

HEAL

Hope and Encouragement After Loss

Issue 2 - Winter 2022



From Our Hearts

Dear Friend,

The release of another HEAL magazine coincides with Chanukah, which is a time of miracles, big and small.

Chanukah implies hope. The *Maccabim* didn't despair, they didn't lose hope. They held onto their faith despite the obvious bleak situation. Their salvation came in an unexpected turn, as a miracle too astounding to fathom.

Chanukah represents willpower and strength. We are all familiar with the miracle of the oil, which amazingly lasted eight days. What is also remarkable is that one anonymous individual had the determination to search for the oil amidst the destruction. The days of Chanukah encourage us to search for our own inner light, even when the darkness is heavy.

Chanukah foreshadows upcoming miracles. The flames of the *menorah* reveal sparks of resilience and faith. It's ok to have the cry you need, as the sorrowful emotions that you express are healthy and part of the grieving process. May hope and faith envelop us during these sacred days, and may we all be *zoche* to be granted all that we yearn for.

The HEAL Team,

Chaya, Ettie and Gitty

Contact Us:

To Subscribe [Click Here](#).

For all submissions, questions, or comments [Click Here](#). You can also Email healandhope1@gmail.com, or call/text (570) 630-4419.

Waiting to hear your voice!

Please note: Some women find that reading about loss brings up old pain. At the time when you are not comforted by the read, please be in touch with us to be removed from our mailing list.

H.E.A.L is a 501(c)3, Non-Profit Organization. Our aim is to provide you with a *chizuk* magazine at no cost. Your donations will enable us to continue our work.

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From Your Heart

I loved reading the magazine. The articles are so well written! Loved the graphics too! I'm sure it gave *chizuk* to a lot of women!

Sury

Kudos to you, Chaya, Ettie and Gitty! What a beautiful compilation! It's amazing!

D.M.

Hi! I felt very validated by Chumi Friedman's response last issue to the question about others brushing away the pain of a loss by saying, "at least you have other children". I would like to add a quote I came across. "Before you tell a grieving parent to be grateful for the children they have, think about which one of yours you could live without."

Please accept my sincere thanks for this beautiful magazine! It provides me with *chizuk* and inspiration.

C.S.

Thank you for creating! This is beautiful.

M.J.

Thanks for the inspirational topics covered in the mag! I would like to add a thought that keeps me going and I hope it'll inspire others.

One day while I was *davening*, I was hit with an exciting thought. You know when there is this famous person that everyone feels extremely good to have a connection with? And feeling superior that you are the lucky one to have a relationship with that someone? I suddenly got this sense of pride that 'I have a personal connection with Hashem! He personally chose ME out of the many other people in this world to go through this.'

I don't always feel so special ;(I have my downs, but I have ups as well, B"H!

Esty Reiss

I literally had to tear myself away from the mag. It's unreal! I can see your effort in it. It's beautiful and it touched my heart the first second.

S.C.

This Issue was sponsored anonymously *L'eilui Nishmas*

מרים בת יעקב מנחם הלוי and דוד בן משה ארלי הלוי

My Thoughts

Dear World,
I cry in the car...
Alone
I cry in the shower...
Alone
I cry on my pillow...
Alone

Whenever I am alone
I cry a little while...

So I can face you with a smile :)
Grieving Mom

Flight of Life

Gitty R.

Looking out of the window an awesome sight greets me. The scene is beautiful and takes my breath away. I thoroughly enjoy the flight and allow myself to relax. The scenic view from below keeps me glued to the window. The plush white clouds look so warm and inviting. I am awestruck by the beauty of it all.

When the plane unceremoniously shakes due to heavy turbulence, I panic and tremble with fear! At times the shaking is bearable, but sometimes it is less so. As the minutes tick by, I find myself increasingly anxious to be back on firm grounds. The map says we've got a bit more to go, but at last we're homebound!

Every single person endures turbulence on the ride of life. They cover a wide range of pain and challenges at different intensity levels and at different stages. Some are more obvious, while some are very well hidden.

Life is a journey indeed.

When we know the destination, when we know where we're heading, our journey is different

