

HEAL



Hope and Encouragement After Loss

Issue 4 - Fall, 2022



From Our Hearts



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Waiting to hear your voice!

It's that time of year again... walking down the street on my way to the supermarket, the wailing sound of the *shofar* greets me, blasting out of the *shul's* open windows. The summer is over and *Tishrei* is approaching. We hope you had a beautiful summer with time to relax and unwind.

With *Tishrei* being the hectic time it is, it's easy to forget our own needs. With the hustle and bustle of endless shopping, packing up if going away, the cooking marathon if you're staying home and everything else that comes up, make sure to take some time for yourself. Eat properly and attempt to get enough sleep. (Am I the only one weepy and feeling down on the days I'm short on sleep or running on inadequate nutrition?)

Many of us may be thinking back to the past year or two, remembering our challenges, and wondering how we can enter Yom Tov feeling genuinely happy. The Torah commands us *V'samachta b'chagecha v'hayisa ach sameiach*. We are obligated to be happy on Succos. How do we rise above our pain and be *b'simcha*, full of joy, when we feel anything but happy?

Although it seems hard, we can definitely be happy, secure in the knowledge that our dear Father is constantly worrying for us, caring for all our needs. It is the Ohr Hachaim that responds to the aforementioned question by encouraging us to remember this, as he states in *Shemos* 22:6. "There isn't a single moment when *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* isn't working for each individual". We need to keep in mind that Hashem will continue to hold our hands and take care of us in the future. This thought gives us comfort and the possibility to enjoy our *Yom Tov*.

On Succos we make the *bracha* on the *esrog* '*miten pitom arup*'- with the *pitom* facing down. This Yiddish saying also refers to the time when life is spiraling downwards; nothing is working out the way we imagined. When everything is looking down, we thank Hashem, because although we don't understand how the challenges are for the good, challenges are good - perfectly so!.

May the following year be filled with happiness,

Wishing you all a *kesivah v'chasimah tova*,



The HEAL Team

Chaya, Gitty, Ettie

From Your Heart

WOW!! IMPRESSIVE!! I'm taking too many breaks instead of cleaning, as the magazine is pulling me too much... ;-) I love the cover; it is so fresh; springy, blooming, clean-feminine-bright-alive! I also noticed the light blue-light pink theme... The design and each and every one of the articles are amazing! Thank you! *Zei gebentcht!*

C. F. L.

Beautiful- as always.

Chumi Friedman
Director, ATIME/HUG

Just got the magazine in the mail, I'm so excited to read it! It looks beautiful! Thanks to everyone who worked on it!

Gitty

Thanks for the "healing" HEAL! I enjoyed it over *yom tov*.

Frady

Hi! Loved reading the magazine! Loved the graphics too! Amazing work!

Surie

The magazine is amazing and beautiful, and it includes so much!! I had to take a break from cleaning to read, as I couldn't wait until Shabbos :)

Rivka S.

Writing to you even before I sit down to read this gorgeous magazine! Looks so promising! *Tizka l'mitzvos!* May we all be *zoche* to share in each other's *simchas!*

Sury

Read from cover to cover! Nice work!

Rachel

I got the magazine. It is beautiful. Thanks so much!

EC

Wow, the perspective poem definitely helped me shape my perspective! Thank you, H. M., and the entire HEAL team!

LG

This Issue was sponsored

לעילוי נשמת משה יוסף בן חנני' יום טוב

לעילוי נשמת חי' חוה בת חיים זאב הלוי

להצלצת ולזכות קלנימוס קלמן יואל בן רבקה ברכה וז' שרה מלכה בת עלא ומשפחתם

וזכות יעמוד להם ולזרעם אחריהם עד עולם

To our dear readers,

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

Inspiration

Rav Gav Friedman

Just Speak to Him

There was a father who once gave his son a *potch* for something the boy had done. The boy started crying, and the father noticed that his lips were moving. He asked him, "What are you saying?"

"*Ashrei*," replied the boy. "I'm *davening minchah*. If I'm crying, I might as well use my tears for something."

If there are two words that describe our relationship with Hashem, something we say various times throughout the year, and many times over the *Yamim Nora'im*, they would be *Avinu Malkeinu*, our Father, our King. It is true that perhaps it could be frightening to stand before a *melech*, but let's not forget that first and foremost He is *Avinu*, and Hashem loves us more than we can ever imagine. The idea that Hashem loves us is now, perhaps more than ever, being spread throughout all sects of *Yiddishkeit*. The question is, do we really believe it? Like, really, really?

Harav Noach Weinberg, zt"l, founder of Aish HaTorah, would often speak about this. He

once had a *talmid* visit him in his office, located in the old city of *Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh*, five stories above the Kotel Plaza. The *talmid* was excited to introduce his son to Rav Noach for the first time. Now, Rav Noach wasn't a small man. He was over six feet tall and his character matched his size - it was big! Rav Noach looked at the boy and asked, "Hey, kid. Who loves you more than anyone in the world?" The boy looked up at this towering giant - the boy was only about 9 years old - "Ummm," he stammered.

"C'mon, who loves you more than anyone in the world?" Rav Noach asked again. The boy looked at his father, and then looked back at Rav Noach, and half-question-half-answer said, "Hashem?"

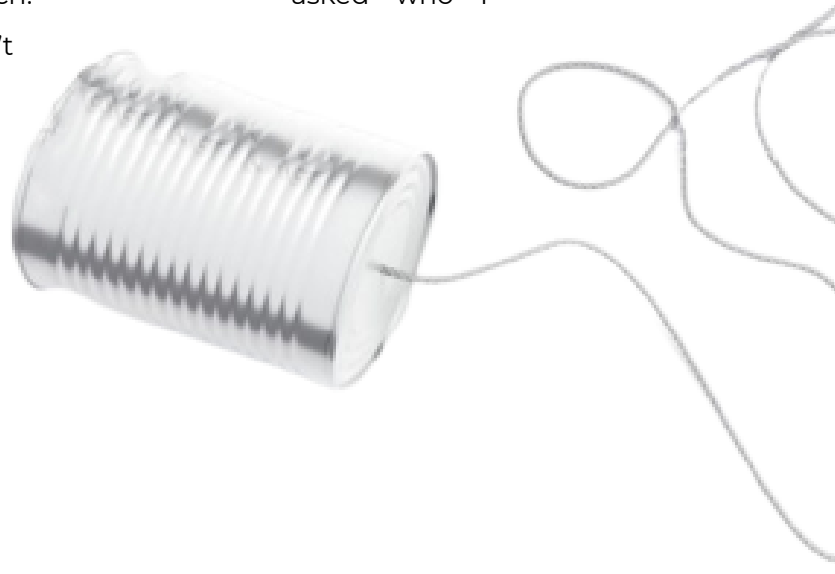
"That's right!" said Rav Noach.

"You didn't have to be so scared. It's not like I would have thrown you off the balcony if you didn't know... I would have

thrown your father off for not teaching it to you!"

We need to know that Hashem loves us, and to live accordingly. How do we make this knowledge more real? How do we internalize this idea? One way is to talk with Him. Speak with Hashem. Many of us have been blessed with a Jewish education and know how to *daven*, and may even be the *shaliach tzibbur*, but do we know what we are saying? Are we even paying attention? Or are we doing this by rote?

Some years ago, I was walking home from shul with one of my sons, and I was speaking to Hashem. My son, who was a few steps ahead of me, turned around and said, "What? I didn't hear you." I responded that I wasn't talking to him. He looked a bit perplexed and asked who I



was talking to. I said I was talking to Hashem. He now was even more perplexed and asked again. "No, really, who were you talking to?" To which I responded, "Really, I was talking to Hashem. What, you don't talk to Hashem?"

