

HEAL

Hope and Encouragement After Loss

Issue 5 - Winter, 2023



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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.

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From Our Hearts

Dear Friend,

Chanukah is around the bend; it's a time of joy, of miracles, and of laughter. It's a time of celebration for the miracles that happened so long ago: miracles that were said to be impossible, yet they happened nonetheless.

The situation of the Chashmonaim looked helpless and bleak, yet they persevered, held onto their faith, and never gave up hope. We, too, can take *chizuk* from their strength. We, too, will *iy"H* merit miracles when clinging to our faith. Hope is what keeps us going, regardless of how challenging the situation is.

When pain takes over, we sometimes feel disconnected from Chanukah. It's hard to fully connect to the power of the days or to the joy of the celebrations. Don't be afraid to let yourself feel the void, yet try to look at the *lichtelech* and dare to connect to them. They have the power to bring light into our homes and hearts.

This past Chanukah, feeling disconnected and discombobulated, I got a great idea from a fellow Loss Friend - to look at the *lichtelech* and 'think' my *tefillos*. I found that a lot easier than actually mouthing the words.

We light the Chanukah *licht* at sunset to symbolize that even when miracles are not clearly seen, even when it seems that the sun is setting and leaving us in the dark, we need to remember that Hashem is with us, at our side, and holding our hands. Even the darkness is part of the Master Plan.

It is our sincere hope that this magazine brings you warmth and light, and that its words of validation, encouragement and inspiration illuminate the dark winter nights.

Wishing you a *lichtige* Chanukah,

 The HEAL Team
Chaya, Gitty, Ettie



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From Your Heart

Thanks so much for your magazine. The song is beautiful and depicts my feelings so eloquently. The bits I've read thus far from the magazine really hit the mark. I see so much effort and sensitivity throughout. Keep up the good work.

R. R.

I read through the magazine from cover to cover. I was blown away by the content and beauty of every page. The Dreams poem touched my heart.

C. C.

Thank you so much. Getting the magazine in the mail was like getting a hug. I thought to myself, someone remembers and knows my pain. I am so touched!

Y. W.

Hi, thanks so much for filling such an important need. I really enjoyed reading the magazine for the validation and feelings of normalcy it gave me. Thank you.

F. W.

This is an absolutely beautiful compilation right here. Wow, wow, wow!

R. L.

Thank you very much for this email and song. May we recover from the trauma and B'eZRas Hashem learn to develop the ability to see the good He has to offer us, not only the pain and sadness.

S. M.

The magazine has powerful lessons and chizuk that can generally be applied in any given situation. It was a nice read.

C. R.

Thank you for your amazing magazine. Just like so many other readers mentioned, I stop whatever I'm doing to read it. Once again, thank you for everything you do and Hashem should continue to *bentch* you for giving *chizuk* to those who need it. *Hatzlacha* in your *avodas hakodesh*.

C. L. Y.

What a comforting and understanding, yet positive magazine! The poem "Master Mechanic" is a winner!

B. Fried

The magazine is amazing! You must be getting lots of *schar* up there because of the people you're helping!

Goldy

It took tremendous self control to put 'business before pleasure' until I finally sat down to read the magazine. All the articles are beautifully written, in particular "Dear Mommy" and "To My Dear". They were especially touching.

G. Z.

Thank you so much! This is a beautiful and special project that I'm sure gives *koach* to so many. Thank you for sharing it with me!

Miriam

The poem "I Will Cry for You Tomorrow" brought my innermost feelings to the surface. Thank you!

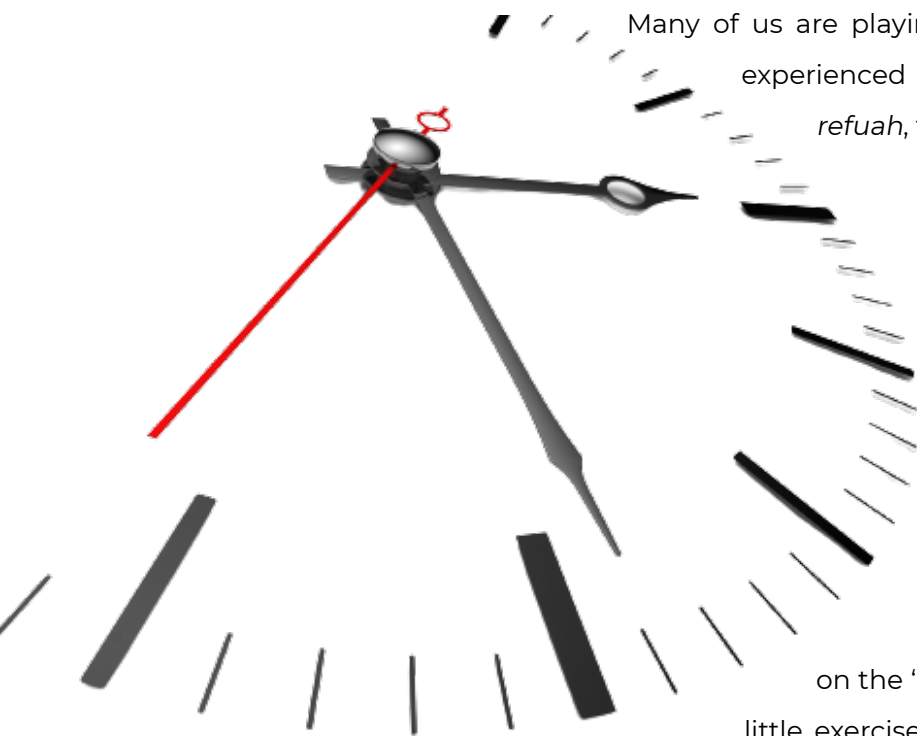
F. R.

Perspective



**Always remember:
You are braver than you think,
Stronger than you seem,
And loved more than you know!**

WHILE WAITING...



Many of us are playing the waiting game, are we not? We've all experienced it: waiting for the results, the *simchah*, the *refuah*, the *shidduch*...

I take every minute as a gift from Hashem: a gift that He has given to me not because I deserve it, but because He loves me as a father loves his child. I remind myself that I am not entitled to anything, and that the only things I take with me to the *Olam Ha'emes* are the choices I made while trying to live the life I've been given.

I always make a conscious effort to focus on the 'haves' instead of on the 'have-nots'. Doing this little exercise really sparks joy in me. A good friend often reminds me that, yes, even though we don't yet have kids, others who do are really no happier than us. It does not bring *simchah*. *Simchah* comes from within and it is a mindset that, like any mindset, needs cultivating.

Looking back now, I am so thankful for the life I have been given. I was brought up by parents who encouraged study and growth in all things. There is so much out there to see and do. My grandmother, *a"h*, was wont to say, "Bored people are boring," and it's funny how that attitude has helped me in the situation I am in now. I truly look at this world with children's eyes: eyes that are carefree and eager to experience all that the world has to offer.

I've been told many times over the years that it's good I'm keeping myself busy. I guess it's pretty obvious that I'm in the waiting game, and people really mean well. There are things in my home that prove I have used my time wisely, such as intricate tapestries that I completed with a good dose of perseverance and determination.

I'm proud when I think back to what I have achieved while playing the waiting game. I have learned that it is critical to be kind to ourselves. As women, we are real nurturers. We are so giving to others, but we also have to remember to give to ourselves on a regular basis. When we are going through a crisis or *nisayon* of some sort, the need to be kind to ourselves is magnified even more. It has taken me years to learn this.

Sometimes we try to be brave, but we only end up hurting ourselves. I once saw a beautiful quote from one of the *baalei mussar*: "To join in someone's pain one must be a *mentch*, but to join in someone's *simchah*, one must be a *malach*." It was so gratifying to read that. I have always set such high expectations for myself and have only recently realized that it's okay not to be a martyr all the time.

I also need to learn that it's okay not to always feel like my normal, chirpy self. Losses need to be grieved, and that includes emotional losses like coming to the realization that we may not lead the life we anticipated. A Rebbetzin whom I have been close to for many years once told me that yes, when we are going through a *nisayon*, we do need

to indulge in more *gashmiyus*, and that engaging in extra "retail therapy" is normal. She reminded me not to forget that we also need extra *chizuk* with regard to our spiritual growth. We need a *ruchniyus* boost when we feel disheartened.

When I'm low, learning a couple of pages about *emunah* in the morning is just not enough. I need to learn in the evening as well. I was encouraged when I heard a *shiur* on *emunah*; the speaker said that developing *emunah* is minute-by-minute work. *Emunah* and *bitachon* do not come naturally to us. The brain knows the theories, but often we follow our heart.