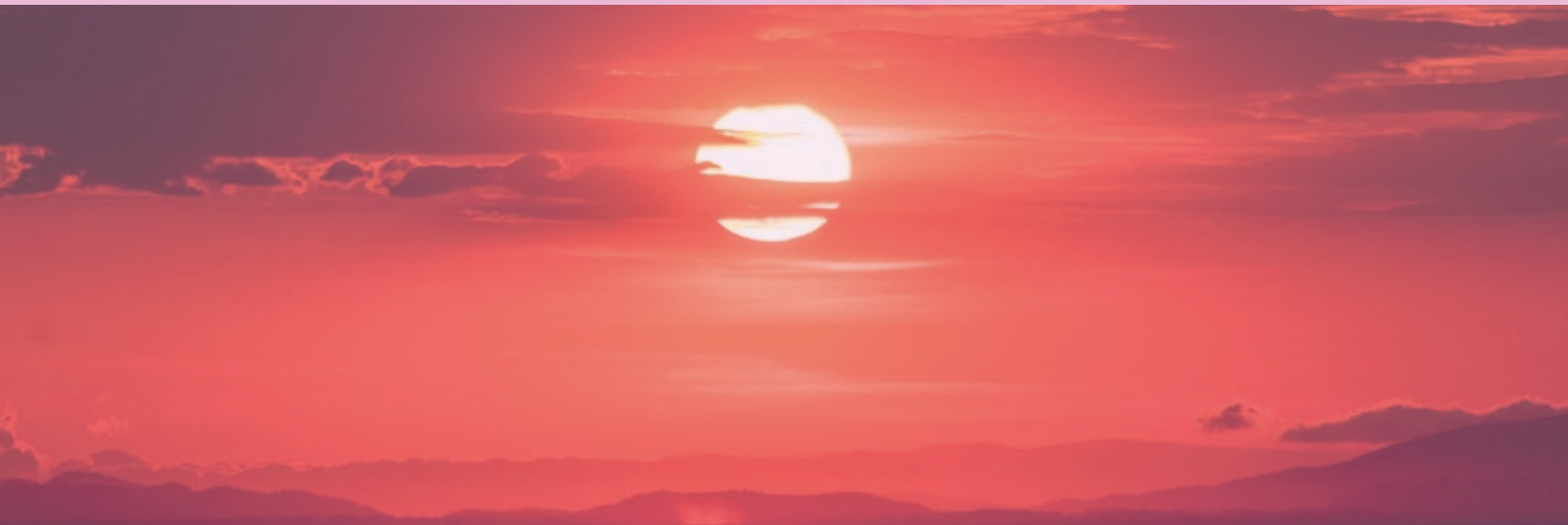
altogether. We gain a deep sense of purpose and understanding. Together with this understanding we get to experience acceptance and calmness, learning to trust Hashem and turn solely to him. On the flight of life, our mission is to serve Hashem in spite of the hardships we're enduring. We accomplish that by doing *mitzvahs* and strengthening our bond with Hashem, thus being *zoche* to bring moshiach closer.

With Hashem as our pilot, His control is the leading force that keeps us going. We feel His presence on our journey, we're being kept warm and cuddled within His secure embrace. He keeps us close and safe despite the turbulence we're going through, for He is the one orchestrating it all. We need to seek the connection, which is attained by practicing *emunah* and *bitachon*. The better the connection is, the smoother the journey.

Buckle your seat-belts, we're preparing for landing. The final destination is the *Geulah*, which is imminent!

Faithfully Grateful

Gitty R.



"Everything in life is a present. How do we know that? Because it's not ours. How do we know it's not ours? Because Hashem can take it away at any second."

-Quoted from Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein

I can breathe? See? Smell? What a gift! Covid taught us that everything a person has is a gift, even the most basic things that we sometimes take for granted. Only when we lose something we hold essential do we start realizing what a blessing it is. Let's appreciate all we've got while we have it, as *Hashem* is in control of giving and taking. We're powerless when it comes to controlling life.

Let's take an example from our eyesight. A young man faced losing his eyesight as a result of being diagnosed with a degenerative eye disease. Did he know to appreciate his eyesight prior to the diagnosis? Probably not; the appreciation is a lot deeper now.

Rabbi Yaakov Rahimi recounted a fascinating story that recently took place in Israel. Rabbi Halpert, founder and leader of a renowned organization helping those going through the challenge of infertility, was traveling from the US to Israel for a short period of time. Being in the Holy Land, he visited *Kivrei Tzadikim* to pray on behalf of *Klal Yisroel* and for himself. At one kever,

Rabbi Halpert saw a person sobbing into his *tehillim* with heartrending sobs. At first he was to give that man his deserved privacy, but then decided against it, figuring he might be able to help him. He approached the man and asked if he could be of assistance. The person simply replied '*Hakol B'seder*' and continued shedding tears into his *tehillim*.

With a kiss on the holy *sefer*, the man approached Rabbi Halpert to explain. "Today, my youngest daughter got engaged. Just as I came to this *kever* to cry for her to find her *bashert*, so too I came to give praise to *Hashem*. And I am thanking Him for the *yeshua* just as fervently as I was praying for it".

Rabbi Yitzchok Sorotzkin gave a very powerful speech explaining why *Hashem* uses *Midas Hadin* at times. What does He want to achieve by it? Rabbi Sorotzkin went on to explain that there are three answers to that.

A- He wants to evoke *yiras shamayim* in us. B- To make us realize that we are not in control, which brings a person to be awed by *Hashem's* ways. C- For us to recognize how many blessings we have in life. We should notice that we have so much to thank *Hashem* for!

We always talk to *Hashem*, asking Him to help us. We don't just mutter a general plea, but present our detailed order for the *yeshuos* we yearn for. Let us learn to thank *Hashem* in detail, just the way we prayed for it in detail.



Answers on the Mark

Chumi Friedman

Soon after my loss I was surrounded by well-meaning people telling me "before you know it you'll be pregnant again", "you'll get over it", "Hashem has a plan in store for you" and the like. My husband also urged me to move on, and encouraged me not to sit in my pain. All this pressure made me feel like I have no right to feel sad (because Hashem did this for a reason). I pushed myself to ignore the pain although it was sitting like a bulldozer on my heart. At this time, I am functioning quite okay on a day to day basis, but there is gloom and sadness in my heart all the time, which sometimes explodes. (More often than I would've liked it to).