He started to answer by saying no, but quickly corrected himself, "Yes! When I *daven*," all excited to think that he had one-upped me. I responded, "That's the only time you talk to Hashem? When you *daven*? You can speak to Hashem whenever you want! In any language, just speak."

Perhaps one could say that if we only speak to Hashem during *shacharis*, *minchah* and *maariv*, maybe it just becomes

part of our routine. I brush my teeth, eat breakfast, I *daven*. Not too much thought and maybe that might be what's leading us to mumble through the davening, "hamina humnahia kimicha hmmmniuhshiratina." However, if we talk to Hashem throughout the day, then when we *daven*, it's a continuation of our conversations, of our connection, of our relationship. Hashem is our father. Talk with Him, it's meant to be real! Because it is! We have to treat it that way.

There is a story told of someone who was walking near the Kotel and overheard someone standing right at the wall and talking. "Yesterday, I went shopping, there was so much traffic getting

back home, oh, wait... I told you this last night, silly me!" She

was talking to Hashem as though talking to a person. It's real; just talk with Him.

The more one does this, the more real it becomes. It's not "fake it till you

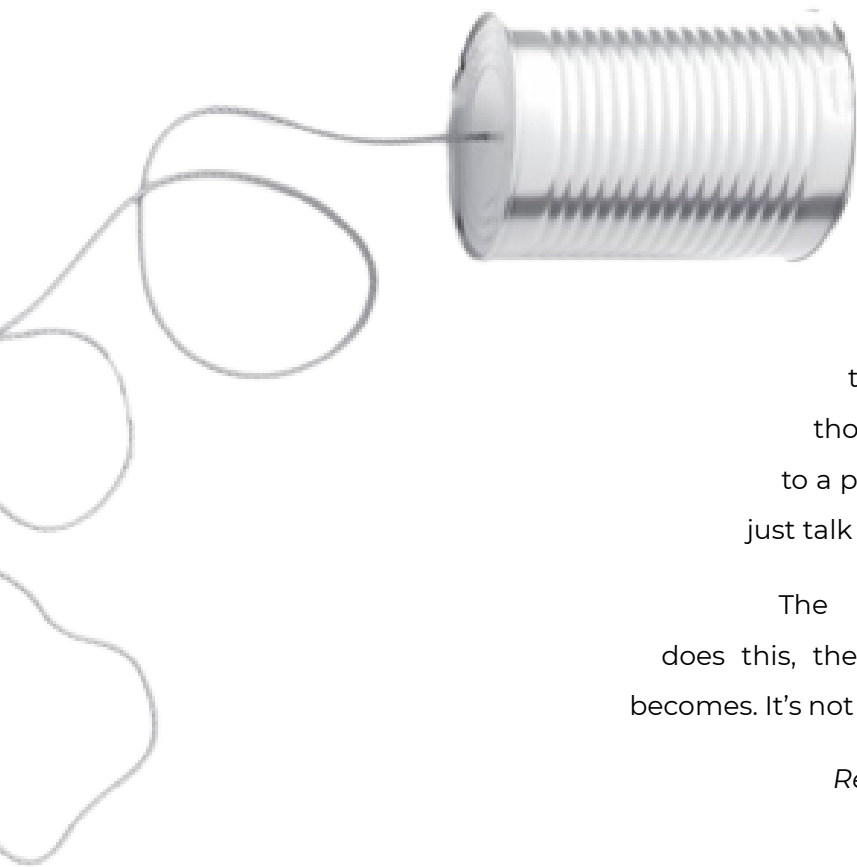
make it." It's "act to impact!"

We all know this is true, we know there's Hashem, we know He loves us, we've heard it a thousand times. But we need to internalize it, to bring it from our head to our heart.

It might feel weird in the beginning, but over time, it becomes more and more normal. After all, the deepest *tefillos* are those that are simple conversations. Dovid Hamelech writes in *Tehillim*, "V'ani Tefillah." Taken literally: "Our essence is *tefillah*." Indeed, we only exist because of *tefillah*, as we know the *Gemara* explains, "Why were the *imayos* barren? Because *Hakodosh Boruch Hu misaveh l'tefillasam shel tzadikim*, He desired our *tefillos*! Our entire existence, quite literally, only came through *tefillah*, through speaking with Hashem. He wants us to reach out and speak with Him.

So as we approach the *Yamim Nora'im*, or any time of the year, for that matter, let the message seep in...

Just speak to Him! 



AVINU MALKEINU

It seems to come quicker each year. The *Yomim Noraim*. It's always been a marked time of the year for me. I guess it is for everyone, but when going through a public *nisayon*, I feel it is just that much more.

It's time to take a look at what is so evident on the outside. I know that I'm my normal and ok me. I identify myself in such a different way compared to others who only know me superficially. I don't like it but I know that's just the way of the world. We are living in a world where we judge the outside. Yes, it's a person's circumstances that may change but that is not who we are. Seeing other people with their ever-growing families, yet me, with a family that, well, is not growing as much- is hard. I dislike (ummm... dislike is I guess putting it mildly- and politely, you see I'm respecting you, dear readers) going on the

street *Yom Tov* and seeing it all and remembering when my losses were in comparison to other children and their mummies. I guess I'm a little better now. I'm getting better at dealing with it all.

Now- first thing's first- I've



learned to focus on the 'Avinu' part more than the 'Malkeinu'. I realize that Hashem is our father, He knows all the heartache and pain. He chose this for me, though I have no idea why. I often think that perhaps in another life my family was full and there was no loss in this area, therefore in this

life, I have to work on something else. I will blossom where I've been planted. (Don't we all just love that phrase!) I will try my hardest to make the most of what I'm given. Determined to bring joy to the home I have and am committed to building on a daily basis.

Gratitude! That's a big one. Do you know? Taking the time to write down 5 things each week that we're grateful to Hashem for can actually boost our happiness by 25%! That's insane, and research has proven this. When we count our blessings we can watch our happiness

go up. It is impossible to be both depressed and grateful. (Try it!) Sometimes when my mind races and something negative 'comes up' I try to take a step back, take a few deep breaths and notice what I have right then and there to feel grateful for that second. There is terminology for that, it's called the

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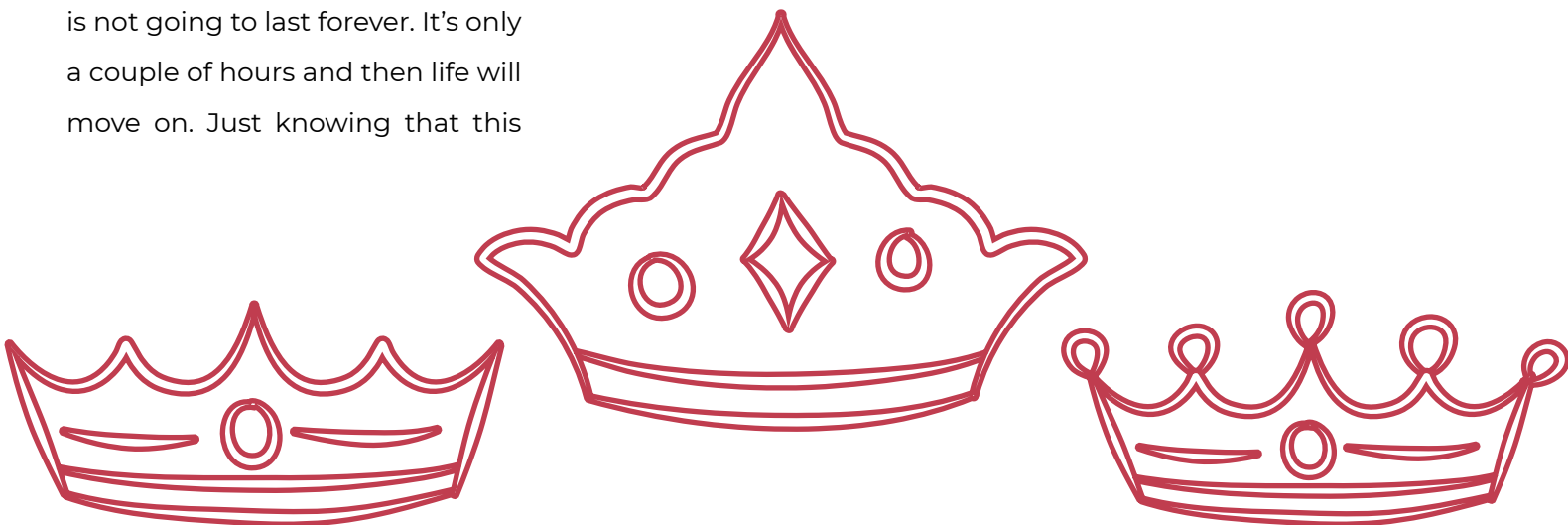
'grateful flow' (no, that's not made up- there is such a thing). I literally stop it all and look around. I'm thankful my kitchen floor is dirty- I have a home and live with others. I notice the texture of the wallpaper – thank you Hashem I can see. It also helps me focus on all the good I have in me instead of looking elsewhere and seeing other things that get me thinking.