When I am feeling particularly sad, I think back to the idea that people grow when they are faced with a challenge. I think back to all the *tefillos* I said and all the learning that I would never have done if my life was smooth sailing and if I was on par with others my age. Experiencing a *nisayon* which presents few ways 'out' forced me to learn about *emunah* and *bitachon*. It's the only way to make sense of the situation, and when I'm using it to connect, that's the most important thing. Nothing else really matters. ✨

I also need to learn that it's okay not to always being my normal, chirpy self.

A Person Named Loss

I learned enough grammar
In sixth grade
To know
That "loss"
Is an abstract
Noun.
Like the kind that is
Not
A Person,
Place, or Thing.

So when you say
I'm sorry
About the
Loss
You had,
I can't quite
Figure out
Just
Who you mean
By that.
The One
I had
Somewhere in that black and
white mush
On the screen
Had a Brain
With two hemispheres,
And Kidneys, and a Heart

With four tiny chambers
That I heard beating -
Wlop, Wlop, Wlop, Wlop.

And the One
I had
And held
Had a perfect little face,
Ten fingers,
And wisps of black hair.
So still, perhaps,
But so alive
Within me
Just the day before.

So who had this...Loss?
The One I had
Was put
Into my arms
All wrapped in pink.
Pink is for girls.
For daughters.
Is Loss
A girl, too?

I may be weary
But don't worry, I'm aware,
She isn't here now.
I know that all too well.
The silence screams it.

The empty space beside my bed
Does not let me
Forget.

The delicate name
We bestowed on her
Capturing
Her gentle purity
Is but a
Whisper
In the breeze,
Not heard
By the world
Today.

But please
Forgive my foggy brain
I did just give birth,
You know -
I'm still confused 'cause
I don't know
Who
Is this Loss
That people say
I had.

I don't think I ever knew
Any Person
By that
Name. ✨

Been There
Schneur and Rachi Garb

Song of Faith

My son, Yisrael Zalman Baruch, was born perfectly healthy, and he remained this way until his *bris*. About two days later, my wife noticed that he was lethargic, not eating normally, and that his color seemed to change at times from newborn pink to bluish. We were not alarmed because we had heard that infants can turn bluish due to bad circulation. The next day we asked a doctor who lives in our building to check him out. He said that he seemed fine, and that his lungs and heart sounded good. We also called our pediatrician who said that if his lips turned blue we should bring him into the emergency room. Unfortunately, this happened and we rushed him to the hospital. When the nurse looked at my son, she grabbed him out of our hands and hurriedly called over a number of doctors who immediately started to work on him. As they were trying to revive him, a Muslim couple in one room and an African American Christian woman in another saw my son and our faces, so they all started

was someone special.

They stabilized him and he was sent to the pediatric ICU on a respirator. He had caught a virus called RSV, which is a type of pneumonia that 50,000 infants and small children with weak hearts and lungs are afflicted by each year. Before entering the emergency room that fearful night, we had never heard of RSV, nor had any of our family or friends.

While Yisrael Zalman Baruch was in the ICU, there were three other very sick children there. At first, we were told that he was going to be on the respirator for only a few days so that he could gather his strength. Several times they successfully removed his tube and, for a short while, he was able to breathe on his own and even open his eyes. One day he even ate and drank, and they were hopeful that he was going to be placed in a regular room. Unfortunately, due to his age (which was 2 weeks at the start of this ordeal), he simply didn't have the strength to keep breathing on his own. Once again, he regressed to the

to pray for him. At this point I realized that my son

point where he was dependent on a respirator. Although beneficial, respirators also have some drawbacks, one of which is that the lungs can collapse from being in a weakened state. With a heavy heart, I am pained to say that that is what brought our son to the next world.

A person might think it odd that I am writing such a detailed letter, but I have noticed that it's very hard for people to talk about this and to console people like us, so I decided to step forward on my own and tell our story. A person does not come into this world without a purpose.

We believe that each individual is here to fulfill a mission. I cannot and will not have my Zalman remembered as a baby who lived for four weeks and died. I would therefore like to relate a few stories about our experiences during his short life.

I invited some of my old friends to the *bris*, and they joined

me for the morning service that was held before his circumcision. Later, one of these friends told me that he had not put on *tefillin* in four years, and another said that this was his first time performing the *mitzvah* in seven years! Already at eight days old, my son was bringing his fellow Jews closer to G-d! While my wife and I were in the hospital, we didn't have a place to sit or sleep near my son because

all those around us. I felt that this was specifically what Hashem wanted us to do. In the lounge, my wife and I spoke with many parents and encouraged them. We spoke about how G-d has His ways, which we sometimes simply can't comprehend. We brought breakfast to people who didn't have any family or other visitors. My wife and I prayed by the beds of all the children there, Jewish or



not. As we were in this situation ourselves, we felt everyone else's pain. We felt that there were no boundaries, racial or other, and it was as though all the children were our children as well. The Rebbe

the ICU is off limits to all parents while the doctors and nurses do reports and rounds. We slept in the lounge, which was one of the worst things I ever had to do, but as a Jew and a Lubavitcher, I believed strongly that my wife and I were on some type of *shlichut*. I felt that we, as Torah-observant Jews, had to do everything possible to help

always said to put a *pushka*, a Chitas (Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya), and the Psalm Shir Hamaalot near the bed of a *choleh*, and this is something I did. Every night I prayed and said Tehillim by Zalman's side. This helped me immensely.

The Rebbe also taught, "*Tracht gut vet zein gut*" – "Think

good and it will be good." I repeated this saying often to all the other parents and to myself. At times, I had great difficulty "thinking good," but even when my son was going through the worst part of his ordeal, I was always surprisingly joyful after saying Tehillim. This shocked some of the hospital staff. I actually rebuked some of the doctors and nurses for coming in with stern and grim faces or for looking miserable. I said to them, "You have no right to do this! You are G-d's messengers, and you must give all the parents hope that everything will be good. I want to see all of you smiling every time you come into this room." From that day on, they made a point of smiling when they saw us. One doctor came to me and said that she admired our positive attitude, and that she felt more positive herself just by seeing our devotion.

My wife is a very special person. Every night when she was a little girl, her parents sang her a Yiddish lullaby. Every night in the hospital, she went to all the beds and sang this lullaby to all the children. When she sang this song, all the doctors and nurses waited for her to finish before they went to their patients. It was as if she was healing them herself. Every time I start to miss my Zalmi, I hum this song to myself. I was amazed at her strength and her ability to see past all the tubes and monitors and sing. The

faith and hope that a mother has is truly miraculous.

After more than two weeks, my son just couldn't hold on anymore and so he left this world. At first I was angry and wondered how this could happen to us, but when I saw the doctors' response, it completely changed my life. These doctors were the attending physicians, and I know that they are trained not to become too attached to their patients, yet when they told us that he was gone, they all cried. They all hugged and kissed me, and they wouldn't let go of me. When they first told me that he was gone, I said to them, "Look at my face and look at my wife's face. I want you to remember how we look. Now go back in there and heal all the other children. I don't want another parent to suffer like we did or to feel this pain."

The only way I was able to get through all of this was because of the way the hospital personnel responded when he passed away. It was like thunder shook the floor. All the doctors, nurses, parents, and even the janitors came out. They all cried and sobbed my son's name as they hugged us and each other. I felt as though my son did some sort of *shlichut* in this horrible place. I could tell from their reaction that, although he never spoke to these people, his pure

soul shone through to bring light to the world.

My son passed away three hours before the 30th day of his life, so in accordance with Jewish law, he was not given a *levayah* and there was no *shivah*. People say this is a blessing, but the Rabbis were wise and they knew that sitting *shivah* gives people the chance to visit the mourner and to offer condolences. Since there was no *shivah*, I gave a *farbrengen* where a number of people spoke with the hope that it would help. My son brought many people together, as people united to say Tehillim for him all over the world.

After all our praying and after everything we went through, some might assume that our faith would be shaken, but just the opposite has happened. My faith and commitment to *yiddishkeit* are stronger now than they have ever been. I have learned that a person should not become completely involved with material things such as cars, houses, and money. I had great difficulty with this issue until then, but if at anytime throughout this ordeal G-d would have come

to me and said, "Shneur, I will take away everything you own, all of your money, your house, and everything else in exchange for one more hour of your son's life," without a second thought I would have agreed.

Living a *frum* life is not just a matter of external action or dress, it is also internal. After seeing what my son did in his short life, I have no questions for the Almighty. As a Jew and a Chassid, it is a parent's dream that his child should live as a Jew and be enveloped in Torah and *mitzvos*, just like my son was. Every morning we washed

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negel vasser with him, and every night he said Shema, so he lived every day of his life as a Jew and a Chassid. I know people who wait their whole lives for the kind of *nachas* that my wife and I received from our Zalman.

People ask us, "What can we do for you?" My answer is, "Do as my Zalmi did, and don't forget his achievement-filled life. Live every day as a Jew!"

