

HEAL

Hope and Encouragement After Loss

Issue 9 - Spring, 2024



This issue was sponsored:

לעילוי נשמת חי' חוה בת חיים זאב הלוי

Reproducing this publication in whole or in part in any form without prior permission from the publisher is prohibited. The publisher reserves the right to edit all articles for clarity, space and editorial sensitivities. HEAL magazine assumes no responsibility for the content of articles or advertisements in this publication, nor for the content of books that are referred to or excerpted herein.

Graphics Done by:



From Our Hearts

Dear Friends,

Another *yom tov* is upon us; one that is filled with remembrance and reacceptance of the most spiritual thing we received: the Torah. It is what guides us and shows us how to live our lives. Shavuos is a time of reflection and change. It represents that we can humble ourselves to face others even when in difficult situations. When we see everyone wrapped in a *yom tov* of *simcha*, celebrating with their children, cheesecake, and more, we may look at how this impacts us and ask why our lives look different than what we had hoped.

On Shavuos, we look at all the fathers who walk hand in hand with their sons as they head to the *beis medrash* to learn the night away, and we wonder where our little boy would have been. On Shavuos, as they call out under the *tallis* by *duchening*, we ponder where our little one would have stood. And on Shavuos, the tears come as yet another *yom tov* is spent without a precious child of our own.

We recall the great *nes* that occurred with Yehudis when she tapped into her inner strength in terrifying times and killed the mighty enemy general. Her message shows that even in the darkest times we can portray how we are strong. When you are down and feeling alone, you have the ability to change the darkness of the situation. Did Yehudis really think she could fight and be victorious over a general? Despite the danger, she saw a need and acted on it. She knew she was risking everything but saw no other alternative. We as Jewish women fight each day to stay afloat with all our struggles. The pain may be searing and seems to be staring us straight in the eye. We long to hide or to let others deal with it but we stay strong. We can fight, and just like Yehudis, we too can be victorious.

Even when the pain is raw and deep, how can we create more meaning? When our dear children surround the *kisei hakavod* and learn their special *seder* with Hashem, we can feel the holiness of that, too. We are the vessels of those *neshamos*, and although we did not ask for it, Hashem chose us. We can cry to the King of all Kings who gave us this challenge and guards those souls nearest to Him. We can ask to be remembered on this special day and that Hashem should alleviate our pain. Only then can we create true happiness and meaning on this *yom tov* and try our best to fully experience and enjoy it.

Wishing you all much *hatzlacha* and fulfillment in this *yom tov*. Have a wonderful summer! 🌞

HEAL The HEAL Team
Chaya, Shira, Ettie

Upcoming H.E.A.L. Issue: Fall 2024

From Your Heart



Editors:

Chaya K.

Shira N.

Proofreader:

Shana S.

Technical Director:

Gitty R.

Design:



purpletulipdesign.com

Contact Us:

We welcome your submissions, suggestions, comments and critique!

Call/Text (570) 630-4419, Email

healandhope1@gmail.com

Waiting to hear from you!

Donate:

Call 844-422-7356

Code - 557041,

Or <https://secure.cardknox.com/heal>

It's beautiful! Wow! I can't imagine how many hours and hours of work this is!!

Y.C.

I'm saying wow even before actually reading it. Just by skimming through, I'm so, so impressed! Keep it up!

F.M.

The past week was really not easy. I'm wondering... Would this loss have been different if not for my past stillbirth...? Please keep up your *chashuv* work. This magazine is a lifeline for me.

Miscarriage ain't easy!

F.R.

Thank you so much! I really enjoyed the issue you sent me.

C.I.

Thanks! The music video is gorgeous!

G.M.

It was late at night when I sat down to read Hadassa Cohen's article. Thank you so much. I feel like this was written specifically for me. Although I know that I wasn't the one you addressed, you can be certain that there are many more women that you touched.

C.K.

The read was fantastic! The articles, "Missing Identity" (Issue 8) and "Just Make Lemonade" (Issue 6) were beyond. My mother also couldn't get enough of it. Keep it up!

B.L.

Thank you so much for the much-needed *chizuk*. Every single article was full of inspiration and validation. It is clear that a lot of time and hard work was dedicated to the magazine.

Thank you again!

E.F.