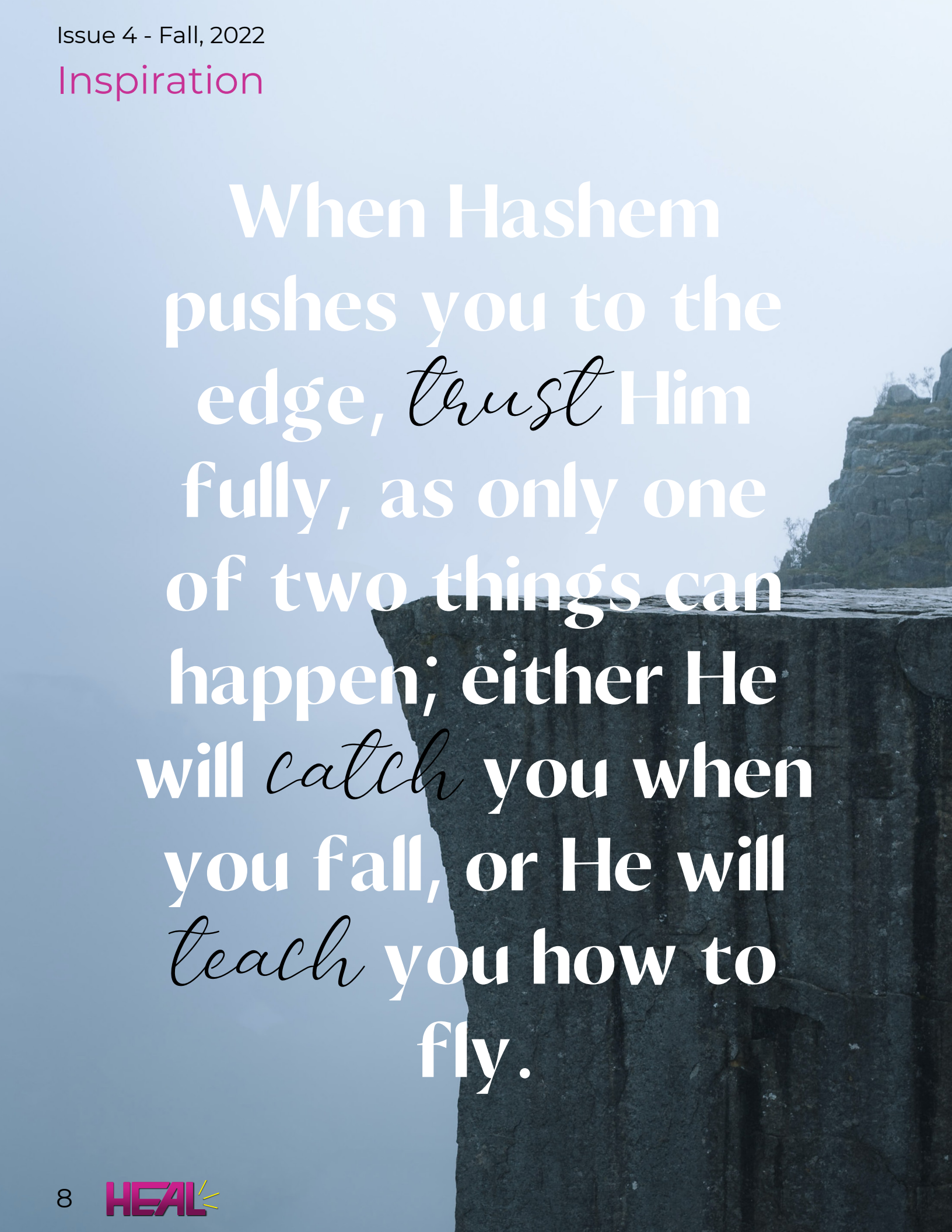
It's all a matter of time. That's another thing that helps me. I know that awkward moment is not going to last forever. It's only a couple of hours and then life will move on. Just knowing that this

pain that I'm in is not going to stay helps me. Yes there are down parts- and there will be plenty of them in this *Yom Tov* season but just knowing '*gam ze ya'avor*', it won't last forever, helps the hard times pass. Nothing stays constant. Life is full of ups and downs, and keeping that in focus is a key tool I have. I give a silent gulp to myself- prepare myself that it's going to be challenging and knowing that it's just today. Tomorrow will be different.

Moreover, after it's all said and done... after the more challenging times, I silently 'high five' myself- 'well done me!' We got through the harder moments with dignity and self-respect. I am stronger than I thought. Yes, I don't always like it when people hint at it to me, but me telling myself is fine. 'I am grateful for my struggles as I have stumbled upon my strength'.

Wishing us all a *Gut Gebentcht Yuhr*. We'll get through it together! 





When Hashem
pushes you to the
edge, *trust* Him
fully, as only one
of two things can
happen; either He
will *catch* you when
you fall, or He will
teach you how to
fly.

A Mother's Words

Yehudis Schenker

Baby'le,
You don't mind
If I mourn for you
Tomorrow,
Right?
For many days
I've been true
To you
To your memory
I've been groping
To make peace
To make sense
To make peace
With not making sense
To try to hold on
To any vestige
Any image
I have
Of you,
My child.
But today,
The window opened
Just a bit
The sun is still shining
It seems,
Though I haven't seen it
In a while.
A fresh breeze blew
Inside
Carrying with it
The distant strains
Of music.
A part of me
I haven't known in weeks

Was drawn
To the warm rays
And sweet melodies
Of Life
Outside.
So you don't mind,
Do you, Baby'le?
If I take a whiff of the
World again.
I promise
I won't forget you.
I'll cry again
Tomorrow,
I'm sure.
And if you want,
Baby'le,
You can come with me
As you always have.
I carried you
Beneath my heart
For eight glorious months.
And now
I have a little corner
Inside my heart
Reserved just for you.
So it's okay,
Right, Baby'le?
Wouldn't you want
Your Mommy
To be at least
A tiny bit
As happy
As you are? 

I WILL CRY FOR YOU TOMORROW

Faithfully Grateful

G.R.



Big miracles inspire big, loud, boisterous thank yous. That is sensible. But in the humdrum, mundane, daily living, in the miracles of blinking, of breathing, of thinking- do we recognize and give pause to those small, 'natural' miracles?

Rabbi Ari Bensoussan once gave a shiur about the significance of thanking Hashem for simply having woken up in the morning. As he states it, that's simple *hakaros hatov*. When we say *modeh ani* every morning, it should be said with awe.

Simply put, it is a fascinating *tefillah*. Not only that, but we wake up every morning with the same capabilities. We can see the same, breathe the same, and just pretty much function the same.

