS WITH KNOWN FERTILITY ISSUES

Wednesdays, 9:30pm



DID YOU EXPERIENCE A LOSS?

You're not **Alone.** *Recuperate.*

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AND RECUPERATE

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Call 732.905.3020 ext. 151

ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Resources

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not of weakness.

A TIME

P: 718-686-8912 Ext. 113
E: losssupport@atime.org
W: www.atime.org

A TIME/HUG offers emotional support and medical guidance. Support includes comforting packets home delivered and/or mailed throughout the world, monthly phone supports, a Groupme support chat, special webinars and teleconferences, a 24 hour helpline (Kol Chaya/ 845-81-ATIME), doulas who are trained to be with couples when delivering babies born still, *chevra kadisha* services when necessary, and so much more.

Haneshama

A beautiful telephone line, in Yiddish, for the Jewish Woman. (A project of Tal Shel Tchiya) 718-906-6466, 4, 7. Options 6 and 7. For the password, call/text Rivky at tel # 929-214-0503.

Our Tapestry

P: 718-438-6930 and 718-771-3443
E: miriam@ourtapestry.org
chanadevorah@ourtapestry.org
W: www.OurTapestry.org

Our Tapestry provides support and inspiration to families who have suffered the loss of a child, sibling or grandchild. We offer a publication, WhatsApp chats, support groups and events.

IVF Loss/Spa Box

E: ljustneedahug1234@gmail.com (Delivery in Lakewood)

Knafayim

P: 718-925-2113
E: support@knafayimwings.org
W: knafayimwings.org

Knafayim Wings supports those who experienced a pregnancy/infant loss. We offer guidance, counseling, and referrals. We hand-deliver care packages for those who experienced a loss, lead phone support groups moderated by licensed professionals, host lectures by doctors discussing topics related to the physical and emotional aspects of loss, and send out weekly inspirational messages culled from the *parsha* of the week.

RSK

P: 845-414-8001 Ext. 103
E: thekitchen@rsk.org
W: RSK.org

Our program is geared for families hit by a sudden shift in the household which results in limited parental availability to prepare dinner, as well as financial constraints. We provide meals that would ease this physical and financial burden. Once an application is submitted and approved, we send you an email with the menu.

Hug In a Box

E: support@huginabox.org

Are you or someone you know struggling with pregnancy loss or infertility? Contact us for a complimentary care package to show you that you are not alone. Available in the US, UK and Israel.

Do you know of any helpful resources? Help us keep this list updated!



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