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

Partner with us in our efforts to offer comfort and hope to those who are mourning

Inspiration

"HASHEM, I KNOW THAT WHILE
EVERY ONE OF MY LIFE'S
CHALLENGES HAS AN
EXPIRATION
DATE, YOUR
LOVE FOR ME
DOES NOT."



Beautiful Blend

Blue to gray,
Gray to pink,
Pink to peach,
Peach to yellow,
Yellow to orange,
Orange to red,
Seamlessly blend
In sunset.

At first glance,
It looks like an anomaly.
It doesn't make sense.
How do blue and red
Coexist in one sky
Blending into oneness?
Primary colors
They are opposites.
Not blendable.

But somehow
It works
In sunset.

Heartbreak to misery,
Misery to agony,
Agony to pain,
Pain to ache,
Ache to ok,
Ok to complacent,
Complacent to happy.

It doesn't seem to blend.
But I see
The colors of my life,
My grief and joy,
Tears and hope,
Loss and love,
Slowly blending.

At first glance,
It looks like an anomaly.
It doesn't make sense.
How do grief and joy coexist
In one life?
They are opposites.
Not blendable.

But somehow
It works
After loss.

Most of the time,
My sky is grief;
Aching, sad, and blue.
But there are moments
In sunset
When a blast of color
Joins the grief
In brightly-hued joy.

A comment or look

From my daughter,
Reaffirming her intelligence,
Validating
I've done something right,
Or a trip
With my husband,
Reconnecting,
Bonding,
Strengthening our relationship.

There are moments
When I struggle to blend
Both joy and ache in my heart.
I cannot blend
The sorrow and happiness.

But in sunset,
I see it's possible
To blend the dichotomous-
To blend the seemingly opposite.

I don't see sunset
Every day,
But on rare occasions
I do,
And then I marvel at its beauty,
And I try.
I try so hard
To see the color-
The joy in my life. ✨

Inner Expression

Faigy F.

Words cannot describe the pain I feel,
It is still so raw and it feels so real.
It is so hard to cope with this loss,
It has turned me upside down, with a big cost.
Nothing excites me or brings me joy,
As I lay and mourn the loss of my little boy.
He meant so much to me and I was so attached,
And then with one appointment my dream was
snatched.
I am broken and sad, nothing gives me
hope,
How will I ever be normal,
will I ever cope?
I don't care about eating,
or weddings, or camp,
All I have is emptiness and
my eyes remain damp.
Life was so amazing,
so hopeful and calm,
And now it's rocky with wet
tissues in my palm.
To whom can I turn,
who do I want to face?
All I want is my baby to hug and embrace.
I don't want any money, no gifts or dresses,
Just give me my life back and take away my stresses.
Where can I find strength to pick up and move on?
Where can I get dreams to look forward to, just one?
There is so much pain buried deep inside of me,
I control it most of the time so that you can't see.
But when it comes forth, it doesn't stop pouring out,
People wonder what that's all about.
To them all is warm and fun and great,
The summer and vacation break,
But to me it's a nightmare, a mix-up, a mistake.
They do not realize what I am going through,

They don't know just how deep the pain can be, too.
It consumes my entire being, it keeps me up at
night,
Will things ever improve, will they ever be alright?
But there is one thing I know in my heart,
Every single thing must begin with a start.
This has all just started, it's still so fresh and so new,
We're just in the first chapter; the story will continue.
There will be a tomorrow I could look forward to
soon,
There's a future, there's a life, the
flowers will yet bloom.
I know things will get
better,
I remind myself again,
He is in control and there
is a Master plan.
It was and is so painful,
It may seem all is dark,
But Hashem is right there
with me,
I just have to do my part.
He cries and mourns with me,
For He surely knows,
The pain that I am feeling,
But He knows how the story goes.
I will get through it with Him, He will surely help me,
I will get back to myself, I will once again be happy.
It will take some time and effort,
But I will always be strong,
I know this is the best for me,
That it's where I belong.
I will accept all that is given, for it's part of the plan -
Together with Hashem I will pull through,
And one day I'll see all the good in this, too.



Standing Tall

I'll never forget when a friend who was also going through fertility challenges mentioned to me that as the weather warms up, she finds it harder. She explained to me that everyone is all bundled up in sweaters and coats in the winter, however, now as everyone begins to leave their homes, we see all those who are expecting. The streets are busier as well, because when it's cold, people seem to hibernate. We know that summer is not too far away now and with it comes a more relaxing time of year. However, for us, it can be another painful reminder that people are out and about, filling up the streets and parks yet again. How do we deal with it?