My question is; is this considered not healing properly? Will I ever get rid of the lingering sadness? I would appreciate advice on how to go about it, now that I am in this situation.

Scared of Sadness

Dear Scared of Sadness

As we discussed in the last issue, very often those around us are uncomfortable with our pain. They want us to "move on" because it will make life easier for them. It's not that they don't care about our feelings; they do. The intensity of our sadness, however, may be too difficult for them to hear about.

Telling us that *Hashem* has a plan is very nice; it's also something we know. That doesn't mean we aren't allowed to grieve; in fact, we are supposed to grieve after a loss - pain and sadness are normal emotions.

Telling us that we will have another baby is not helpful as none of us have been gifted with *nevuah* and we don't know the details of *Hashem's* plan. So, we feel pain and sadness; we are grieving what we thought was going to be, what we hoped and dreamed about - and are surrounded by people who want us to move past the pain.

Is that something we can do?

The answer is yes, it just takes time and patience - with ourselves and our emotions. Once we acknowledge that we have a right to feel sad, that we have a right to be in pain, then we can give our feelings space to exist. And once they have a space, once they have been honored and acknowledged, we can find small ways to learn to live with them so it doesn't feel like we are being stabbed in the heart on a regular basis.

We will never forget these losses, however, with time and some work, we will be able to live in this new reality and be happy.

For now, know that it is okay to feel sad; it's okay to grieve. There will come a day when the lingering sadness will be just a reminder of what you expected your life to be like.

Reach out anytime if you want to explore this idea more.

Chumi Friedman
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*Have a question?
Ask the
professional!
Find our contact
information on
Page 2*

Poems

Keys *By: Faigy*

Have you ever stared at death, right in its face
When there should have been tremendous happiness in its place?
Have you ever seen a bitter end when there was so much more ahead
And realizing it can't return, you can't rebirth the dead?
Have you ever had the feeling of numb with nothing to grasp
As your world as you know it begins to collapse?
Have you ever worked so hard for something, and just before you're done
Lose it all in an instant, leaving you just stunned?
Have you ever had the feeling of your world turning all dark
And nothing can heal the wounds buried in your heart?
Have you ever dug a little hole and placed inside some seeds
Then covered them over with mud, until it can't be seen?
Have you wondered how those tiny seeds can one day sprout forth life
And grow to produce a perfect fruit; delicious, sweet and ripe?
Have you ever watched the skies go dark and spill its lofty rain
Telling those tiny buried seeds it's time for you to sustain?
Have you wondered how a drop of water can create a tree so tall
What power lies in those moist little drops, what makes those raindrops fall?
Have you ever studied the face of a child as he/she slept
Seeing that angelic shine, created just so perfect?
Have you ever listened closely to the things that children say?
You can see their little minds working, their cuteness is portrayed
Have you ever seen children near their parents and seen the similarities
How they can all be so much the same, with amazing clarity?
Have you ever bent over a newborn child and smelled that smell so sweet?
You can feel the godly touch of him, how perfect the little heart beats
Have you ever embraced a yummy child and felt their skin so softly?
You can tell this flesh isn't man made; it comes from a place real lofty

Has it ever dawned on you how a child is born and raised?
 A total *yesh me'ayin* these occurrences do amaze
 Indeed I have pondered about all these thoughts and wondered all of these
 The answer is so obvious, it can be answered with much ease
 I have seen death right before my eyes and lost all of my dreams
 I don't question why and I know it's good, although bad it seems
 I know there won't be any returning until the world to come
 In this world I said my last goodbyes to my dear son
 I see the world continues to spin and life keeps moving forward
 Grass is green, flowers smell, the skies are blue with birds
 Yes, He has made a beautiful world and will continue to sustain it
 He is the giver of all life, the earth and every planet
 He also continues to make *simchas* for friends, neighbors and family
 They all seem to be continuing to grow their families quite easily
 He possesses all the power to make life come forth
 It's Him and Him alone that keeps life on its course
 Other things in this world perhaps were sent with a *shaliach*
 But to give and create a source of life didn't give away that *mafteach*

I know there is no one else that can bless me with new dreams
 It will only happen if and when the time has come He deems
 So *Hashem*, I ask you with all my heart that you please listen to me
 I know everything has a good reason, it is all meant to be
 I'm waiting for a *yeshua* that perhaps will warm my heart



It's been a very painful year, I'm ready to restart
 All my *hishtadlus* can do is nothing, until You feel it's time
 Please answer my *tefillos*, feel my pain and hear my cry
 No power lies with mankind, it truly is all up to You
 So I turn to You, my dear father, Hakodosh Boruch Hu
 Can I be blessed with a healthy child, Oh please,
 can I just please
 For I know You, and only You, are the one holding
 the keys.