Postscript: This article was written in February, 1997. The Garbs have since brought three more beautiful, healthy children into the world: Kayla (22), Mendy (20), and Ziporah (Ziggy) (15), (ages as of 2015). They are currently initiating a free children's CPR class in Zalmi's memory; if you are interested in sponsoring or volunteering to teach a class, please contact them at sjg770@gmail.com. Upon Shneur & Rochi's request, donations can be made to Chabad.org in memory of their son.

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<https://www.chabad.org/338341>

My AHA Moment

Chaya K.



Don't Compare Your Insides to Someone Else's Outsides!

Strolling next to a pond, I was marveling at the relaxed, peaceful sight that met my eye. Little yellow ducks were gliding gracefully in the water, and I got to see a picturesque view of Mommy Duck with her little ducklings swimming beside her. Only when taking a glimpse beneath the surface of the water would you know that there is more going on than what meets the eye. Although these ducks look as if they're effortlessly gliding on the water, we know that their little feet are in constant motion as they paddle to and fro in order to remain afloat. This message was so applicable to my life and to life in general.

I was falling apart, but I was going on with life and meeting people. And talking. And socializing. And smiling. It took all the strength out of me. I was weary and tired, drained, exhausted, and had no strength left within me to be in control. I felt so alone. On top of that, I was eating myself up and berating myself, asking "Why am I the only one so stuck in this situation?? It is already x amount of time since my loss and the world has continued turning on its axis. I am not the only one with a challenge. Others come and go and only I am struggling to keep afloat! How do they do that??"

When I shared my doubts on the HUG chat, some special woman commented: "Do the people around you know what you are going through? Do they know that you're falling apart? Or are you putting up a happy, jolly front...? Just the same, you may see smiles on others' faces and not know that they might be falling apart as well..."

She was right and this put me in my place. Her words hit home. It's true that I walk around with a smile, covering up my turbulent thoughts and feelings. People are fooled by it, and you know what? I would rather that they continue to get sold by my smile than that they know the real truth... I have no need to share with the whole world that I am floundering, groping in the dark, and looking for a way out of my misery... Similarly, others smile but they might be covering things up too. Nobody knows what's hiding behind another's cheerful exterior.

There was a Rav who walked into a Yeshiva auditorium and asked one young man, "Why do you look so down?" When the *bachur* started listing everything that's going on in his life, the Rav interrupted him. "I didn't ask WHY you are down, I asked why you LOOK so down!" Let me continue facing the world with a smile, yet let me not be fooled by others' smiles. Just like a duck paddles frantically to stay afloat, under the smile may be layers of pain, anguish, and grief that no one can see. I will go on paddling, continuing to stretch my mouth upward, and hopefully soon that smile will reach my eyes as well :) 



The potent power of thanking and appreciating what we have, grants us the opportunity to bring more goodness upon ourselves.

A *talmid* of Rav Shach once approached the Rav in distress. He wanted to break his engagement because he wasn't 'feeling it,' and he was unsure about how to proceed. After gentle probing, the *bochur* confessed that he was worried because his friend was also a *chosson*, but he was always beaming and joyful, and frequently talked about both his *kallah* and the *chasunah* plans with utmost happiness. He figured something must be off with his *shidduch* if he wasn't constantly doing the same.

Rav Shach smiled and replied, "What If I told you that just this morning your friend came over to me and said exactly the same thing?"

The *bochur* was too stunned to react, but he received his answer loud and clear. He turned his attitude around and appreciated what he had.

The *kapitel* of *Mizmor Lesoidu*, although short, is a perfect way of thanking Hashem for even the small things.

Hashem doesn't owe us anything. Whatever he gave us until now, and whatever he chooses to continue to give us, is what we need to thank for. When times are rough, it may seem quite impossible to find

the positive amidst our challenges. It's okay to fake it and push ourselves to be thankful for something even if we don't feel it in our heart. The heart will follow, as long as we try to find the positive.

Before an athlete competes with his peers, he takes the time to stretch and warm up because he never knows how challenging today's game will turn out to be. So too, every morning we can take a few short moments to thank Hashem for big things or even little ones. This prepares us for the day ahead, so that we can, *B'ezras Hashem*, handle whatever life throws at us.

Rava would begin every Torah class with a joke. Humor gives us a new perspective on a seemingly hard situation. As Rabbi Label Lam would say, it gives us a transcendent look at ourselves. The grass is not always greener on the other side. Although it may appear so, we just need to realize and be thankful for what is already on our side of the fence. ✨



**BE
THANKFUL
FOR
THE LIFE
YOU HAVE**

Inner Expression

A. F.



How can Hope
Spring eternal
When sometimes
It feels like an eternal winter
A cold landscape
Sharp ice
Burning cold
Punishing winds

How can Hope
Spring eternal
In a barren garden
Rocky terrain
Dry earth
Harsh heat

How can Hope
Spring eternal
In the dark of night
No sun
No warmth
No light

Hope
Is not a wildflower
It must be planted carefully
Tended to
Watched
Guarded

Hope
Is not a wildflower
It will not grow on its own

Hope needs
Rich soil
Warm sunlight
Gentle rain

A seed of Hope
Struggles to grow
I watch it carefully
Hoping to make it flourish
With love
With light
With faith

A seed of Hope
Struggles to grow
Sometimes tending to it feels
Too hard
The wind too strong

The rain too fierce
The sun too harsh

But Hope
Is what I hold onto
When life feels like
An eternal winter
A barren garden
A dark night

So I do my best
To tend my Hope
Giving it
Love
Care
Faith

So hope
Can spring eternal 

Answers on the Mark

Chumi Friedman

Chanukah is a time of parties and celebrations, of happiness and joy. I find it so hard to join in the fun, although my loss wasn't so recent... To my friends and family, it'll be hard to understand if I choose to skip a party or two. I'm managing quite well in my day to day life, but with Chanukah coming up, I'm not sure how I'll pull through. Do you have any suggestions on how to make this time more bearable for me?

- Anxious

We associate Chanukah with themes of light overcoming darkness and of good vanquishing evil. It's also a time of happy family gatherings. When we are struggling with grief and loss, all of that can seem overwhelming and hard to deal with, and that's okay. This is not a journey we "get over." This is a new reality we are learning to live in.

Let's begin by acknowledging two points: the first is that we don't owe anyone an explanation if we choose not to attend a family event of any kind. It should be enough to say something like, "I am sorry I can't be there. I was looking forward to seeing you." The exception to this is our husbands who might not understand how we feel, and who will need us to explain. Hopefully, they will accept our decisions.

The second point is that although the first point sounds good on paper, it is much harder to actually put it into practice. Friends and family may pressure us to come even when it's clear that we don't want to. If you can stay home, then do so - at least for one event. It will make it easier for you to go to your other parties.

In terms of the gatherings that you feel you either have to or really want to attend, here are some guidelines that may be helpful.

1. Take a deep breath and be prepared for hard moments: comments, babies, children who are the same age your child would have been.

2. Discuss with your husband in advance what time you are going to leave the party.

3. Look for the person who you believe will be the easiest to spend time with and hang out with her as much as possible.

4. Come up with deflecting lines for the times you need to change the subject, like: "You look great. Is that a new dress (sheitel, hat, shoes)?"