I think that first and foremost, we have to be respectful and honest with ourselves. It's okay to focus on our needs, because if we don't put ourselves first, we can't be there for anyone else. Declining

gatherings and invitations that may bring up painful reminders and emotions is self-protection and it's perfectly okay. We each have our own personal threshold of what we can handle and what we can't, and that's perfectly fine. If a busy park is on the way to our favorite grocery store, maybe we need to find another store or perhaps even get our shopping delivered. We should allow ourselves to think twice about what we need to do in order to protect ourselves. I feel it is often better to be at home within our own comfort zone rather than trying to be a martyr by going out to places which we know will likely make us feel down.

Another thing to think about is interacting with our spouse. Sometimes we can be struggling with so much pain that we keep it in because we want to give the impression that we are strong and

that we are doing fine. After many years, I have realized that this is one of my coping mechanisms. We can be open about the pain we are in and at the same time we need to remember that our spouses, even though they don't go through the physical side like we do, are also in tremendous pain. Someone once told me the following, and it's something I try to remember. He is the only one in the world that understands our pain; let's use this difficult challenge as a catalyst to bring us closer. We know that struggles can build us as a couple or break us, so let it be the reason that we build our union and make it stronger. Let's have open and difficult discussions, let's talk about our feelings, and we will better support each other. Let's also remember that there is so much in our lives besides this *nisayon*, and we can expand our focus so we do not only dwell on this. We need to



spend quality time together, enjoying each other's company, and doing things that make us happy if we want to go through this together.

Another idea, which I feel strongly about, is to pamper ourselves. As the challenges get harder, our self-care should increase. We know ourselves and what we need to do in order to unwind and stay centered. We know what gives us energy and vigor to continue on the path we're on with a sense of confidence and even pride. Self-care helps us manage, even managing to hold our heads high, when considering the effects we can have on others by doing so. Perhaps a regular walk in nature fills us up, or it might be a good massage. Maybe it's a long, hot bubble bath or a fitness class. Whatever it is, let's make sure to schedule it and actually make the time to do it. I know that I love massages and I already have my next appointment booked. I have to book it weeks before, otherwise I know I just won't get to it. You can do this too, and trust me: it'll be worth it.

After all is said and done, we must constantly reconnect to our Source. Let's be growth oriented!

We have to keep on reminding ourselves that we were given this mission on earth for a Divine purpose. We don't understand why we were chosen to have this struggle, but we need to believe it is for our best somehow. Therefore, we must learn and connect to Hashem in our own ways as we go through this. Perhaps it's our *davening* that connects us. Maybe we can learn a little *bitachon* daily, say a few *kapitals* of *Tehillim*, or keep a 'Thank You Hashem' notebook to write in. We have to remember that we're not in control and that's okay, because we are loved by the One who is. We are part of His bigger picture. Of course, we continue to do whatever *hishtadlus* we can, but we must remember that ultimately we are in Hashem's hands.

Those are my tips in order to help us ease our way into the warmer months ahead. It is hard, but in life, the best views come after the hardest climbs. Together we will keep climbing so that we can see the view, standing tall and proud with the knowledge that we are passing this test with flying colors. ✨

In Focus

Chaya Hott

EMOTIONS - EXPRESSED OR SUPPRESSED

We learn to read and write in school. We educate our children with Chumash, Navi, math, science, history and more. Some subjects serve little to no purpose later in life, but important life skills that are vital to our well-being. They're usually not part of the curriculum. Hundred percent of humans will experience loss at some point in life. Rightfully, we teach our youth to be strong and resilient in the face of adversity. We focus on positivity and push pain away in order to keep ourselves afloat. We suppress sadness because we believe this signifies strength. However, the opposite is in fact true. Expressing all our emotions (not just the joyous ones) is a healthy need and part of the complete human experience. Emotions need to be expressed and processed - not suppressed.

Many people lack the skills to deal with grief after experiencing a loss because they have not previously learned to navigate their emotions in a healthy way. Society mostly associates grief with the death of a living person. However, the reality is that grief can

ensue when losing someone or something that is important - not only through death. Many types of losses or disappointing life experiences can cause grief. Often it is the loss of a loved one, however, other times it is the loss of a marriage (divorce), the loss of a job, infertility, miscarriage, stillbirth, infant loss, pet loss, chronic or terminal illness, etc.