Precious Stones

Reprinted with permission from Binah Magazine

Why am I numb
When I need Him the most –
When the burdens are too great to shoulder?
When I'm standing, as if
At the edge of a cliff
Is my heart as dry as a boulder?

Recalling the time
When a few words of mine
Transformed to spring
If only again
My words were like then
Once more, there'd be a reason to sing.

But the wellsprings within
Are dry from the source
Much as I'm loathe to admit it
And it's a mistake
Staff in hand to take
And beat it and beat it and beat it.

Yes, there were times when I'd speak
And just as I'd seek
A dam would burst as I'd pray
But if He alone
Has turned me to a stone
Then... I'll serve Him as a stone today.



My AHA Moment

Chaya K.



"My heart is big enough to feel joy for others and pain for myself simultaneously!"

When friends, family, coworkers, neighbors (you name it!) have babies, it is just so triggering. It unleashes our innermost feelings of grief and longing for our own; it awakens the dormant pain. You may feel it literally piercing your heart! It's so so hard! It takes tremendous effort to separate our pain from allowing them their happiness.

- We shared a due date!
- We went shopping for maternity wear together!
- I am older; I deserve to become a Mommy first!
- My friends are expecting their seconds while I am still waiting for my first!

A woman shared on the HUG chat the following episode.

Just last night my daughter had a school melava malka. My son was mad, yelling, "It's NOT fair!" When I asked him what made him so angry, he said, "Because I should have had the melava malka! It should have been mine! I was supposed to have one and the school canceled cuz of Corona, so it's not fair that she gets one!" I realized right then and there how I sound when I think someone else shouldn't have a baby 'cuz I lost mine'?!?!?!"

I need to keep on reminding myself that someone else's happiness is not connected to my suffering in the least! No matter how similar or timely the connection is. Trust me, it's a struggle. But I know that deep down, underneath the layers of self pity and confusion and loneliness, there are feelings of joy for her, although it's hard to admit that. (Especially to myself)!

Been There

Chaya K.



When talking to Chany, her cheerful smile came through the telephone lines. We were laughing and crying together, and I rejoice at her Simcha. Let's start at the beginning and hear her story firsthand.*

With loads of joy, I got pregnant after just 6 months of marriage! I was riding on euphoria, thrilled to join the ranks of motherhood. Ever since I was a little girl I dreamed of the day that I would be a mother! In my mind's eye I envisioned my precious baby; perfect lips and tiny toes. I saw myself sitting on the couch with baby toys strewn around me and this perfect little baby in my arms. And now, the dream of my childhood was about to become a reality!

At 7 weeks the staining began, which had me running to the doctor. Nothing showed up on the sono, and the doctor recommended that I start on progesterone to try to keep the pregnancy going. The questions gnawed at me. What if this is an unhealthy pregnancy and I will work hard to keep it going, only to lose it later on in gestation? I was young and inexperienced and torn between the possibilities. I ended up waiting it out and it passed with an agonizing painful labor.

I am so thankful to my Kallah teacher, who had mentioned that having a miscarriage with the first pregnancy is quite common, as it is a shock to the body. It gave me the strength I needed to move on and face the future with a smile.

6 weeks later I was pregnant again! I held on to the belief that my first pregnancy ending in a loss was just a blip on the radar, while happy moments were quick in coming. I am forever indebted to Hakadosh Baruch Hu for the subsequent two healthy pregnancies and births; the two dear children He gave me, filling my house with love and laughter.

My little one was growing up, and there it was! A positive pregnancy test! Dreams and hopes, exciting plans and then crushing disappointment. Being at a routine exam, the doctor hemmed and hawed and said, "I think you are having a miscarriage. There is no heartbeat." It felt like ice cold water being poured on my head. This was a total shock! I actually saw the sack and the fetus at my 8 week visit a few weeks prior, and listened to the heartbeat. This time the silence was deafening. Finding my voice with difficulty, I tentatively asked the doctor, "Are you sure? Can you check again?" to which he coldly replied, "There's nothing to check. There is no heartbeat."

This was so hard! There are no words to describe my feelings of distraught and distress! These were 12 long weeks with strong pregnancy symptoms. I had every reason to believe this was going to be okay! I was so looking forward to sharing my news with family and friends. And now, there was nothing to tell. It was over.

With no other choice than to go on with life while the life within me was no more, I went to my mother to pick up my little ones. I ran upstairs for some privacy and burst out crying! Heavy sobs racked my body, with me cradling

my stomach in my arms. And yet when my son walked into the room some 15 minutes later, the tears disappeared and a warm *hellooooo!* rang out. Amazing how we are so resilient and can portray warmth when our hearts are frozen... I was scheduled for a D&C in 2 days time. I reached out to Chumi Friedman at A TIME and she was so helpful and understanding. It made such a difference to have her at my side.

I was back at work the following week when I was hit with excruciating, painful cramps, which sent me back to the doctor in a scurry. A sonogram confirmed that the D&C hadn't cleaned me out all the way, hence the cramping and the pain. My doctor prescribed Cervidil to help me pass the remaining tissue. It was so stressful; I then needed to take some more time off from work. I was so busy tending to my physical needs that I didn't have the space to grieve properly and heal emotionally.