5. Bring along something comforting - food you enjoy eating, music you like listening to, or a game you enjoy playing. 🎮

Wishing you many days of light and happiness,

Chumi Friedman

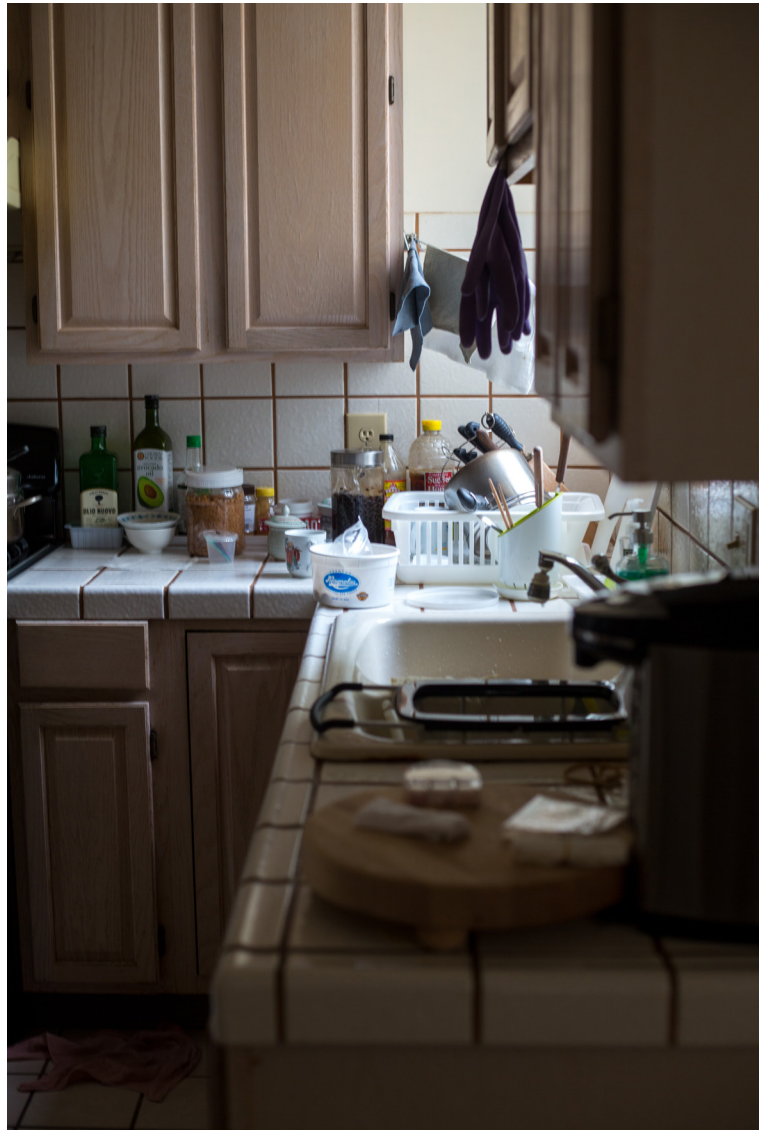
Director, ATIME/HUG Program

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The King's Judgment

The white tablecloth is still on the table since Shabbos, ready to be folded and put away. The table is already strewn with laundry that is waiting patiently, or not so patiently, to be sorted and placed in its drawers. There is clutter on the counters, but Yours Truly is just sitting down. My eyes are unfocused, my mind is in a fog, and I am staring around with a dazed look, not knowing what to do first. It feels like everything came crashing down around me. My good friend, trying again after multiple losses, has recently miscarried again. Another friend sent me a message earlier to share that she had a loss. A woman who is a part of the PAL (Pregnancy after Loss) chat by ATIME miscarried. I wonder, "Hashem! How can you bear so much pain??" I am not functioning, and I'm doing only whatever I really must do while the rest is piling up around me. My nerves are taut and my endurance level is low. As the days go by, I regain my composure. Still thinking about my friends in pain, I try to be there for them and offer support in any ways I can.

As I attempt to make sense out of this situation, one that does not begin to make sense, the following thought enters my mind. We know the difference between the King of the World and a king of a country. While a *melech basar vedom* has the ability to give a trial and judge



every person, he inflicts pain mindlessly on the people surrounding the one going through judgment. For example, a king sentences a man to prison. No thought goes into the community at large, this young man's wife and family, close relatives, friends, neighbors and all other people on whom his incarceration inflicts tremendous pain.

Opposing this, we are *kachomer b'yad hayotzer*, as we say in the Rosh Hashana *davening*: "We are like clay in the Hands of the Potter." We are fully in the Hands of Hashem. We trust Him completely as The One that orchestrates all events according to His will. When He decides to inflict pain on man, He takes into account all individuals that will be pained by this man's dire circumstances. Only if it's *bashert* for all those people surrounding him will the *tzarah* be inflicted on him. The feelings of the family, close friends and not such close friends, community, acquaintances and the Yiddish world at large are all taken into account by Hashem.

My friends' pain is my pain. I own all those feelings of helplessness, of misery, and of a foggy and numb heart and mind. It is *bashert* for me to go through all this, just as much as their pain is *bashert* for them. I will strengthen my own *emunah* through their struggles. Their pain means that I am meant to be in pain too, and that this has a *cheshebon* as well. If the pain wouldn't have been meant for me, they would have decided to keep it to themselves instead of sharing it. Now that I am privy to their situation, I will strengthen myself and support them, while hoping that there is only good news from now on.

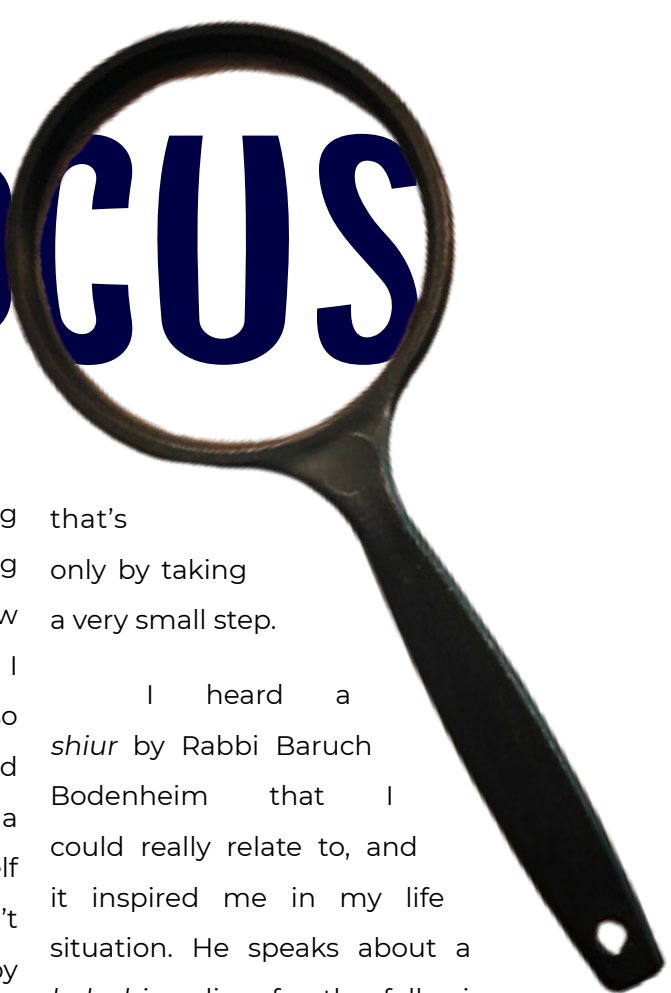
The *Shechina* is with us in *galus* and feels the pain of every Yid... How are You, Hashem, handling the pain of Your children for so many years?? Please redeem us from this *galus* and redeem yourself as well, *bimheiru v'yameinu, amen.* 

Emunah Insights

The place of doubt in Judaism is very interesting because most people define *emunah* as certainty, while I define *emunah* as the courage to live with uncertainty. There is one thing we will never know: what tomorrow will bring. Every single commitment and course of action that we take has its underside of doubt. *Emunah* is not the absence of doubt but the ability to recognize doubt, live with it, and still take the risk of commitment.

-Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, *a"h* 

IN FOCUS



It's nearly Chanukah. When we are struggling with building a family, it seems that each approaching *Yom Tov* has a strong emphasis on family. Is that how it really is, or is that just what I perceive it to be? I don't know. A part of me likes to be on auto-pilot so that I just ride the waves when they come and avoid thinking too much. I now know that that is just a coping mechanism of mine. I'm annoyed with myself if I don't feel inspired at this time of the year. I didn't pick up the *chizuk* that I could have received by utilizing the energy of the time. It's so complicated...I don't know what to do. Should I be on auto-pilot and not think too much, or learn and think deeply, yet at the same time also be reminded that our time is slipping away all too quickly...and along with it come shattered dreams and hopes...?

I once heard that when we are in a very tall building and we take an elevator to the top floor, we don't feel like it's the top floor. *It doesn't matter whether we feel it or not*, we are at the top! We have arrived at that destination and we should try to make the most of the situation. This is how I think about *Yomim Tovim*. We shouldn't wait until we feel open to inspiration, as that time may never come. Instead, let's try to make the most of our opportunities, even when

that's only by taking a very small step.

I heard a *shiur* by Rabbi Baruch Bodenheim that I could really relate to, and it inspired me in my life situation. He speaks about a *halachic* ruling for the following scenario. What happens if we light a candle for the *menorah* and it gets extinguished? What is the *halacha* - must we relight it or not? The Gemara concludes that we do not need to relight it. It's better to relight it, but we would have fulfilled the obligation even if the flame became extinguished soon after it was lit. Initially, this seems strange. If the light has to burn for half an hour, and indeed it has oil that would allow the flame to burn for that half an hour, why would we not be obligated to relight it if the flame goes out?

To help us understand this *halacha*, let's remember how the *menorah* in the *Beis Hamikdash* was made. Hashem instructed Moshe to form a *menorah* out of one piece of solid gold. Moshe had

difficulty with this task, so Hashem showed him a *menorah* out of fire which was the picture of how Moshe should form it. Moshe tried and he still could not do it, so he threw the gold into the fire and it came out fully formed. This doesn't seem to make sense, because if Hashem knew that Moshe would not have been able to form it, why did Hashem show it to him?