There are five famous stages of the grief process by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance. These stages were observed for death and dying and have been adapted for the grieving process after experiencing a loss. The stage of Meaning was also added to the stages later on by David Kessler. We know the only way through the stages of grief is "through it", but in practical terms, what does that actually mean? What do we need to do, or what would it look like to get "through" grief?

First, we need to understand that the grief experience isn't dependent on the external details of what happened to you, but rather the wound



that you sustain as a result. That wound, that inner experience, will differ from person to person and therefore the path to healing and the time it takes will also differ for everyone. For some people, having a loss can be difficult for a brief period, and for others it can be earth-shattering, taking years upon years to rebuild life. It all depends on the severity of the loss and more importantly, it also depends on the layers of grief and trauma which occurred both before and after the loss which all contribute to the inner wound.

The path to healing grief requires meeting the following essential needs:

To have your pain witnessed - It is essential to acknowledge your loss and to know that your experience is seen, heard, and understood.

To express your feelings - You

need to be able to process the pain and find a voice to articulate your emotions and tell your story.

To integrate your loss - To find a way to integrate the loss into your life and with time to remember with more love than pain.

To release the burden of guilt - Guilt often accompanies grief as a way for the brain to control what it could not control. It's crucial to explore, understand, and release the "what if" thoughts.

To heal old wounds - Sometimes the grief is complex and stems back to childhood wounds or hurt caused by someone in the past. Old wounds can resurface during grief and addressing them is vital to healing. This will often lead to the need to redefine one's sense of self and identity.

To find meaning in life after loss - Meaning can come from small actions. It's not about grand

organizations or movements, but about finding ways that are meaningful to you to move forward while honoring your loss.

These needs are not necessarily linear, and individuals may experience them in different ways and at different times throughout their grief journey. Respect your journey, honor your needs, and give yourself grace as you grieve. ✨

Chaya Hott is a certified Trauma coach, Grief Educator, and writer. She specializes in supporting and guiding Jewish individuals as they navigate baby loss due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant loss. Through her training as well as her own personal experience with loss, she provides coping strategies and tools to navigate all stages and aspects of grief, and when the time is right, she gently guides individuals toward rediscovering joy, purpose, and meaning in life. Call Chaya for a FREE 30 minute consultation. www.embraceyourvoid.com 718.310.8678



A Mother's Prayer

Malka P.

A beautiful little baby placed inside my arm,
A perfect set of features and also lots of charm,
They told me it's a boy and with great emotion,
We held our son and gave him
Love with such devotion.
We knew that he was early,
His time had not been right,
We held on strong to not give birth,
We put up a fight,
But then, my child, out you came
On that Sukkos night,
Parents we now were, there was nothing

but fright and delight.
We held you close, just a pound and a bit,
At twenty-one weeks your little body fit,
And then with tears streaming down my face,
I begged *Hashem* that
I'll be able to forever embrace,
Hold you close and love you so,
My precious little Nossan with his constant glow,
You made us parents, and though you're not here,
Forever in our hearts, though there are
Never-ending tears.
Your little *neshama*, *Hashem* wanted it more,

My Miracle Bundle



For only twenty-one minutes your heart
 Beat so pure,
 Then in Tatty's arms your *neshama* flew high,
 Close to the *kisei hachavod* way up in the sky.
 Looking down upon us though we want you close,
 Your little body sits still: no chest rising, just froze,
 The nurses around do nothing to help,
 My screaming, begging, still linger
 And non-stop yelp:
 "Do something, anything," we cry out and plead,
 "Don't take this precious baby from me."
 They stare in helplessness as the law does say,
 Not until twenty-three weeks
 Can we help in any way.
 A child born before that even with a
 Heartbeat must die,
 The endless pain won't allow my tears to dry.
 Nosson, we called you a gift from above,
 That showered us with the title parents and
 Let us love,
 A gift from *Hashem* and we don't ask why,
 Despite how hard this is and how hard we must try.
 This child was different, not for this world,
 Although his fingers around mine curled,
 I knew you looked like me and how perfect you are,
 You'll always be my baby and my shining star.
 I miss you so much and the pain is so great,
Daven for us and help our fate,
 Go close to *Hashem* as we know that you will be,
Daven for Tatty and Mommy.