Sometimes people ask, why do I have to say *brachos* and *tefillah* every day? On a simple level, the answer is because you woke up this morning. Show some basic recognition for the absolute renewed wonder of life.

Rabbi Yosef Palacci discusses two exercises that, if implemented in one's life, lead to great success.

Firstly, train yourself to say *gam zu l'tovah* for anything seemingly bad that happens to you and bothers you. Just say it. You could say it aloud, mutter it to yourself, or even think it in your head.

Secondly, pray. When you leave the house in the morning, kiss the *mezuzah* and say, "please help

me leave safely and come back safely". This forges a connection with Hashem. It starts with simple things but carries over to more intense things.

Rabbi Palacci shares a story that once happened to him. 'I was rushing out of my house, my driver was waiting for a few minutes and I was in a rush not to keep him longer. The weather was frigid, and on my way out I slipped on black ice. While flying mid-air, I thought to myself 'Why is this happening to me'? In a split second I remembered that in my rush out, I had forgotten to say my daily short prayer of "please help me leave safely and come back safely". Now, we don't know Hashem's calculations. This is not to say that the slipping was some sort of punishment. It just made me pause and reflect...

Even when doing mundane tasks, start with thanking Hashem and finish off with thanking Him. When doing these two exercises, you will be flying high. Put Hashem in your life, you will get to notice blessings you might have missed. ✨



Been There

As told to Esther C. by Sharon Sommer

Hope x10

As much as we want all the good things in life, hard times are inevitable. I remember as a child I would play dress-up with my dolls. I would spend the entire day pretending to feed them and put them to sleep. I waited impatiently for the time I'd care for my children the same way.

The transition from childhood to teenage years was swift. I'd wake up in the morning ready to get the best of the day but return home tired. From standing up to bullies, to grades that were below expectation, it was just a lot. But in all of these, I knew I could not stop moving forward. I always found the courage to move on to the next day.

Adulthood came and my husband and I got married in 1995. A little while later, we discovered that we could not conceive on our own. One thing I found comfort in was that I had a community and I had enough support from them.

There were several other women who could not conceive like me and we found strength in one another.

We started with IUI, but it didn't work. We then began IVF in 2001. The process was rough and hectic. I had my hopes raised, only to have them shatter before my eyes. In total, I had 9 missed IVF treatments. I felt like a failure having to go through those heartbreaking experiences. It was so painful for my husband and myself, but with many thanks to Hashem, there were other options for us. In my first year, I went through two cycles. It was a lot of money and so I couldn't do more than two cycles, being without insurance at the time. The first treatment failed, so did the second, the third, up until the ninth try. After each failed treatment, I felt like screaming. Life was so unfair! Why did they fail? Confusion was my closest friend at that moment. My doctors didn't bother to

take tests to discover the issues because they believed I was fine as I was healthy all through the process. I wasn't sick during any of the cycles. I kept wondering what the problem could be. I believed that either the drugs were not effective, or they were inadequate.

Sometimes, even the doctors could not point to the source of the failure. Going to three hospitals, I met several doctors. The previous doctors kept by the books, doing all they could according to what they learnt. At first I had trust in those doctors, but lost trust in them after the failed treatments. Each time after failure I would spend weeks and months grieving. I would cry, go for days without food, just hoping the pain would stop. Then I pulled myself together and found the strength to continue. I was going to keep on trying till I held my child.

Through it all, my husband

"Sometimes, even the doctors could not point to the source of the failure."

was a solid support system. He saw how much of a mess I was after each failed cycle and would care for me and give me all the love I needed. When I told him I was ready for the next cycle, he would support me once again. At one point, we got into debt, as the insurance only covered two treatments. But thanks to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, we were able to get help from another insurance company.

And then, I was finally pregnant! After the ninth IVF cycle, it seemed like we had gotten it right. My husband brought home pizza and fries for supper. Boy, did they smell weird. Later on I had implantation bleeding, and my baby began to grow. I needed to take IVig (intravenous immunoglobulin) to counterattack the natural killer cells (NK). In short, my husband's and my cells are so similar that it could kill off the embryo.

Weeks turned into months and the first trimester was complete. My hope returned at this point because I innocently thought I had passed the range for miscarriages. We were ready to prepare our baby's room. Each time I went to the mall, I would pick up a cute pair of baby shoes and add it to the collection of

items I had gotten for my unborn child.

But there was something there; a niggling feeling deep inside of me whenever I tried to be happy, a weird feeling that I did not understand.

My baby was 26 weeks and I was tentatively looking forward to holding her. One night I was about to go to sleep when I felt a sharp pain. I remember thinking, this

"Try again", they said. So we did.

cannot be labor, can it?! We rushed to the hospital, where I delivered a tiny baby girl, all of 1.2 pounds. She was born alive, but sadly lived for only seven hours. I was kept in L&D overnight and the nurses covered the vent on the wall so I wouldn't hear the newborn's cries.

"Try again", they said. So we did.

Later on, we found the right *shaliach*. Switching doctors wasn't easy. But after failed cycles, I realized that it was time for change. I told myself that the hardships were going to get me closer to my goal, *b'ezras Hashem*. And then I switched again. The last doctor was a blessing, with ideas outside the box. He made

suggestions that really helped. With much gratitude to Hashem, I am here to share with you that I have a son!

The pregnancy had its ups and downs, and at eleven weeks I had a cerclage put in. When at twenty weeks my cervix started to shorten, I was laid up in the hospital for two and a half months, until my little boy was born at thirty-seven weeks. My son is now fifteen years old.

I am forever grateful to the wonderful organizations which helped us get through those trying times. A TIME guided us through the maze of options out there, and was there for us with information and support. Bonei Olam's wonderful counselor was constantly at my side and helped me get through the difficult years. May Hashem bless them with all the best.

Dear readers, friends in pain, hope and growth,

You flipped through the pages of my "story"... It is my sincere hope that you internalized the message to never, ever, (no, really. Never.) give up. Even if your situation looks helpless, bleak, dark and endless, just know that there is hope out there. The proof is in the pudding. My son.

My AHA Moment

Chaya K.



'Yes, I will forgive and ask Hashem for forgiveness in return!'

This line reverberated in my mind, but not before other thoughts were banished.

At first, it was: How can I forgive? Her carelessly uttered, malicious comment triggered my innermost feelings of vulnerability and helplessness. How can I forgive when she is dancing on in life and leaving me behind in the depths of despair? How can I forgive after she took my personal feelings and failings, and threw it into my face? But on the other hand, how can I not forgive? It's the time of year that we ask Hashem for forgiveness, and we want Him to forgive us for our misdeeds. Can I take the courage to tap into my *tzelem elokim*, my G-dliness, and take the leap to forgive?

Personally speaking, it took more than a day or two for me to realize that yes, that's what I want to do. It was not easy at all, but He gave me strength. With a sudden burst of inspiration, I changed my mindset. Hashem had wanted me to get hurt. Nebach for her that she was the *shaliach*, the chosen one to do the job.

'*Elokim amar lo kalel*', Dovid Hamelech said after Shimi ben Geiru threw stones and insults at him when fleeing from his son, Avsholom. (ג'") He wouldn't allow his people to kill him as a *mored b'malchus*. Instead of unleashing his hurt at him, he took a step back and recognized that it came from Hashem.

When someone speaks to you in a rude or disgraceful manner, react with the words "*Elokim amar lo kalel*" - This is from Hashem. This is an elevated state of living worth incorporating in one's daily life.

This thought is life changing. I separated the embarrassment and the anger toward her on one side, and an acceptance that this was meant to be on the other. I started to let go of the intense hate and disgust towards her animosity. With a sudden shift in my mindset, I said, "Hashem, just like everything else in life, this too is from You. Help me overcome my human anger and get past this. Grant me a year of *simchas* and *nachas* and freedom; to free myself from the shackles of grief and despair. Help me accept; to see and really feel that You are behind this master plan. And forgive me too."