The answer is that all Hashem requires of us is that we expend some effort. This gives us great *chizuk*. The message of the *menorah* is that we should light it, and then, whether it burns or not is not up to us. What Hashem wants is our action, but we are not in control of the end result. This helps me so much. So many of us

are so involved in building our family, yet our families are still so much smaller than what we want. Well, guess what? All we need to do is try. The result is up to Hashem, and it's not our responsibility because

we did our due diligence. We should not at all feel connected to guilt, blame or any other negative title that we, as Jewish Women, at times identify with. Stay focused and try your best; our bodies are the ultimate handiwork of Hashem, and we are simply not in control of how they behave! Let's let go of the pressure and demands we put on ourselves, and instead treasure and embrace our bodies with love and warmth.

On the topic of Chanukah, there is actually another hint to this focus on the effort we put into the process. All the vessels for the *Mishkan* were completed on the 25th day of Kislev in the desert, but

the inauguration only took place on the 1st of Nisan. That's strange. Why was the actual inauguration so much later? The answer to this is that thousands of years later, on the 25th day of Kislev, there was an actual *Chanukas Hamishkan* when the Chashmonaim relit the *menorah* after finding one small jug of oil. It would have been easy to become disheartened, but they tried their best despite that the *keilim* were only able to be used months after completion. This attests to the fact that our task is only to try and do what is required. We have no idea what is 'in store' for us in the future. What or how our *mitzvos* and *maasim tovim* affect this world is something that is beyond us. We may not see the fruits of our effort in this lifetime at all - and that's okay.

Chanukah can
present us with
some very painful
moments.

Chanukah can present us with some very painful moments. We see lots of full and busy families hustling and bustling to light when it's just not the same in their small and humble abodes. This year, as we watch those

flickering flames, I will have some completely different thoughts. Normally, I want to see each and every flame standing strong, tall and straight, but sometimes they just don't burn that way. Now I know that that's nothing to get discouraged about. I will see it as yet another 'heavenly hug' letting me know that I'm not in control; I just need to put one foot in front of the next. These flames will also shine a light deep into my soul and congratulate me for continuing to keep strong in the face of so much pain and adversity. They'll congratulate me that I keep going even when I feel like I have every reason not to. Perhaps, if we listen closely as we watch our beautiful flames, we may even hear them say that.

Inner Expression

Rachel Aron

With a flick of my fingers
The *dreidel* goes
Spinning, spinning, spinning
Turning, twirling, whirling,
Will I be winning?
When will it drop?
Oh, let it stop, let it stop
Seems like it's spinning
Out of control
I'm waiting for it
To land on the *gimmel*

With a flick of His hands
My existence starts
Spinning, spinning, spinning
How can I contemplate
Winning?
The world turning round
All without a sound
Oh, let it stop, let it stop
My life's spiraling out of control
Begging, hoping, imploring
For my very own miracle



Spinning Dreidel

A thought to ponder
Let us remember
Just like the *dreidel* won't be
Spinning forever
The salvation will come
Your troubles will be gone.

Based on a thought by R' Uri Lati 🌟

Humor Me

Y. Freund

I sit down with my favorite pen and heart- shaped pad and start scribbling.

The ~~menorah~~ Chanukah lights is are burning,
My headache like a *dreidel* is spinning.

Ok, I think I qualify for the family *Badchan* now. I already put together the 2 line poem that everyone was told to bring along for the game.

Game...! As if I want to play! As if I want to go! Oh, yes. I would love to join a party - one that I chose to attend and one where I chose who will attend. If I can't choose who will be attending, then perhaps I get to choose if I will be attending!

My tantrum notwithstanding, I can't wiggle my way out of this one: The Green family Chanukah Party.

Mommy will be hurt if
simply must get my act

In a desperate
myself look (and feel)
apply some cover-up and
impressive outfit. I almost
prove that I'm alright and

Now, all I need is
I need space to shove
can't express it publicly. I

bag and run around grabbing items to put into it...



MY NIGHT OUT

I don't show up, and I
together and Just. Go.

attempt to make
presentable, I carefully
get dressed in my most
grab my husband's tie to
dressed to perfection.

an oversized handbag;
my pain into when I
choose my silver glitzy

Colored pen - To add life to my otherwise black page.

Tea bags - To remember there's something good at home awaiting me when I'm being put under hot burning stares.

Safety pins - To puncture the ones that puncture me with not-such-smart comments.

Vaseline - To let everything glide and slide off my back.

Ahhhhh! There's nothing like a security bag filled with items that help in challenging situations. Like Vaseline, pens, and safety pins.

Postscript: Finally home, and I must thank Hashem for my very own Chanukah miracle. That is... I survived the Chanukah Party. ✨

Perspective

H. M.

I am a failure
And don't try to tell me that
I will get far in life
Because, you don't know the real me
I tend to fall often.
Even if
I can triumph over the constant trials and
tribulations
The motivation doesn't last
And I don't believe that
I have the strength to carry on

Because
My weakness is shown
Through the countless times I have fallen
And it is false to believe that
Through my fails
I am not defined
One can clearly see
My challenge has affected me negatively
And you'll never hear me say that
I can stand tall and proud.

****Now read from bottom up to gain a new perspective!**** ✨



Inner Expression

Goldie Burger

Miracles

Sometimes I wonder and I ask
How a miracle is defined,
Is it a bit of oil in a flask
Or when for eight days it shines,

Is it a fire not burning down a tree
Or is it the ten *makkos* the Mitzriyim got,
A cane converting to a snake for all to see
Or the *lechem haponim* remaining fresh and hot,

Is it when vinegar keeps alight a flame
Or is it the splitting of the mighty sea,
In reality, to Hashem, they're all the same
Both *nes* and *teva* are equally easy,

It is waking up each morning to a new day
It is seeing the sun shining high,
It is being able *Asher Yatzar* to say
It is rain and snow coming from the sky,

It is a closet full of clothes, a pantry full of food
It is safely crossing over the street,
It is owning and feeling emotions and moods
It is being on your own two feet,

So as we make our way through this maze
Not knowing what to do,
We know that He who did *nissim bayamim haheim*
Can perform *nissim* for us, *bizman hazeh*, too.

"If you don't believe in miracles, perhaps you have forgotten you are one as well" ✨

Cinnamon Sticks

Yields: Approximately 50 sticks

Ingredients:

- 2½ tsp water
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 egg yolk, white reserved
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 6 oz. chopped nuts



Glaze:

- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- ¼ tsp vanilla sugar
- 1 Tbsp oil
- 2 Tbsp boiling water
- ½ tsp lemon juice

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 375°
- Mix all cookie ingredients, except nuts, by hand. Spread onto a lined cookie sheet and brush with the reserved egg white. Sprinkle top with chopped nuts.
- Bake for 10 minutes. While still hot, cut into 1x3-inch strips. Return to oven for 10-15 minutes.
- Combine glaze ingredients and drizzle over cooled sticks.

Enjoy! 