Tell *Hashem* how it's unfair,
 The pain is so raw and we just can not bear,
 Our little *neshama*, we cannot ask why,
 Just know that we're proud of you on high.
 You reached the maximum goal
 And finished your life here,
 It's pure torture for Mommy and Tatty who care.
 We love you so much, our precious baby boy,
 In your twenty-one minutes
 How you've brought us *nachas* and joy.
 The title of parents will always be now,
 The feeling of holding you is
 Just overwhelming and wow.
 Our own sweet miracle born to us as a gift,
 Though your life was short and to
Hashem you were swift.
 We're trying to be strong, my dear little one,
 Help us from above and let us mourn.
 And don't forget how your parents love you so,
 And how *Hashem* does not owe.
 He does what is perfect and does what is right,
 Despite what we think and the fight that we fight,
 Thank You for letting us be Nosson's parents,
 And giving us love and assurance.
 Although we don't know what was Your *din*,
 In the coming days help us find
 Strength from within,
 And let us once again feel the joy,
 And send *brachos* from above,
 Dear sweet baby boy. 🌟

My AHA Moment

Chaya K.



Even in the worst of times I can find the good!

It is never a good time to lose a pregnancy. But my loss happened at the best time it could've happened. Let me explain.

I was in the country and had the grass and the lake and the circle of ladies outside when I wanted company. And being that I teach, I was off from work! I had no boss calling to hear when I was going to be back in the classroom. It was the second week of the summer; in other words, I was basically unpacked and settled into my bungalow, and still weeks away from packing back up the boxes to go home. All in all, Hashem chose the "best" time for the tragedy to hit.

Although I was rushed by Hatzalah to the emergency room and my friends' husbands (yeah, make that plural) were the first responders on this Thursday night (weekends in the Catskills...!) my dignity was preserved as I was *tznius* the entire time.

My sister's wedding was weeks away which was somehow enough time to come to terms with my not being in my ninth month at her *simcha*.

My friends gasp when they hear the good I can find in this situation, but you know what? Finding the good is what kept me sane in those difficult and challenging moments. Delivering a baby at home while being the only adult in the house at the time

was traumatic. Not knowing beforehand that this was about to happen was traumatic. Finding myself with a baby in the palms of my hands without a phone nearby was traumatic. (Oh, this tiny face with perfect features...) Being sent home from the hospital with my baby in a gift box only adds to that.

What anchored me? Seeing some good in this *matzav*. No, I wasn't saying that it's all for the good and that Hashem has a Master Plan, even though I can't understand. No, no, no! I was lost and being swallowed into an abyss of despair: a black hole with seemingly no end in sight. I told Hashem to get out of my life as He was the one that made this happen, although I am not asking "Why". (As I am sitting here typing, I can't put into words the way I was feeling in those days.) And still, seeing some good anchored me in a way that nothing else was able to.

My friend, try it for yourself. Find those little stars in the dead of the night. It takes time for reality to sink in. It's not easy to build *emunah* and trust that all is for the ultimate good. For now, just find some little gestures of kindness and let them help you in the turbulent times, until you will surprise yourself and write your own gratitude list. ✨

Yoga and Healing: Getting Back in Touch

Being in a vulnerable place can make us think a lot and start moving less. It even makes us care less for our bodies at times. However, we've discussed some of the many benefits of yoga and what it can do to help your body and even your mind and your mood. Let's give it a try and see if those benefits are true for us!

You may be someone that does yoga regularly with a teacher, but if you just want to try it out, you can do it on your own right here! I'll give you a short series of yoga poses that are simple and can be done wherever you are. A good time to do this might be in the morning before starting your day or in the evening to wind down before going to sleep. Of course, anytime you feel you need some time for yourself, giving yourself a few minutes of attention is always beneficial. Find a quiet place in your house with the least distractions. You might want to play soft music in the background or be in a room with complete silence. Remember, yoga brings us into our bodies and breath, disconnecting from the outside world. Yoga is not a workout but rather a work-in.

Take a look inside your body, connect with your inner self, and get to know it. We tend to live in our minds, always thinking and making plans or to-do lists. This is moving on automatic mode without much connection to our physical body. Taking the time to do yoga and just feel is so beneficial to our wellbeing. It gives us a chance to say hello to each and every muscle in our body, see how it's doing, and thank it for always being here for us.