I had booked a trip to Florida way back, and why would it even dawn on me that the pregnancy would be over by the time the day of the trip arrives? Nonetheless, I traveled with my husband and it really got me on the right track to healing. I came back with renewed strength.

I was back at work the following week when I was hit with excruciating, painful cramps

A short time later I was pregnant again. I didn't believe in the pregnancy in the least. Yet, I was excited! And nervous, too. I was sort of pushing the days to get past 12 weeks, but I never made it there. At 8 weeks I started staining and miscarried. Another D&C. Recuperation and grief all over again. I was terrified. Will I ever have another baby?!?

In my pain, I insisted they send the fetus for testing, which came back chromosomally abnormal. We were sent to a high risk doctor for a consultation. We went with unease, trepidation and nervous feelings. What are we going to hear?? After a whole bunch of tests he dismissed us with a wave of his hand. Everything is fine; both losses were "just a fluke". Feel better and dare to try again! He did find a blood clotting disorder in my blood, but claimed that it was in no way responsible for any of my losses.

Pretty soon thereafter, I saw those two lines. And pretty soon after that I was told it was a "chemical pregnancy". My reaction was to unequivocally state, *'WHATEVER! So I won't have more kids!'* I was trying to convince that to my own self... After 3 losses in 9 months, I was going crazy. Obviously I wanted more... yet I couldn't even tell that to myself.

Upsherin pics, pekalach, little peios and loads of pain. I should've had a newborn... and the tears flowed.

I tried every segula I heard of, lit a candle nightly for others in need of a *yeshua*, and worked on my *emunah*.

...I was pregnant again. My anxiety reached exceptional levels. In no way was I connecting to the pregnancy, yet I was so connected. I was waiting for the miscarriage to happen... but Hashem ordained otherwise. I got myself a Baby Doppler, which seriously helped me keep my sanity. I was a mess throughout the months, gained a ton of weight and bloated terribly.

Motzei Yom Kippur, 10 days overdue, I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, *Baruch Hashem!!*

I still say *Nishmas* every day. And I cannot stop thanking Hashem for the wonderful gift He granted me after so much loss. My anxiety is still on; my history hasn't been erased. Being ready for a pregnancy means being ready for a loss. Yet I continue to believe that although Hashem's ways are hidden, my grief and pain, 7 pregnancies and 3 beautiful children, are all a part of His Master Plan.

*Names Have Been Changed to Protect Privacy

Chany is here to support you! You can reach her through the Heal Magazine.

To share your personal story and offer hope to the many readers, please reach out to us. You can find our contact information on page 2.

Small Talk; Big Talk

After a late loss when everyone knows about your loss, it may be difficult to meet other people. It might make you feel awkward or uncomfortable. On the other hand, socializing is probably good for you. What are your thoughts?

Anonymous

In my opinion you can give yourself a little time, but the longer you wait after that, the harder it will get. However, it is very uncomfortable and awkward to go out at first. I found it helpful to ask a close neighbor to come out together with me the first time. This made it so much easier. *Hatzlacha!*

EC

I would say start by socializing with people you are comfortable with. Choose friends that are tactful and sensitive. After a while, you will feel more comfortable and it will be less awkward to be around people.

Esther

To ask a question or share your insights, find our contact info on pg 2

People knew about my loss and sadly decided to ignore the situation and keep quiet about it. I would recommend for you to start going out for short amounts of time at first, building it up slowly slowly until the awkwardness dissipates. I also feel that if people see you acting okay between others they will act okay to you

E.R.

I know! It's so hard to get out and meet people! Definitely uncomfortable! (Why is that, are we embarrassed?!) For me it worked best to have a friend, a body guard sort of, that came along with me the first few times I left my house. It did get easier though, once I saw that no one bit off my nose ;)

C.S.

Upcoming Talk

It's been a few months since my loss, and I'm still dazed, totally not back to myself. I am treating myself often and lately took on more cleaning help. How long should I let myself feel the pain and walk around in a fog? When should I push myself to get back to routine?

Confused

Comfort Food

Chaya K.

Simple Hearty Soup

Hot soup to comfort you on cold days

I make this recipe often, as it is simple, quick (only 10 minutes of prep time!) and multiplies beautifully. With this soup you can really say that once you have the ingredients home, half the job is done. Snap your fingers, and there you go! Soup for lunch, dinner and midnight snack! Put a container (or two) into the freezer for the next time you need comfort.

Prep time: 10 Minutes

Makes 14 Servings

Ingredients:

3 Spanish onions- cut into large chunks

6 cloves garlic- minced OR 8 frozen garlic cubes.

Cooking oil

3 packages 'California Blend' frozen vegetables

2 T. salt

½ tsp. White pepper

Instructions:

Using an 8 qt. pot, sauté the onions and garlic until golden. Add the frozen vegetables, salt and white pepper. Fill the pot with just enough water to cover the vegetables. Bring to a boil, then lower to medium flame. Cook for 1 hour. Blend using an immersion blender.



Soup is like a warm friend; always there to offer comfort.