Hugging 'Treat'ment

Toby Glick

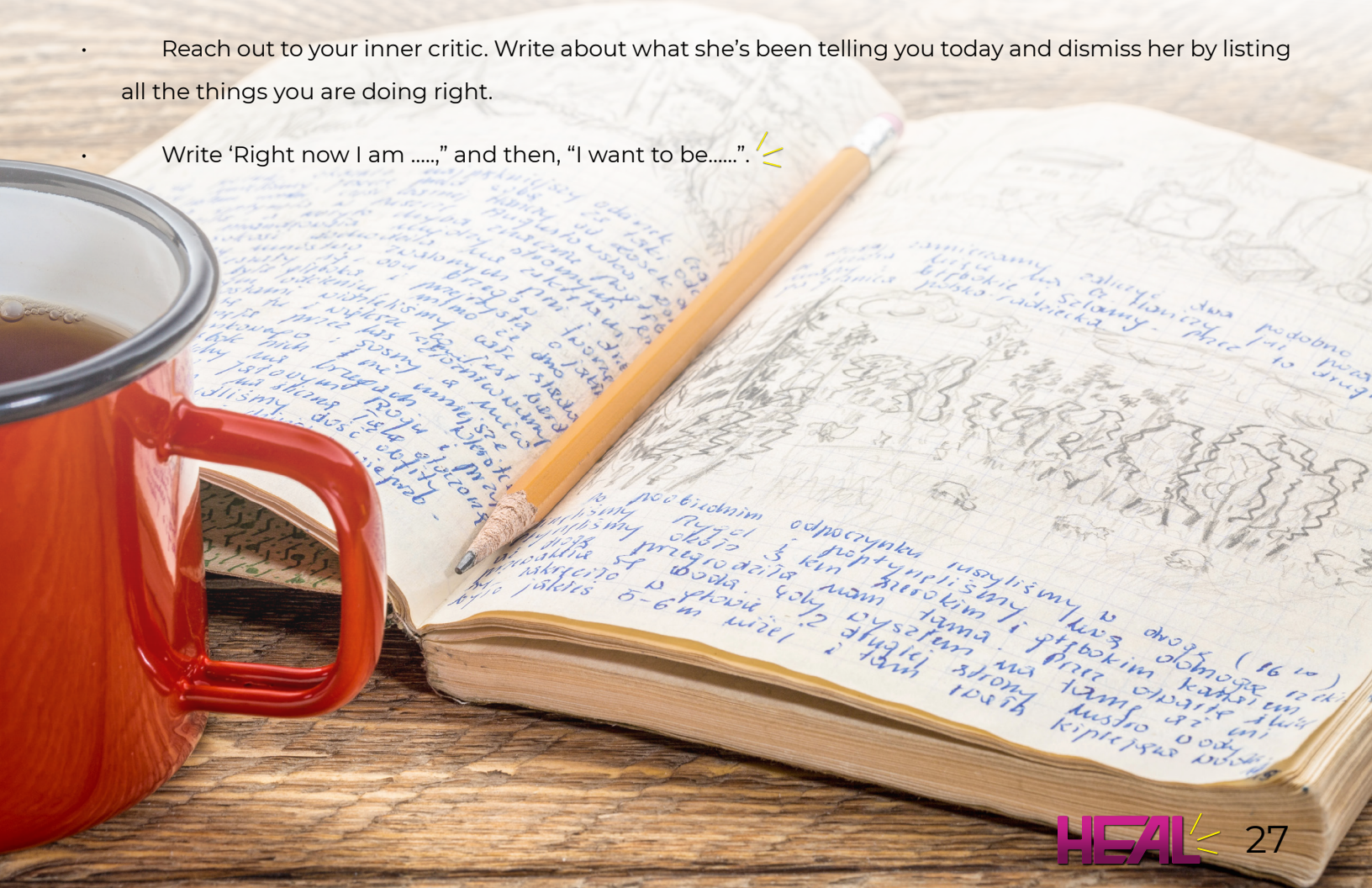
Feeling overwhelmed?

All it takes is some innovative relaxation techniques to get you to unwind. Grab a glass of coffee, a pen along with a pad, and pick up your feet...!

Journaling provides an opportunity to untangle your nerves and sort through your thoughts. It is available to you at all hours of the day (and night!). The outcomes are improved memory, decreased stress, and more self awareness.

Some prompts to try:

- Without stopping to think, write down everything that is bubbling in your mind. Once it's out, leave the list and come back to it at a later time. This helps you clear your mind so you review the list with a new view.
- Write about something that brings you joy without fail. Swimming? Skating? Shopping? Explain how you feel when you are doing it and think of when you can do it next.
- List all your accomplishments of the day, no matter how small, and make a point to celebrate them.
- Reach out to your inner critic. Write about what she's been telling you today and dismiss her by listing all the things you are doing right.
- Write 'Right now I am, "and then, "I want to be.....". ✨



My Journaling Experience

E. T.



After my loss, emotions were all mixed together,
At times I felt that it was too much to weather.
My thoughts were overwhelmed and flying,
I was confused, I felt like crying.
My mind was ready to explode,
I needed a way to unburden my load.
Someone recommended for me to write,
To express my thoughts, which might help me start
to feel alright.
At first I dismissed her advice,
It's just not for me; for someone else it would be nice.
However, I decided to try, to give it a shot,
There is nothing to lose; maybe I'll even gain a lot.
Writing turned out to be the key,
An amazing outlet it became for me.

Do yourself a favor and be kind,
It doesn't matter if it's writing what's on your mind.
Or even some poems that rhyme just so,
Writing is a great tool; don't just say no.
It helps organize my thoughts without a doubt,
Writing allows me to grieve and let my emotions out.
You can share what you write with your husband and
family,
Or you can keep them for yourself and no other eyes
to see.
Writing allows you to express your grief,
This can help you feel some relief.
So take a pen and paper out right away,
This might just do the trick and make you happier
today! ✨

My Thoughts

E. T.

The Club

I have become a member of a club - a club that I never would have chosen to join. I joined so suddenly and unexpectedly. This club goes by several names: Pain, Loss, Grief and Sadness. I had thought I was to join a different club, one whose name is Happiness, Simcha, Elation and Joy. However, I was mistaken.

It is difficult being a part of this club. It is so very different from what I expected. There are so many others in this club, and although I never would've wanted them to join, it's good to be around those that understand and share the journey with me. Now I have a new appreciation within me for all that I took for granted until now, but never will have again.

HAPPINESS

PAIN

Health

Rivka Ruchy Kolman

Hi everyone!

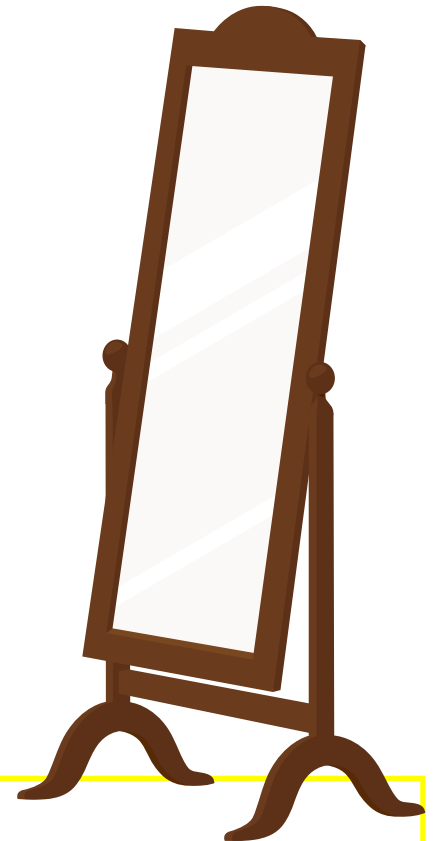
It's Rivka Ruchy from Health with Heart.

I had the privilege of sharing some insight with you on the topic of Emotional Eating in a previous issue. Are we ready to go a bit deeper and discuss the topic of Achieving Mindfulness? First, let's recap.

In the previous issue we learned about the EE cycle: turning to food for reasons other than nourishment, how that makes you feel, and how to break the cycle.

Now, let's move on.

A major factor in breaking the EE cycle is becoming mindful: connecting and tuning into ourselves. To make it clearer, I broke this down into the three C's.



The first is Connection.

The reason many of us avoid the act of tuning into ourselves is because it's very uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable because we subconsciously create blockages between our own view of ourselves and who we really are.

Here's an activity that's helpful in becoming our own best friend. It may seem intimidating at first, but with practice it gets easier.

Look at yourself in the mirror. Look yourself in the eye and say:

I am beautiful.

I am special. (List your qualities. You have many. Qualities are not the things you do; they're who you are as a person right now).

I am worthy.

I am enough.

I deserve to feel good!

Now we need to realize what makes us feel good - by tuning in and listening to our bodies' cues.

Ask yourself, "What food choices and food habits serve me well," and vice versa.

Foods that serve you well are foods that nourish you, foods you enjoy eating, and foods that leave you feeling comfortably full.

Foods that don't serve you well are foods you don't enjoy eating, foods you do enjoy eating but leave you feeling uncomfortably full physically, emotionally, or both.

Keep a food log to help you figure out your custom made food plan based on your findings.

2 The second C is for Compassion: Being kind to yourself.

We've tried and erred many times. We've been waiting for change and it hasn't shown up. So yes, it makes sense to get frustrated when it seems like we're not strong enough, and it makes sense to give up when it seems as if our bodies are not cooperating with us.

Here's an activity that's helpful in turning that frustration towards our bodies into compassion.

Tune in and realize how amazing your body is. You can write down different ways in which your body is serving you in unbelievable ways despite all that it has been through. (Thank you, Hashem!)

With compassion comes patience, forgiveness, and a strong desire to take care of the beautiful vessel Hashem has granted us: our bodies.



3 Once in this place, it brings us to the third C of Commitment.

Because I tuned in and realized how much better I feel when I eat a certain way, and because I'm so grateful for my body and all the wonderful things it does for me, I now really want to take care of it by committing to a plan that'll help me feel my best.

Why is Commitment important? Because change is hard and results take time. Commitment is that space you give yourself to give whatever you're doing a fair chance.

Know what you want. Why do you want it? What's your plan of action to get you there?

Write all of this down and look at it every day. It's helpful to choose a doable time frame for yourself. Write down the positive changes you are noticing, because this helps to keep you motivated.

Once things become a habit, it's easy to forget what brought you into this journey. Always remember why you started!

We are human. We don't strive for perfection. We strive to do our best so we can feel our best!