In this series we will try to combine balancing, stretching the spine, and relaxing / meditating. Begin with just breathing and getting to know how you feel. Notice how you are doing and then get into a balance-pose, challenging yourself to stay centered. Allow yourself to stretch beyond your comfort zone, and finally come down to a peaceful rest on your mat.

Each pose has different benefits for your overall health. The main thing is to stay focused, breathe, and feel your body movements. Stretching and twisting the spine is good for your posture, and balance helps your mind to stay focused as well, which can sometimes be hard when you are overwhelmed. The sequence we will follow starts with a child's pose (which was in Issue 8), and after the child's pose we'll learn the Cobra, Tree Balance, Forward Fold, Supine Twist, and Relaxing Pose.



Childs Pose

Cobra

Tree

Forward Fold

Supine Twist

Relaxing Pose

Supine Twist:

Draw your knees into your chest. Put your arms out in a "T" position. On exhale, let your knees fall to the left and come all the way down to the floor. Gaze to the right and supine twist. Let your shoulders relax and let your hips be heavy. Inhale while coming back to center. Exhale and switch sides. Send your knees to the right as you gaze to the left. Repeatedly move your knees and gaze from right to left, pausing for three to four breaths at each side or for as long as you like. Then, stretch your arms and legs out on the mat. Return your arms to your sides.

Cobra:

Come on to all fours and slide your upper body forward flat on the mat. Push your palms into the mat and straighten your elbows. Lift your head, neck and shoulders, then press your shoulders down and look straight ahead, pressing your upper thighs into the mat with hips together. Breathe in and out feeling the stretch in your upper body and lower back. Stay here for a few breaths and then slowly come up to stand.

Relaxing Pose (Meditating):

Come to full stillness relaxing all your muscles and joints, and let your limbs feel heavy and melt into the mat. Close your eyes and connect to your breath by breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Begin to move through your body from the crown of your head all the way to your toes pausing at each body part and relaxing it. In your head, say the name of each body part and then say 'relax' or 'melt'. For example, "Shoulders relax, arms relax, wrists relax" etc... when your whole body is still, start counting your breaths. In your mind, say, "Inhale- 1, exhale- 2. Inhale- 3, exhale- 4," and so on until you reach 50. If your mind wanders, just start over or gently bring it back and continue. If you just want to focus on your breath without counting, you can do that too. Stay in your breath and body, stilling your mind and thoughts for these few moments. You might feel like you're drifting in and out of sleep. They say that if you quiet your mind, your soul will speak.

You might feel different emotions coming up, so acknowledge what you feel and let it wash over you.

For some people, the first few times they do this, they find it difficult to stay connected to their breath for a long time. Test it and see where you're at, and remember that whatever you are able to do is good. When you're ready, you can slowly come back to movement.

Wiggle your fingers and toes, draw your knees back into your chest, and take your time to get up and get back to your day.

Forward Fold:

Inhale and lift your arms overhead. While reaching up, keep your gaze forward and lift through your chest. Let your shoulders relax and draw your shoulder blades down your back. On your exhale, hinge from your hips and dive forward over your legs. Bring your chest down to your thighs. You can keep a slight bend in your knees here. Lengthen your spine and the back of your neck over your legs. Stay as low as you can with your head. Breathe. You can do tree balance with the right foot down and then forward fold again. You can repeat this as many times as you want, and when you're ready, come back down to lay on your mat, face up.



Tree Balance:

Stand with your feet together. Be still.

Take a deep breath in, and then exhale the breath completely. Shift your weight onto your left foot, pressing into all four corners of the foot as you lift up the arch of the foot.

Place the sole of your right foot at your calf or your inner thigh above the knee. (You can also use your big toe as a kickstand and let the foot lean on to the left leg - to modify). Bring your hands together at the heart center, both palms pressing together. Lift, feeling it through the crown of your head, as you extend your tailbone down toward the ground. Keep your chest lifted and your gaze steady. You have the option here to extend your arms overhead or practice lifting your gaze up. If you fall out of the pose, come right back in. Focus on your breathing. Exhale, release the pose, and come back to stand on both feet.

Hopefully you feel refreshed after giving some time and attention to your mind.

The body benefits from movement as the mind benefits from stillness! I hope this clarity impacts you and your day.

Enjoy your yoga routine!!!

Feel. Stretch. Breathe. Be yourself. Relax.