Friendly Tip: Eating with a metal spoon as opposed to plastic has 2 advantages! (I know... 'fewer dishes' is a big enough excuse, but here the benefit outweighs the job it entails!) Firstly, the heat transfers to you, making you feel the warmth even more, and secondly, cuz u deserve it!

Humor Me

Y. Freund

I don't know about you, but I am in desperate need of a vacation. To be away from those pitying eyes, away from friends and acquaintances in maternity, and away from myself. Yup. Away from my feelings, thoughts, and emotions. I need a break. The question is where the best place would be. Definitely not those *Kimpeturin Heims*, although I heard that they're rated five star by those lucky enough to make it there. Sometimes I feel like it's not fair! Not only did I lose my baby, I also lost my chance of being wined and dined?!?

I will put on my thinking cap (5th grade teacher, be proud!) and think of the perfect vacay.

I have been to many places before. I have been in Furiated more than once, in Flexible when it was important to stand firm, and in Sane. I was driven there, as they don't have an airport. I went to *kivrei tzadikim* and *mekubalim* in Israel, Argentina and Hawaii. One of my favorite trips was going to Sleep. As an afterthought, I have been with my husband at Tacked as well. We were sent there by well-meaning friends and family members for reasons of being oversensitive, evading their children (born around my due date!) and for not having enough emunah and *bitachon*.

All that traveling was exhausting! Physically, mentally, emotionally, and hormonally. Some thoughtless associates have been in Sensitive, in Considerate, and a number of them in Vading; a land where there are no clear boundaries between one property and the next.

Yet we were blessed with a few friends that were in Credible and in Valuable. They sent us caring cards and treats when we were in Consolable. At this time I am dreaming of a lovely getaway at some nice, isolated location with the three of us for company. Who, you're asking? What do you mean?!?! That's me, myself and I, And when that's not enough, I will have my emotions to keep me going. I need a place where there is no need to fake a smile and to act as if everything's okay when it's just not. Away from the hustle and bustle of life and acquaintances eying my stomach, thank you very much.

So now my question is to you. Where should I go to take it easy, unwind and relax?

Any ideas??

I got the inspiration to write this article from *Shaarei Tikva*, an A TIME magazine for couples experiencing infertility.

Hugging Treatment

Toby Glick

Some days are hard.

Some days are easy.

Some days can be made easy when supplementing it with the right boost!

*Grab a few moments for yourself
and get ready to relax!*

Sit down at the table, couch, or get into any other relaxing position. Think of something that used to make you happy as a kid and allow yourself to be transformed into one :)

For many people, coloring comes to mind. As a child, coloring is a way of letting your creative juices flow and allowing your mind to enter fantasy land.

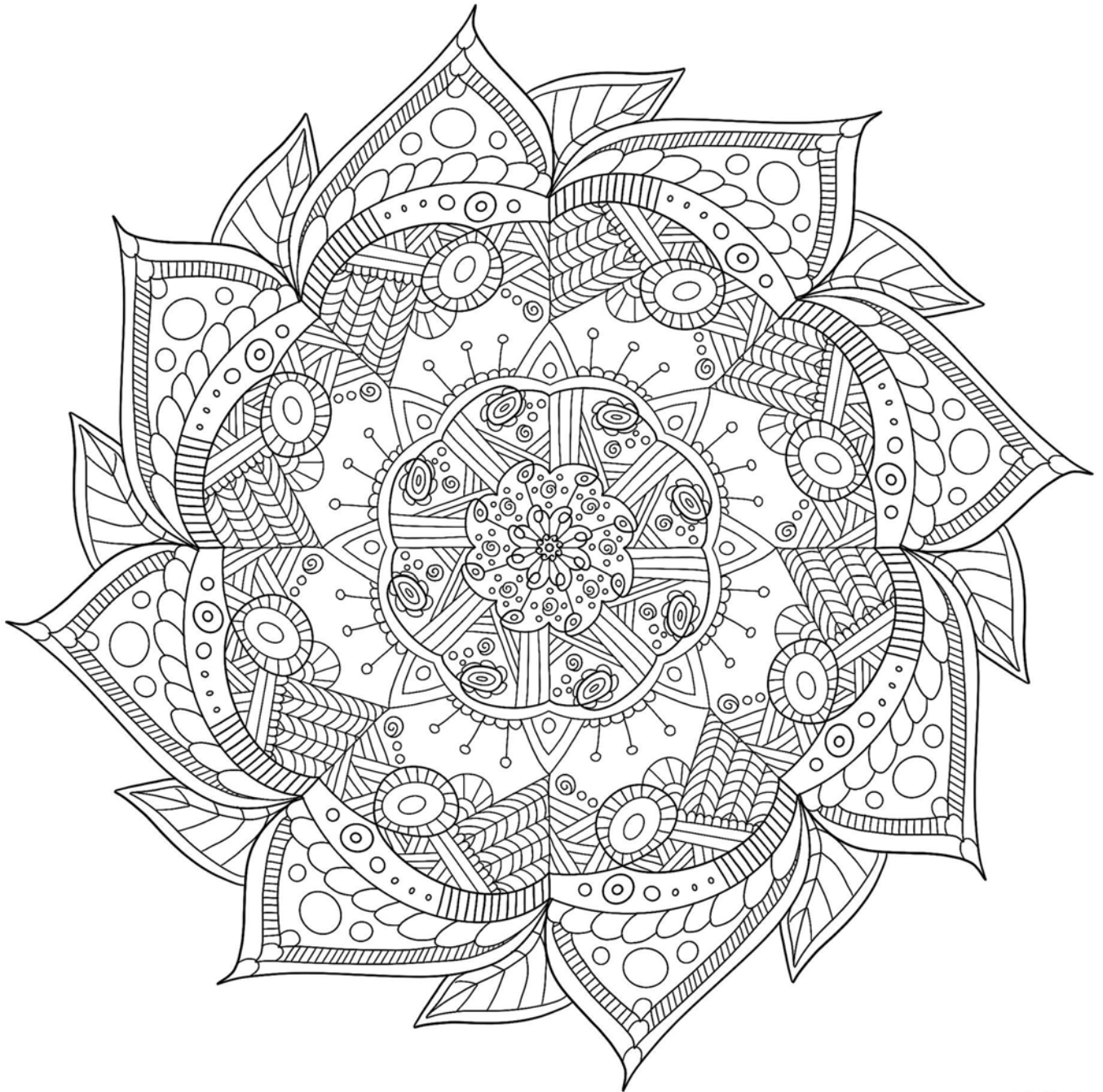
Well, coloring isn't reserved for kids only. Adults can enjoy it too! Adult coloring books are being sold in greater amounts as the benefits are becoming known. They improve mindfulness and decrease stress levels. The intricate designs make it fun and enjoyable to color while providing multiple benefits.