May Hashem grant you lots of *siyata dishmaya* on your journey towards health.

Rivka Ruchy Kolman, founder of Health with Heart, is certified as a health coach as well as in emotional eating. She runs her practice in Monsey, NY and works both virtually and in person. Her program has helped many people develop a healthy relationship with food and self. 

Small Talk, Big Talk

It's been 2 years since I gave birth to a beautiful baby that I carried for 9 months, made him 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, 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?

When faced with this question, my answer depends on who the questioner is. If someone is asking it as a courtesy question, just for the sake of asking, then I don't mention him. But if that one genuinely asks, then I do include him..

E. G.

It's a challenging situation! I don't include him when saying how many kids I have, simply because I'd rather not have this unpleasant encounter every time they ask me the ages, etc.

R.R.

There is no right or wrong way to go about this. I personally prefer including her when confronted with this question, simply because in my heart she's part of my family.

True, she didn't survive birth, but she's still part of the family.

S. P.

It's been 5 years and subsequently 2 healthy children, *Baruch Hashem*, but confusion remains... I still can't get it! How many children do I really have?? In the *Kimpeturin Heim* after my last birth, I answered "7 births" because that is the truth! I went through 7 pregnancies and 7 labors and 7 deliveries, and so 7 is a legitimate answer. On a 'regular' basis, however, I just take a deep breath and swallow, keeping the questioner in suspense for 2-5 seconds while formulating a response. (I wonder if she is thinking, "Really! This lady doesn't know how many kids she has?!") I then do a quick calculation... (Okay, 7

-1 = 6), and confidently say, "Six, *Baruch Hashem*!"

Of course, the best part is that I smile inwardly for my bravery and congratulate myself for my maturity. I also make myself a mental reminder: NEVER EVER will I ask anyone directly how many children they have...

B. Fried

Being that I had a full term stillborn, I get this!! I cringe every time someone comments on the number of kids I have. I attached a poem I wrote a few months after my loss when someone was talking about her 4 children, and I knew I had 4 too - but only 3 to show. (Editor's Note: See poem on following page).

C. L. Y.

Next Issue's Talk:

It's been some time since my last loss, and with no baby in sight, people often offer me to be *Kvatter* at their son's *bris*. On one hand I feel like accepting it since I know it's a big *zchus*, but on the other hand, I feel self conscious, so that embarrassment is keeping me back. Should I push myself to do it, or should I consider my feelings first and pass on the offer? 🤔

A Mother's Thoughts

C. L. Y.



How many kids do you have?

"I have 3"

(Deep down in my heart I know there are 4),

What are their ages?

"8, 6, and 3"

(Deep down in my heart I know there is more).

It takes place wherever I go

At the store or on the plane,

In the park or on the street

There is always pain.

I wish I can say

That I have a baby too,

But that would be awkward

For the person that's new.

My baby's always with me

Even if others don't know,

Just sometimes I wish

I had what to show.

It's a lesson for us all

To be sensitive, don't pry,

Don't ask too many questions

All I ask you is to try. ✨

To My Dear Sury L.

To My Dear *Heilige Neshama'le*,

I hear your sweet voice

Singing *shira*

With the birds

I see your face

Serene

Peaceful

Angelic

I caress your blue-ish cheeks

Silken

Soft

Angelic

I hold you tightly

Pressed against my chest

Wrapped in white

Otherworldly

Angelic

I stare at your closed eyelids

Gorgeous, long lashes

And I picture

Your deep set eyes

Like the sea

I hold you close

But my hands are bare

I think I hear a voice

A symphony of cries

But you are still

Eerily silent

I kiss your blue cheeks

And imagine if they would've been pink.

My *heilige Neshama'le*,

You've left me bereft

Nine months together

Long but gone

I felt you here

I knew you were real

Kick by kick

You tugged at my heartstrings

I couldn't wait to meet you!

To raise you

To hug you

To love you

But you preferred

The sweet sounds

Of Torah learning

That was all you knew

My *heilige Neshama'le*!

My tears flood the heavens

I'm in pain without you,

But the one notion

Of your exalted existence

Your place right by

Kanfei Hashchina

Brings me peace

Brings me comfort...

It's time,

I hear a *Kol Torah*

Far off in the distance

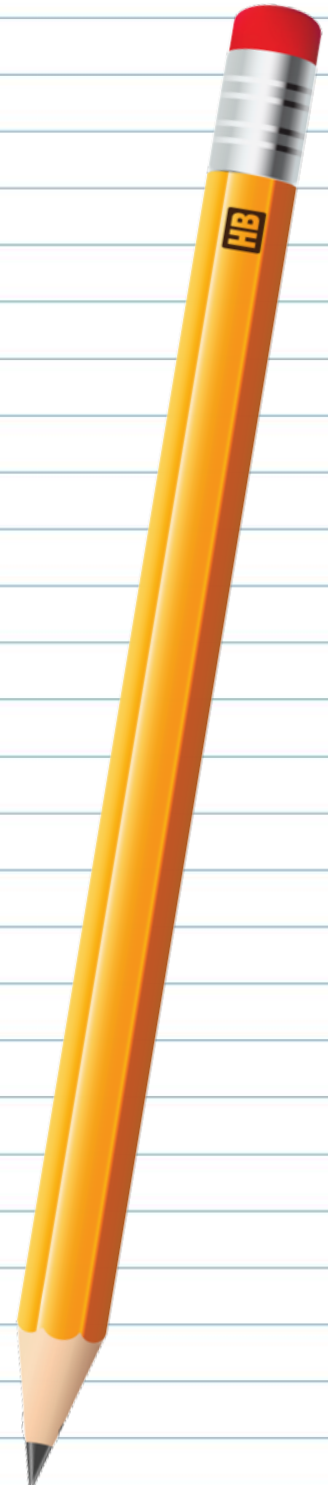
I know that sound

I've heard it once before...

It's time!

With all my love,

♥ Mommy ✨



Dear Diary

Tova Ross

Dear Diary,

Yeah, it's me again... Oh, no! Please don't complain. I'm beating you to it with an apology. I'm truly sorry for venting again, when at the moment you're my best friend.

Can you imagine how chaotic a short trip to the grocery turned out to be? This morning I ran to the grocery for some staples while leaving a whirlpool at home. The house needed a serious shape-up and laundry was piling till the neighbors backyard. I figured that a short trip down the street shouldn't take long, right? Wrong. As I walked in, I was greeted by Mrs. Graidelsky.

"Tova'la dear, I heard... nebuch, shefa'le... So tell me, how far along were you? Where did you deliver? Was it the doctor's fault? What caused it to happen?"

The store was pin-drop silent... or so it seemed. I contemplated running for the exit but a quick reality check assured me that I'm better off listening to her now than having her parade my weird behavior through the streets of gossipers.

I must've mumbled something in return because she spoke again in that shrill voice, "Such a nebuch, I hope you don't take it too hard because this world isn't the real world. So don't worry too much about it".

Well, well...what a day. I'm so very glad to have experienced this unpleasant encounter. At least I know to thank Hashem for my tact. Gotta be positive, huh?

Talk to you again!

Tova

A Father's Words

D. Portowitz

Not Just a Nefel

We are so sad.

It's a real sadness that's open and raw; even though, "It's only a *nefel*!"

It was a real baby, with a real body, with a real *neshama*, and a real, beating heart for nine long months. There were daydreams and night dreams, talks and plans. There was happiness and excitement, hope and thanks, and desire and prayer that made it all extremely palpable and so real!

What and who will the baby look like?

What will the baby sleep in?

Where will the baby lay and play?

Who will we name after?

Where will we make the *kiddush*?

How very excited our other children will be,

how lucky we are to have another baby,

and how we hope she will grow up to be someone really special are just some of the very real thoughts that were lost with this very real passing of "our *nefel*."

Our *Neshama'le* is gone, leaving us bereft, with a feeling of anguish as real as her beating heart!

She was a beautiful baby, full and complete, with only the gift of her breath missing.

She is pure; too pure to have even entered this world of impurity for just one moment. She had achieved her *tikkun* and fulfilled her *tafkid* just by basking in the illuminating light of Gan Eden while learning the *Ribono Shel Olam's Torah*. She did not taste sin, and we look forward to *tchiyas hameisim* when she will reawaken as a complete *tzadeikes*, as our *tzadeikes*.

Our *Neshama'le* will recognize us and we will reunite as one family!

We have no questions. We merited to partner with Hashem Himself in emptying out the "Gur" that is filled with *Yiddishe neshamos*. We merited to bring Moshiach one step closer, and for that we feel exceedingly privileged. We accept the decree of Hashem and even feel special for being chosen, as we know that whatever Hashem does to us, He also does for us as a friend.