I stretched my muscles even more and asked that she never endure the pain and hardships I went through, as her comment was directed to me by Hashem, my merciful Father. And the more I said it, the more I got to internalize it and actually feel it.

Whoever your 'her' is in your life, trust me. Letting go makes you feel a hundred pounds lighter, ten times stronger - and one with Hashem. ✨

Inner Expression

Rachel Aron

Game of Life

Moving forward, moving toward,
Exhilarated, up the ladder,

Es geiyt mir git!

Advancing yet to another ladder
With a whoop of joy,
Moving my pawn up
And up

Continuing, until,
I land on a slide
down
down

I slip, my grin gone.
I was almost at the top!
And the other player's taunting
'Good for you!'
Ain't making things better...

I won't give up
I'll throw the dice again.
I get the ladder,
Only to slide down once more.
I'm playing the game
Chutes and Ladders.

Quite like
The Game of Life you're playing
And the winner is
The one that keeps on trying,
Aims for the top,
Keeps on moving, not giving up
Just going,
going,
growing. 🐍

HOPE

It's not until something jolts you that you realize you may have given up hope — as scary as that sounds. Yes, in theory, I have hope — there's always hope, right? Hashem is the *Kol Yachol*, after all, but all those wonderful stories seem to only happen to other people.

It hit home on the night my brother sent me a text, randomly asking me if I had time to speak. Sure, of course, I texted back, and he called me. The next part of the conversation is blurry in my mind. He must have said that he was getting engaged the next day. My brother is known to be a practical joker, so I quickly shut him down and told him we don't joke about these things; what's really going on?

He started to tell me which city he was in — which was far, far away from our hometown. I started to bombard him with questions: What's the time there? When did you get there? Who made the *shidduch*? He had a quick answer to each question until I realized: He was not making this up!

What's the big deal about my brother getting engaged? Well, he's past the 30 mark and it is safe to say he's lived all over in search of his *ezer k'negdo*. I could not imagine where she would be and sometimes, as uncomfortable as it is to write this, I wondered if she even existed.

There's a unique bond between me and my

brother. For many years we were both stuck in our individual situations, seemingly unable to unlock the gate and run free: my brother with *shidduchim* and me on my journey toward parenthood. I've been married well into my double digits — close to 15 years now — and life in this situation has become routine. Our family unit is a comfortable two and it's been this way for so long that a part of me relishes the beauty of sharing this journey called life exclusively with my *bashert*.

It's like the unexpected is completely off my radar.

That's the scary part, that the two of us has become normal. It's like the unexpected is completely off my radar. Yes, I learn about *bitachon*. I know Hashem can change any physical reality in an instant. I try to focus on the present, to not let my mind escape to the worry of the future. The passuk "*Tamim tihyeh im Hashem Elokecha*" (Devarim 18:13) helps me. Rashi explains that this means we have to try not to investigate/worry/consider the future and just accept everything we're given at this moment in time.

It's hard, though, not to be filled with despair when there have been so many losses. So many attempts on all fronts. I have to really work on myself to believe that the next "wow" story in our community could be ours. I have to believe in hope. Not just a superficial, "Yeah, I have hope," but a real, deep-down hope that I'm expecting a positive result. Knowing that Hashem can change anything, not just for other

That's why this phone call from my brother was a wake-up call to me. I did not see it coming. Why not?

people, but for me as well. To expect it can happen, to want it to happen, and to believe it could happen.

That's why this phone call from my brother was a wake-up call to me. I did not see it coming. Why not? Why did I not have faith and trust in Hashem so ingrained in me that at any moment my brother could have told me he was going to be a *chassan* and I would have believed him?

I had lost hope, and that slippery slope had filtered into other aspects of my life. Yet I need not become disheartened. I've realized I slipped, and I am going to refuel myself with positive energy. I will inspire and motivate myself. I say loud and clear, "Kavei el Hashem!" Yes, I have slipped, but "*chazak v'yaametz libecha*" — I will return all my hope and trust in You, Hashem, alone. *Kavei el Hashem.*

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Reflections

G.R.

As the roller coaster wheels finally kick off the ground, I watch the world around me twirl and swirl into a mixture of colors and magic. The world, which seems so big from up close, is starting to shrink, as do my worries and fears. It has always amazed me how distance makes everything seem smaller, less pressing. As I soar higher and higher the world and all its problems are gone, replaced by magical swirls. As my eyes gaze into the beautiful sky, I feel tension and stress roll off my shoulders.

The ride stops. I re-secure my seatbelt, as my stomach plummets in fear. I can feel my heart quickening as the roller coaster is at a standstill, momentarily seeming out of control.

Seated on the ride, I'm realizing something very real. No amount of screaming, crying or nail-biting done by me, the passenger, helps the ride continue its course. No matter how tightly I hold onto my seat, I'm not the one in charge. There is someone controlling the ride, ensuring my safety. I trust him enough to place my life in his hands, yet, he too, is human. The ride has been stopped at the tip of the hill for the ensuing enjoyment to be heightened.

As the ride resumes its exciting, thrilling course, thoughts keep on flying through my mind at lighting speed. More inspiring than the view that I previously saw, I am inspired by the revelation I just experienced.

Hashem, the Orchestrator of the entire world, has my best interest in mind. When I hit a stop in life, I need to trust that He will bring me back to safety. Screaming, crying, blaming, and the like will not help normal life resume. The same Orchestrator that has shown me the beauty, will protect me when it's dark and cold. Finally, when the ground I'm on seems so shaky and unsteady, I trust that the One who has brought me to this point in my journey, will continue to guide me until I land safely. ✨



Answers on the Mark

Chumi Friedman

It's been a long journey since my loss, and those around me are happy to finally 'see' me moving on, so to speak. See? I'm wearing maternity clothes. But the equation pregnancy equals baby no longer exists in my lexicon. Along with the anxiety and trauma the new pregnancy evokes in me, I am dealing with a hurting friend. We were there for each other through thick and thin, supporting one another during the turbulent post-loss time. Sharing my news with her was really hard; I was so hoping for her to have news of her own to share! Our relationship has changed. I'm still here for her, but we're moving apart as she feels I'm no longer in her league. Is there any way we can grow stronger instead of growing apart??

-Disturbed

Simple friendships exist in preschool or possibly even elementary school. As we get older and move into high school, we are often faced with complicated situations and complex relationships. You got into choir, your best friend didn't. You were invited to "the party", your best friend wasn't. You both applied to the same seminary and only one of you was accepted. Some friendships make it through these changes, staying just as strong as they were before, while others begin to change. That complexity can exist as we move on in life, into dating, marriage and building our families.

It's wonderful to have a friend who is on the same journey as you are; someone you can share the ups and downs with, someone who "gets" what you are going through. Yet, what happens when one of you moves on? Can the friendship stay strong or does it always have to mean that you will grow apart?

Some of this will depend on you and on your friend, on how committed you are to the friendship

- and how much space you are willing to give her as she accepts your new reality. A true friend will be happy for you, yet may still need time to process your good news.

Let her know how much you value your friendship and how much it means to you. When you spend time together, on the phone or in person, talk about things that are important to you and don't involve your pregnancy. Be patient; it may not be smooth sailing right away.

At the same time, be prepared for things to be different than they once were. Different doesn't mean bad, it just means not what you are used to. While that may be painful, it may also be something you have to accept. 

Chumi Friedman

ATIME/HUG

chumi@atime.org

WORDS OF THE WAVES

Ocean breezes and salty whiffs of sea. Waves, lapping to and fro. What are the waves doing, crashing relentlessly?