It's ideal to do it for 15 minutes in the morning. Enjoy a mint tea at the side for improved effectiveness.

Check out your local craft and toy stores for adult coloring books. See link below for a great one to purchase.

[Adult Coloring Book](#)

Grab some color pencils or gel pens and enjoy the coloring page we included for your pleasure!



justcolor.net

To My Dear

Reprinted with permission
from *Mishpacha* magazine.

Dearest Mommy,

You wait for the validation of a baby's first cry. Then, at last, you will feel that you deserve the title "Mommy". But you are no less a mommy than all the mothers around you.

We are your *neshamalehs*.

We are a paradox. We are the easiest children and we are the hardest children. We have never kept you up at night with our wails. And yet, we have kept you up so many nights, as the tears pour from your own eyes.

We have never thrown a temper tantrum in the grocery store. And yet, we will never stand beside you as you walk us to the *chuppah*. We have never disturbed you as you *davened* beside the candles on Friday night. And yet the thought of us breaks your heart as you whisper the words, "May I raise children and grandchildren..."

Under the *chuppah*, you encircled our *Abba*. It was the happiest day of your life. We were there. The fact that we exist only in the spiritual world doesn't make us less real. When you have reached 120 years, you will meet us at last. Your children.

The doctors were callous. "Chemical," they called us. They said we were nothing but a few cells. Unviable. Incompatible with life. You cried. *Abba* cried. Not with tears, but in his heart.

But I, your first *neshamaleh*, was whole and fulfilled. Because I knew that you and *Abba* had given me the greatest gift. You had enabled me to leave the *heichal haneshamos* and enter the *Olam Ha'emes*. Without you, I could never have known this pleasure.

And yet, if I had lived, I would have had to endure the toil, the temptation and the struggles of the physical world. My soul couldn't bear to be a part of it. Inside you but for a few weeks, I had my gateway to the Next World. And yet, I caused you such pain. I was your first. You wanted to hold me in your arms. I was the *pidyon haben* you would never make. I was the *Succos bris* you had imagined. It was the due date that would never come to pass.

My sister came next. Your hopes were raised, and then dashed. You wanted a child to nurture, but she was a *neshamaleh* and could never have tolerated this physical world. You gave her a gift. You hosted her and enabled her transition to her True Place.

Your arms are empty. Your house is quiet. When people ask, you say you have no children yet. But in your head, you count us. We know that you have endured so much for us. Not a day goes by when you don't think of us.

Mommy dearest, I want you to know that you and *Abba* have created a beautiful family. We are pure souls and you have enabled us to bask in the presence of the *Shechina*. We want you to know that we think of you, too. We love you, Mommy.

Note: information regarding miscarried children and the transition from the *heichal haneshamos* to *Olam Haba* culled from an article by Rav Moshe Wolfson "A Mission Fulfilled"

Love,
All your Neshamalehs

Dear Diary

Tova Ross

Dear Diary.....

I know I'm taking you on a roller coaster. Thanks for bearing with me, I hope you enjoy the ride more than I do. For me, this journey is draining and tearful. You are a silent witness to the pain I suffer and to the tears I shed during this tumultuous time.

I'm so confused. I'll say that again. I'm so so confused!

When I lost the baby boy I so cherished, I knew it was ok to be sad and cry. Time helped the pain heal, or so I thought. Why is it that now, when I am finally getting back to my old happy self, am I so sad and weepy? I feel that over the past few months I took 10 gradual steps forward and now in one teary day, I took 5 leaping steps back. Why is that? How long will my emotions keep me enmeshed in its tight grip? How long will I feel so vulnerable and tearful? How much longer will I fight my tears back, when there seems to be no apparent reason to cry so long?