And yet it still hurts, and we know it hurts Hashem too. He Himself was a partner in this miraculous creation. We love our little *Neshama'le* and it's difficult to let go; it's difficult to say goodbye. We miss her and long for her. The hurt is raw and the sadness is real, because:

She is not "just a *nefel*." She was a real baby, with a real body, with a real *Neshama*, and a real beating heart, for 9 long months.

May we all merit the coming of Moshiach, speedily, in our days! 

Chanukah

Reprinted for the benefit of our readers.

The moments the candles flicker are an auspicious time for prayer. In the presence of the *menorah's* light we can offer a personal *tefillah* 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.

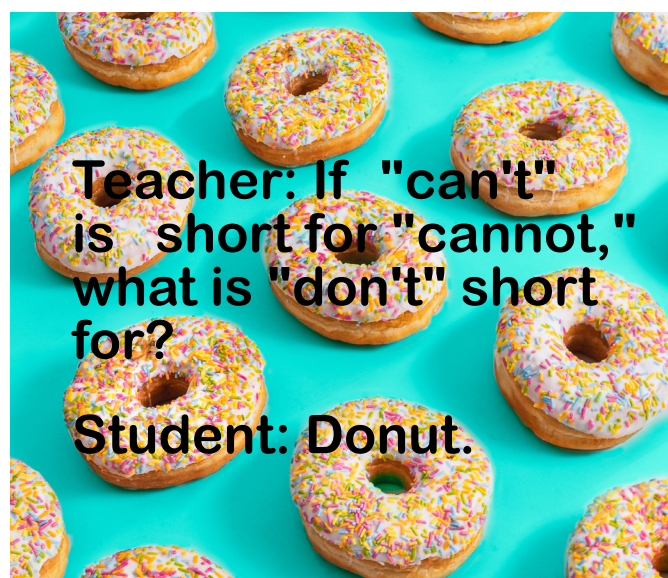
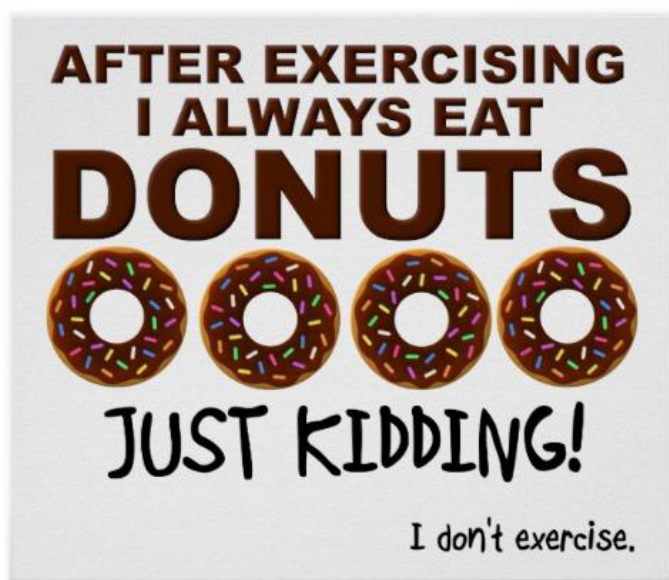
7th night - Shabbos is the source of all *brachos*. Ask Hashem for happy and peaceful Shabbosos; for your *seuda* to be with *Zmiros* and *Divrei Torah*.

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



Chanukah

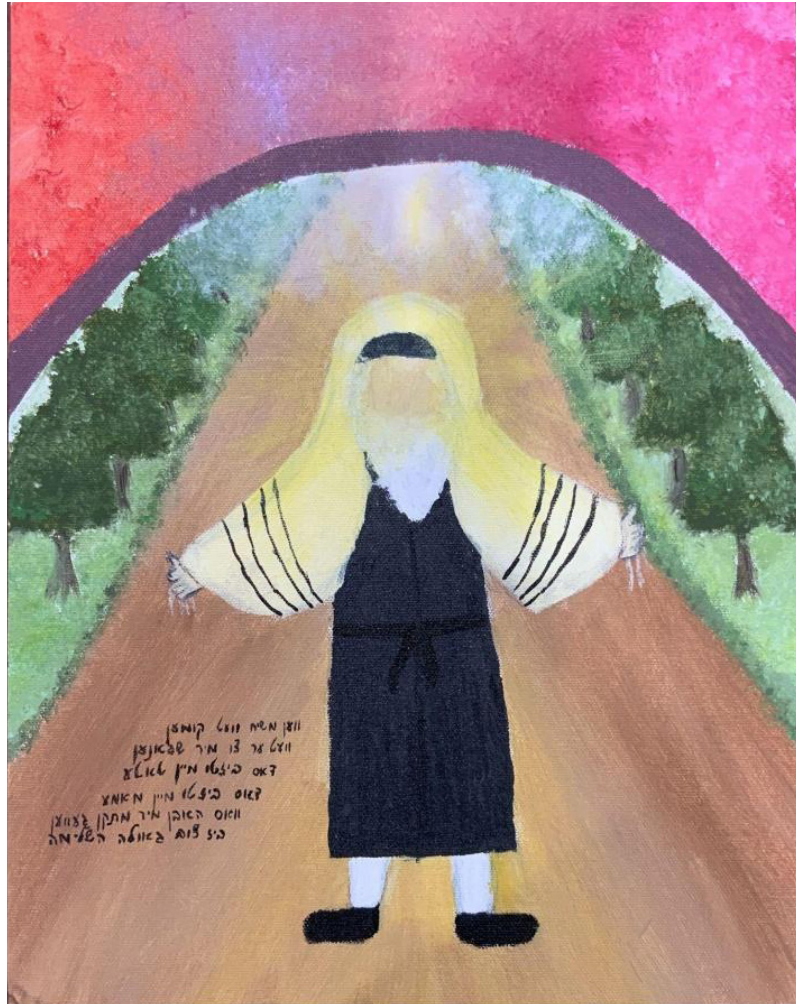
Jelly Ring Donut

Celebrate Chanukah with chocolate! All you need are some jelly rings, a bowl of hot water, and mini colorful sprinkles. Dip half of the chocolate jelly ring into hot water and then directly into the sprinkles. Place on parchment paper to dry, and presto! Yummy Donuts!



Image Credit Goes To Oh! My Image 201-491-2648

New corner!



The *nisayon* and the *tzar*!

Artistic Expression

E. Fried

And just like that
The balloon of hope
Went pop
With one little prick

For three glorious weeks
I allowed myself to dream
Allowed myself to hope
Allowed myself to smile

I filled my balloon
With happiness and joy
Dreaming of the future
Relishing the news

My balloon grew bigger
Filled with beautiful gardens
I spent all my time
Enjoying the view

And just like that
The balloon of hope
Went pop
With one little prick

Gone are the gardens
The dreams
The hopes
Scattered in a mess of pieces



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

Quote Me

"Your strongest muscle and worst enemy is your MIND. Train it well."

"Anxiety is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you very far."

"I CAN USE 6 MONTHS OF VACATION TWICE A YEAR!"

Did You Know?

Toby G.

We all want to be good listeners. A good listener knows when and how to validate feelings while being nice and respectful. Sometimes, empathy comes across as contrived and it leaves the speaker and listener feeling unhappy.

Are there any tips to ensure good, healthy validation?

That. As simple as that.

Using the word 'that' removes the focus from the speaker's feelings and

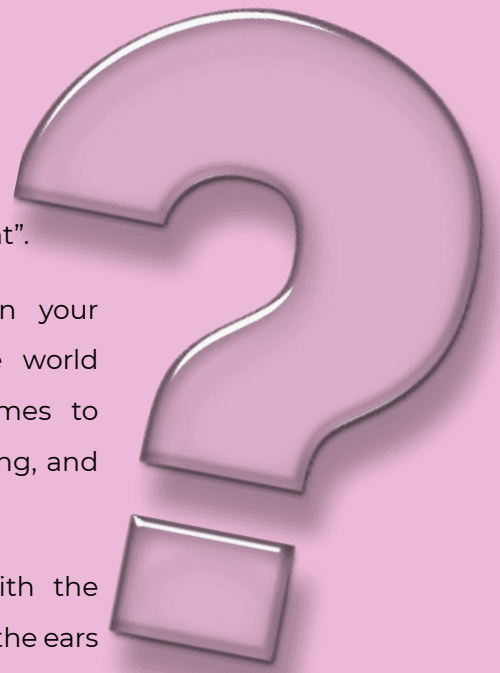
gives her private space.

"That's upsetting!"

"That's such a hurtful comment".

This minor change in your choice of words makes the world of a difference when it comes to giving validation, understanding, and comfort.

Empathy is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another, and feeling with the heart of another. ✨



Resources

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

A TIME

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

A TIME/HUG offers emotional support and medical guidance 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.

Haneshama

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

Our Tapestry

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

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

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.

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!