Standing on the sandy beach, I find myself gazing at the frothy blue and white thoughtfully. I wave to the waves absently.

Yes, it is you that I am waving to. You are my friend, awash in waters of pain and suffering. Don't you recognize me? Well, I also don't recognize myself. Although we have not met before, waves and I, we identify with one other. We understand each other. In our pain, in our hearts, through our emotions and our personal triggers, we know each other. We are Loss Friends. We share with each other more than we share with our mothers, sisters and next door neighbors. We just get each other.

Standing here together, let me share a thought with you that I heard being repeated from Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein z'l.

**We share with
each other
more than we
share with our
mothers, sisters
and next door
neighbors.**

We see waves coming full force to the shoreline, ready to conquer and flood the world, yet when they reach the coast, they foam into nothingness. Then we see a second and third wave doing the same thing, and we might wonder: Why doesn't the first wave tell the second wave, "Don't bother, you don't stand a chance?" Rabbi Wallerstein explains what the *Zohar* says in reference to this idea. The *malach* of the first

wave tells the angel of the second wave, "Don't bother, you won't make it," but the second wave's *malach* answers, "Just because you didn't succeed doesn't mean that I won't pull through!"

Hashem has put the power of not giving up into creation. Every eight seconds, a wave tries, thinking that maybe he will succeed to flood the world, not allowing the failures of the previous waves to determine his outcome... and they go on, trying again. And again. And again..

The waves are waving to us, signaling hope, courage, determination, persistence and strength. 🌊

Inner Expression

E. Solomon

I am deep in a cave
Hidden from view,
I refuse to come out
And start life anew.
Here I feel sheltered and protected
I want to stay alone,
No human company
But surrounded by stone.

In this darkness
When everything is so still,
I yearn to come back out
My heart's hope to be refilled.
I beg and cry
Hashem! I want to rejoice,
Help me, please
I know it's my choice!

Stepping out of this cave
I feel limp and weak,
I know I am doing what's right
Yet security I seek.
Unsteady steps
One by one,
Unfamiliar streets
My certainty is gone.

Stepping Forward

Walking on this broken path
Is all I currently do,
I seek a ray of light
To help me pull through.
I spot one from afar
And focus on the light,
The more I do
The more it turns bright.

It's illuminating the path
Paving my way,
Stitching back broken pieces
Turning night into day.
This tiny ray of light
Is known by a special name,
'Noticing Blessings'
Earning himself fame.

When it's gray and dark
Seek any tiny blessing you've got
Focus on it and you'll see
You've got more in your lot! ✨

Humor Me

Y. Freund

Traveling the width and length of my journey, I am holding my breath. There I go, stumbling on stones laying in my path, trying to hold my footing and just hoping that I am actually going in the right direction. That is, I am traveling towards Healing Land.

It is no secret that I am directionally challenged. Turn right? Then left? Yeah, right. But somehow I still get it wrong. I only need to meet head-on with a trigger, and I am totally lost.

Some have it so easy; the ability to know their location and find their way from place to place. Why is it that although I was always so good at it, now I am completely lost? Did my loss make me lose my sense of direction as well? Did my internal GPS turn off, making me unaware of my ways and WAZE, having me searching for a familiar landmark, an oasis, in my pain?

It might seem like it is simply inconvenient, but in reality there are days that I really get lost.

Sometimes I drive down the road to Nowhere and I do not know where to make the next turn. Do I trust myself to go to this event tonight? Or will I get home in an emotional mess, not making it worth the effort of even having to put on my shoes? Then if I make a wrong turn at the intersection and struggle to rectify my mistake, I will travel in circles and return

home tense and drained.

I remember being on the subway, with my mind in a state of fog (nothing to do with the mist outside.) I didn't realize that the train was approaching my stop. Panic ensued a few minutes later when I realized I missed it, until I was safely headed in the wrong direction to take the train in the right direction towards my connecting train. So, so bewildering.

Let me share a piece of advice with you that I heard from a friend on one of my travels. "Two wrongs don't make one right, but three rights make a left!" Great news, but I am still trying to figure out exactly what she meant with that.

People don't get it, they think that comments like "just pay attention!" will do the trick? I must say that I am definitely trying to pay attention, because

I don't like being the one that my acquaintances tsk, tsk about.

With all the lefts and rights and thicks and thins and ups and downs, I am left bewildered and confused. Until I realize that it is not my compass to control. My sense of direction should be to follow His guidance. Right, left. Up, down.

It is as simple, un-confusing, and un-bewildering as that.

Right? Right. 



Submission
Fraidy Joseph

Master Mechanic

A broken machine
Standing on the side
Abandoned and alone
Can not do its job.
All around he watches others
Happily working
Producing as they should
Only he stands all alone.
One after the other
They show off their products
Unaware how painful it is
Seeing something he wishes to create.

I still keep hoping
I'll revive on my own
That I just need a little oiling
Or some material refilled.
I keep on trying
To create something
But disappointment each time
Shatters me again and again.

I need a mechanic
The Creator of my machine
To come into the picture
And fix me, new and clean.



Inner Expression

Anonymous

DREAMS

Dreams of smiling as I look in the mirror
Of thanking Hashem as I grow bigger,
Dreams of wheeling the bassinet to the nursery
Of cuddling and nursing my newborn baby,
Dreams of my son caring for his very own sister
Of singing, cooing and laughing all together,
Dreams of a wardrobe with pink frills and bows
Smothering kisses on those precious little toes,
Dreams of the toys that are in the storage for so long
Of when I'll hear the mobile sing its song,
Dreams of a Shabbos table set for four
Of having little company while doing my chores,
Dreams of the sleepless nights I awaited
But the dream of caring for an angel dissipated,
Dreams, shattered and dashed,
When that sweet heartbeat did not last.
Dreams, oh, I can dream forever,
This time it was more real than ever.
Dreams, for them to come true I'll wait some more,
As I beseech Hashem to heal my sore.
Dreams, that this *nisayon* is meant for me to grow,
That my faith in Hashem I can show.
Dreams, Hashem's love for me is infinite,
And all that happens is for my ultimate benefit.
Dream on, I will continue to dream,
As in my heart I know

כי אני יודע / יודעת בליבי



Perspective

H.M.

I am weak

Don't tell me that

I am strong

I am broken

Don't tell me that

I am whole

I am lost

Don't tell me that

Life is purposeful

I am distraught

Don't tell me that

I can find inner peace

I am on my own

Don't tell me that

People love me

I am falling

Don't tell me that

I can get up

I am a failure

Don't tell me that

I am a work in progress

Now read from bottom up to gain a new perspective!



Comfort Food

Chaya K.

Apple Domes

Yields: 4 servings

Bake time: 40 min

Ingredients:

- 2 Apples, Peeled
- 4 Pieces Yitzy's Mini Puff Pastry Dough Squares- slightly defrosted
- Powdered confectioner's sugar
- 1 Tsp. cinnamon
- ½ Cup sugar
- Custard

Instructions:

- Cut the apples in half, lengthwise, and remove the core.
- Mix the cinnamon and sugar.
- Roll each piece of apple in the cinnamon and sugar mixture.
- Fill the hole with custard.
- Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and place the apples flat side down.
- Stretch the flaky dough square so it thins out and covers the apple, tucking the edges underneath.
- Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes.
- Once cooled, sprinkle confectioner's sugar.



Hugging 'Treat'ment

Toby Glick



After a long day, treat yourself by picking out one self care card and let serenity take the place of stress.

Wellness in a Box

These cards are a simple, yet powerful tool designed to be used daily or whenever you need inspiration so that you can live your life with greater happiness and fulfillment. The cards allow you to find inner peace and live a healthy life.

You may always find a card that speaks to you at that moment, as they are divided into four categories; self care, mindfulness, sleep, and intuition

Chizuk from Within

B. Fried

I'd like to introduce myself as one of the "Move-On'ers"....