I'm so confused. I'm so alone.

I know I need to give myself more time to heal. In theory, I agree. But in reality, it's hard to give it more time.

Hashem, help me get out of this turmoil. I can't deal with this on my own! This force is much bigger than me, and I know only you can help me get out of this bottomless pit.

Diary dear, thanks for listening to my woes for the umpteenth time during these past few months. I treasure your existence.

Be back soon!

Quote Me

“Courage is not the absence of fear; rather it is feeling the fear and doing what it takes anyway.”

"The less I take for granted, the more blessings I find."

“MOST WOMEN SAY THERE IS NO GREATER PAIN THAN TO BEAR A CHILD. I SAY, THERE IS NO GREATER PAIN THAN TO BURY ONE”

Did You Know??

Chani Kurtz

As we all know, having a friend offer a listening ear is vital for our emotional well-being. The results of a new study indicate that it's essential to our cognitive health as well! Researchers analyzed data involving over 2,000 adults, finding that those in their 40s or 50s that lacked good listeners in their lives had a cognitive "age" that was 4 years older than their peers. According to the study's lead researcher, "Today, right now, you can ask yourself if you truly have someone available to listen to you in a supportive way, and ask your loved ones the same."

It doesn't matter in which age bracket you fall into, everyone should have a good listener in their lives.

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Chanukah

The moments the candles flicker are an auspicious time for prayer. In the presence of the *menorah's* light we can offer a personal tefilla on our behalf and on behalf of our friends in need.

It is said in the name of the *Kedushas Levi* that each night of Chanukah is *mesugal* for different things to *daven* for:

1st night - Not to be lonely or depressed.

2nd night - For *shidduchim* and *shalom bayis*.

3rd night - For good, happy, and healthy children.

4th night - To be a healthy and wholesome woman, as the *Arba Imahos*, in the four walls of your home.

5th night - That your husband and children should be Torah Scholars.

-By the 5th night more of the *menorah* is lit up than not; *daven* for more light in your life, for clarity.

6th night - For *simcha*; you can have everything and still be sad, this is an opportunity to pray for joy and happiness.

7th night - Shabbos is the source of all *brachos*. Ask Hashem for happy and peaceful Shabbosos; for your *seuda* to be with *Zmiros* and *Divrei Torah*.

8th night – An auspicious time for barren women. Being that the number 8 is above nature, Zos Chanukah is a powerful day to *daven*.

The *Chasam Sofer* says that when you cry in front of the Chanukah candles you can be sure that your *tefillos* were answered.

May we all be *zoche* to have our prayers answered *bekurov*!

Chanukah

'Cool' menorah dessert

You will need:

- 1 graham cracker pie crust
- 15 black and white sandwich cookies
- 1 ½ cups (12 oz.) non-dairy topping

Instructions:

By hand, crack cookies into small chunks. Place into pie crust. Shake the defrosted whip topping in its container and pour over cookies. (You will be using $\frac{3}{4}$ of a 16 oz. container.) Freeze.

Frozen? Now the fun begins!!

1. Using a sharp serrated knife, cut the pie into 2 pieces (figure 1)

One should be larger than the other.

2. Turn around both half circles so that the round parts meet with one another (figure 2) and place on a tray.

You've got a menorah!!

3. Using your creativity, decorate the menorah with whatever suits your fancy.

Optional: You may whip up the leftover topping and use as garnish

4. Serve with a proud smile and enjoy the compliments!

Shabbos Tip: This desert can be whipped up in minutes for a special Shabbos treat. Cut into wedges and drizzle with chocolate syrup.

Recipe for Cookies 'n Cream Wedges taken from 'Table For Two'

Figure 1

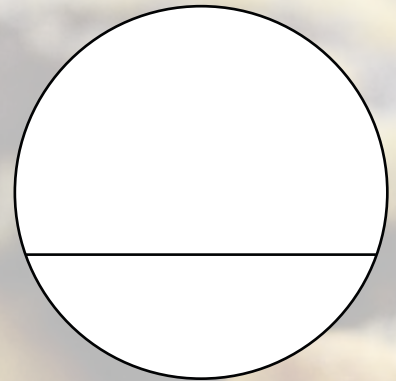
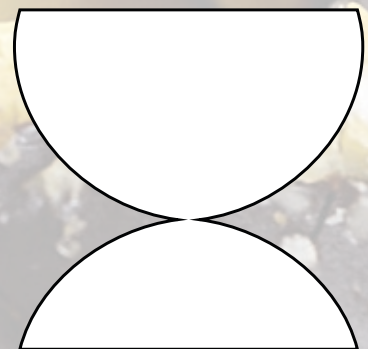


Figure 2



Sample



Chanukah

You will need:

Square shaped plates of your choice
2 Coordinating cocktail napkins per setting
Cutlery



Upgrade
your
Chanukah
dinner,
party style!
Enjoy the
dreidel place
setting as
you spin the
dreidel!

A Freilichen
Chanukah!