I 'did' the loss....

I 'did' the shock....

I 'did' the pain...

I 'did' the anger...

I 'did' the grief...

And yet....

I 'did' move on!

To some, moving on is something they are not ready for- yet. But if you do want to hear some friendly advice, here goes:

♥ First and foremost, ask Hashem for *Siyata Dishmaya*. Hashem was leading me by His hand, step by step to "Healing Land".

♥ Allowing myself to remember was (and still is!) the next part of my healing. No, I did NOT forget!

♥ I chose chapter 23 in *Tehillim* as my "sanity kapitel" to say every day. "אל תי אַתְּחַח וְתִהְיֶה אֶלֶּךָ שָׁלוֹם וְחֵסֶד יִרְדּוּבֶיךָ..."
No explanation needed on my choice of *kapitel* ;)

♥ I reached out to listen to others in pain and offered practical assistance where applicable. How soothing!

♥ I bought a magnetic picture frame and stuck a bright, neon colored index card weekly, with a new "Power Quote", a quote or phrase that would remind me of my healing status every time I looked at my refrigerator.

Some examples:

What does Hashem
want from me
NOW?

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב כִּי יִשְׁלַמְכֶם חֲסִדוֹ
has 7 words and
24 letters. Thank
Hashem 24/7
(Rav Elimeilech
Biderman)

I'm on a mental diet.

sadness,
negativity,
criticism

NO

ע' עקרי אמונה + אהבה
= אהבה
(Rav Elimeilech
Biderman)

I am okay being
not okay.

♥ I filed my memories and thoughts just like I'd file my teaching stencils and sheets; organized, as in a file box. My mind's clutter cleared up, I took out the file only on Friday night to light benching. Throughout the week, I allowed myself "glimpse peeking" but reminded myself that this file is designated to be opened fully only once a week. Oh, did I take advantage of that special moment... I must add that Friday night worked for me. You would need to choose a time that works for you.

♥ Last but not least, the old-fashioned-yet-always-effective method of being thankful.

- Saying, thank You, Hashem!
- Feeling, thank You, Hashem!
- Writing, thank You, Hashem!
- Singing, thank You, Hashem!

I actually took it one step further and had a "Thank You, Hashem" project which included a special notebook, where each child wrote or drew a picture of what they were grateful for. We did this every day at dinner, going according to the *alef-beis*. We love and treasure that book to this day.

Yes, being grateful is a great trick. There remains no room for wallowing in self pity.

I wish you lots of success and many good moments on your path to healing. Rest assured, although it may take time and time and lots of time for some, we all get there at one point. ✨



Dear Mommy

Yitty Sofer

Dear Mommy,

I know the time we spent together was short, yet my bones and cells soaked in more than you can imagine! You provided me with a safe space, a glimpse of what I would have received, had Hashem ordained me to be born alive. Judging by the perpetually flowing river of tears, I can see that the love you had for me was the greatest love in the world; the love a mother has for her child. And I cry with you, Mommy. You have received the hardships of parenting, the heartache and pain it takes to raise a child, without receiving the overflowing *nachas*.

I know you are asking 'why' constantly, and that you are sinking in anguish. I know you don't understand why you had to go through this... Why you are left empty-handed, instead of joyously looking forward to the day of my homecoming... If only there was an answer in this world that would be able to soothe your heartache.

All I can do is thank you, Mommy. Thank you for caring for me while I was inside of you. Thank you for sacrificing everything for me. Thank you for giving me a taste of the true pleasures of *olam haba*.

No child can ever thank a parent enough, and although I am an unborn fetus, I am no different.

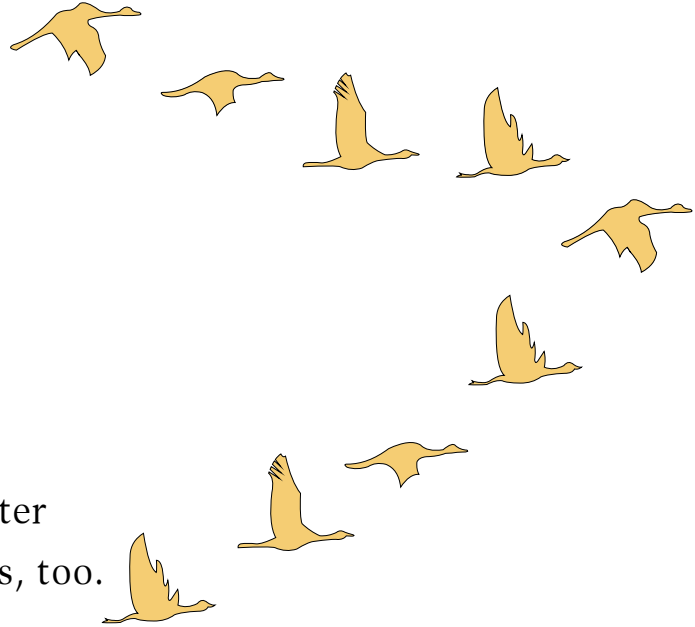
Thank you, dear Mommy! 

thank You

Submission

Frady R.

Wings of Hope



Little Duck,
How I wish to be you
To bury my head in the water
And along with it my emotions, too.

I'm drowning
Everyone is lined up against me
Including myself.
You look so kind, Little Duck,
Will you allow me to share your wings?
Fly away and set myself free?

Little Duck,
I look into your eyes
And I can see
That one day
Just like you, I too, will be free.

Little Duck,
Today you are Hashem's gift of hope to me. ✨

Small Talk, Big Talk

I had a traumatic 19 week loss and there are many triggers along the healing path. The hardest one right now is my new co-worker, who joined our place a few weeks after my loss. I'm constantly being triggered by her comments and actions. I don't feel comfortable sharing my history with her just yet, but on the other hand, she's insensitive to my sensitive needs. What should I do?

If your workmate is the type to pick up on subtle hints, drop them, so she learns to avoid speaking about things that trigger your pain

S. R.

One option would be to have another coworker tell the new employee something vague, like "You couldn't have known this, but discussions about pregnancy and babies can be sensitive for so-and-so these days."

Shani

It's not easy to deal with someone on a daily basis that triggers so much and yet not share with her. If you're sure you don't want to disclose to her just yet, I would recommend you to reach out to others to help process your feelings.

F. R.

It is a hard call. When we don't discuss our private lives with others, they have no way of knowing, and may therefore come across as insensitive. It's a catch-22, since discussing a loss may have repercussions as well, as this co-worker may just not understand or have a low EQ (emotional quotient) and respond with insensitivity.

Let me share with you something I think about frequently. Insensitive comments are like burns.

A first degree burn is when someone is insensitive unknowingly, as they are unaware of a situation that you are dealing with; it definitely hurts, yet it's more to the extent of a first degree burn.

A second degree burn is when someone knows what you have been through but puts her "foot in her mouth" so to speak, or does not have the "know how" to

respond appropriately; this is extremely hurtful, compared to a second degree extent.

A third degree is highly unusual and something I never encountered with healthy people. That would be someone that knows you and your situation and purposely hurts you; incredibly painful to a third degree extent.

Most healthy people want to show care but do not know how. They may not have the knowledge of what to say or do to make things easier for someone who experienced a loss.

An idea for getting through those hurtful comments would be to reward yourself with a quarter or dollar for every insensitive comment and watch the money grow. It may even help towards a well-deserved vacation!!

S.T.

I am so sorry for your loss. I think it would be best if you find a coworker who already knows your story and you are comfortable with, to tell the new workmate about your loss. She will then be able to be more understanding and sensitive towards you.

E. C.

Having experienced a 20 week loss, I personally would share the circumstances with her. However, that's me. I understand not everyone is like this. If you feel comfortable, maybe explain to her that her actions and comments are triggering to you but that you are not ready and might never be ready to discuss it. If you are not comfortable with that, find some tools that can help you get through it when she says or does something that triggers you.

S. G.

That's rough! I don't know how to answer the question, but here's my support! Wishing you all the best!

G. D.

It's a tough one... Wish I had an answer.

Yitty

Next Issue's Talk:

It's been 2 years since I gave birth to a beautiful baby that I carried for 9 months, made a *bris*, named the child and also did a burial, since he was unfortunately born without a heartbeat. When people ask me questions regarding the size of my family, it's not comforting to me not to include him. And yet, it brings discomfort to others when I do mention him. Whose feelings do I take into consideration when faced with this difficult question, which magnifies the void? 

To ask a question or to share your insights, find our contact information on page two.

To My Dear

Suri T.

Dear Neshama'la,

When you were taken, the dark skies reflected our heartbreak and wistful feelings
Waves of shock and sorrow, intense sadness and grief that left our family reeling,
We waited five days for the doctor's appointment, holding on to your body, so much wanting
you to stay

Yet knowing that your *neshama*, back to her home, had already wended its way,
Neshama'la, we love you and want to hold you so very tight
Caress you, snuggle you, and protect you with all our might,
We know your place in *Gan Eden*, near Hashem, is oh, so soothing and full of light
Yet down below, the ache and longing, keeps us awake throughout the endless nights.

Neshama'la, before you were taken, we told you it's okay to go
That your totty and mommy loved you deeply, that we feel special to have helped you
grow.

Go on High, my little one, and beseech Hashem to bring us closer together one day
Daven for your precious siblings who dreamed of you and badly wanted your
presence without delay.

My precious *neshama'la*, we will never forget you, as a part of our family you will
always remain

May we be reunited with the coming of Moshiach, when happiness and joy shall
become our constant refrain!

With all our love, and missing you so very much,
Totty, Mommy and your loving siblings ✨



Dear Diary

Tova Ross

Dear Diary,

I'm so glad I can do some writing instead of talking as I am still numb from today's dentist appointment. That was some visit! There was a lady in the exam room next to me, and I overheard this conversation. (I didn't eavesdrop, trust me!)

"Ma'am, let me cover you up while we do the x-ray", I heard the dental student's rough voice.

The patient smoothly replied, "I'd like to have double protection. See, I'm pregnant".

Sure enough, the nurse came into my room to grab the lead apron hanging on the wall, and then headed back where she had come from to give the pregnant woman the double protection she had asked for.

Shortly thereafter, when I was the one being cared for, I was still reeling from that conversation... Ya know, just a few weeks ago, I had the same request(!)

Out of spite, I asked the nurse, "Is there more protection you offer? I might be pregnant".

"Of course! We give you a double layer, like we did last time you were here". (Ouch!)

I hope next time I sit onto the dentist's chair I will say sweetly and confidently, "Please give me double protection. I am pregnant".

Tova

Napkin Folding

Flower

1. Get a Square Dinner Napkin
2. Fold the edges of your napkin to the center.
3. Pinch the ends of the corners in the center of the napkin and flip it
4. Repeat Step 2
5. If you are to feel underneath any of the corners, you will feel a flap. You must pull that flap, so that the corner of the flap is facing you. Then turn up the edges of the petal and pull up the "flower" part of the napkin, to make it stand out. Repeat this on all the corners.

1



2



3



4



Star

1. Start with a Chinnet® Dinner Napkin completely unfolded. Fold the top and bottom sections to the center to form a long rectangle.
2. Fold your napkin in half again horizontally.
3. Fold the napkin accordion-style into 8 equal sections. Press firmly.
4. Gather accordion folds together again and hold between forefinger and thumb. Leave the double layers open at top with the raw edges facing away from you.
5. There should be four folds facing you. Firmly pull down the sections between the folds. Do this for a total of three folds
6. Turn the napkin around so the raw edges are facing you. There should be three folds facing you. Beginning at one end, firmly pull down the sections between the raw edge and fold continuing to the other edge. You will do this for a total of four folds.
7. Let the napkin unfold to create a double star.



1. Start with a Chinnet® Dinner Napkin completely unfolded. Fold the top and bottom sections to the center to form a long rectangle.	2. Your napkin should look like this.	3. Fold napkin in half again horizontally.	4. Your napkin should look like this.	5. Fold the napkin accordion-style into 8 equal sections. Press firmly.
6. Gather accordion folds together again and hold between forefinger and thumb. Leave the double layers open at top with the raw edges facing away from you.	7. There should be four folds facing you. Firmly pull down the sections between the folds. Do this for a total of three folds.	8. Turn the napkin around so the raw edges are facing you. There should be three folds facing you. Beginning at one end, firmly pull down the sections between the raw edge and fold continuing to the other edge. You will do this for a total of four folds.	9. This is a front and side view of what your napkin should look like.	10. Let the napkin unfold to create a double star. (you can use a paperclip to secure base of star together)

Quote Me

"Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death."

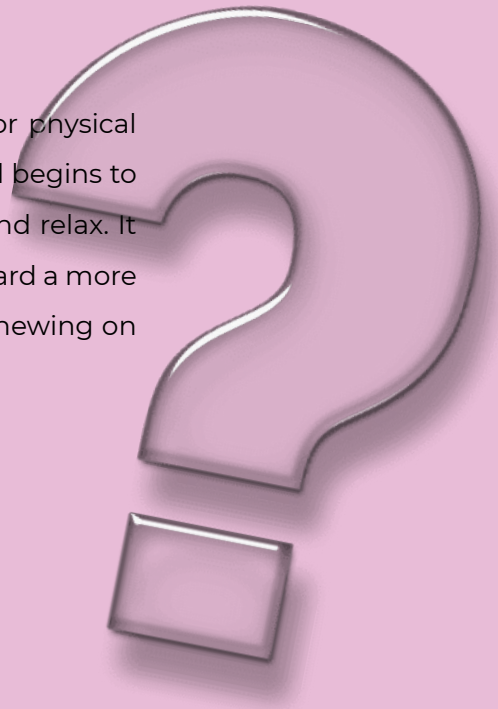
"Nobody ever started riding a bike by reading about it."

"HOPE SEES THE INVISIBLE, FEELS THE INTANGIBLE AND ACHIEVES THE IMPOSSIBLE."

Did You Know?

Toby G.

Sensory play on the court! Don't have the emotional, mental or physical capacity to actively busy yourself with your thoughts? When your mind begins to chew on things, sensory play helps you tune into your surroundings and relax. It induces mindfulness and helps reduce stress by shifting your brain toward a more relaxed mindset. You can opt to stick to simple and cheap ideas, like chewing on ice, or more complex (and messy!) ones like sand play. 



Resources

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not 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 for couples experiencing perinatal and infant loss as well as for terminations for medical reasons. Support includes comforting packets home delivered and/or mailed throughout the world, monthly phone supports, a Groupme support chat, special webinars and teleconferences, 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.

Knafayim

P: 718-925-2113

E: Support@knafayimwings.org

Knafayim Wings supports those who experienced a pregnancy/infant loss. We offer guidance, counseling, and referrals. We hand deliver full 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 aspect of loss, and send out weekly inspirational messages culled from the Parsha of the week.

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.

RSK

P: 845-414-8001 Ext. 103

E: thekitchen@rsk.org

W: RSK.org Link for application:

<https://reb-shayala.secure.force.com/applications?id=0014T00000UGZZF>

Our program is geared for families hit by a sudden shift in the household which in their current situation are unable to prepare dinner, and the meals would ease their financial burden. Thanks to our generous donors, we temporarily subsidize specified takeout foods so they can emerge on the other end as strong as before. Once an application is submitted and approved, we will send you another email with the menu.

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