Tzippy W. - Yoga Instructor 🌟

Been There

Shifra Freedman

ONCE AGAIN

Recap: I had gone through many painful losses. My husband and I travelled to Eretz Yisrael and davened at *mekomos hakedoshim* over Lag BaOmer. Before flying home, I found out that I was expecting again. I cried at the Kosel like never before, praying for a healthy child, yet, there was still more pain I had to endure to fill the quota...

Part 2

In some ways, the second stillborn was easier: I already had all the *chizuk* I had heard and read from the first one, and I could 'pull it out of my pocket' again. I had managed to carry past the point of the previous miscarriages, which was encouraging. I also knew I could conceive, though I still had no children.

On the other hand, there was only one way I endured all those months of bed rest: I kept thinking and visualizing what it would be like to have a baby, nurse a baby,

hold a baby, and push a carriage down the street like any other mother. I imagined how excited everyone was going to be that I finally had a baby... When those dreams came crashing down, they didn't exactly have a soft landing.

I can only explain how I got through it by saying that Hashem really does help a person through a *nisayon*. It's said that every *nisayon* comes as a package: along with the challenge comes a special *siyata d'Shmaya* to make it through; a way to tap into inner

kochos and come out strong on the other side. Others may wonder how on earth a bereaved mother can get up in the morning and put one foot in front of the other... She wouldn't have been able to without this *siyata d'Shmaya* to get through the *nisayon* that she was given!

This is like when Yosef *HaTzaddik* was sold by his brothers and sent down to Mitzrayim. Hashem made sure the caravans were carrying sweet-smelling spices instead of

kerosene so that he wouldn't have to suffer one iota more than was decreed. It helps to look for the *chessed* amidst the darkness. We can choose to realize that, although it didn't go according to our plan, there is always a ray of light that shows us it isn't all bad. This encourages us to heal and to know Hashem is beside us. It can be a truly painful *matzav*, but somehow, seeing the *hashgacha* and the *Yad Hashem* in our lives strengthens us. It's a *chizzuk* to recognize how He is actively involved with our lives and how much He cares about us. It helps us realize that He loves us even when the things that are happening don't seem to be acts of *chessed*. Then, we know that for whatever reason it is for our good.

My husband told me that when Rav Shaul Barzam, *zt"l*, a son-in-law of the Steipler, *zt"l*, Rav Yisrael Yaakov Kanievsky, was *niftar* at a young age, the Steipler said to his daughter during the *shivah*, "Why have all these people come to you?" She said, "Because they care about us." He told her, "You should know that Hashem loves and cares for you a lot more than any person does!" So, we don't know why He decrees certain painful situations for us, but we have to strengthen ourselves and remember it's coming from His

love for us.

My husband was amazing (though he was suffering too!), and we supported each other through all the ups and downs. My family and friends were wonderful too. People who had had a stillbirth in the past called and visited, trying to show their support and advice. Many would say that now they had ___ children after such a trauma. It did help, though sometimes I wanted to say, "Yes, very nice, but now you are on the other side, and I am not!" It was certainly much harder for me because I still did not have any children. As hard as it is to lose a pregnancy, it's magnified when there is not another little person or two at home.

At this time, we switched to a top doctor in Columbia. After discussing my history and reviewing my records, he told us, "With God's help you'll have a baby." I was elated; I told my husband, "If he's bringing Hashem into the picture, he'll be a good *shaliach*!"

He did discover a reason for the early losses, though he did not feel there was anything medically to be done about it. Basically, I just had to believe that it should go well. (In fact, even before the problem was diagnosed, whenever I was pregnant I would *daven*, "Hashem,

"You should know that Hashem loves and cares for you a lot more than any person does!" So, we don't know why He decrees certain painful situations for us, but we have to strengthen ourselves and remember it's coming from His love for us.

please let it be good this time. And if *chalilah* it's not going to be good, let it end quickly and easily!") I tried expressing my feelings with this *mashal*: Every pregnancy was like going on a *shidduch* date; I never knew if it was going to work. When it ended in miscarriage it was like a broken engagement, and when it was a stillborn it was like a divorce. (Okay, I know it wasn't exactly like that, and I don't mean to minimize the pain of people who've gone through those experiences. I was just trying to put it into context for people who had never had pregnancy losses.)

I had another miscarriage that summer, but the following year I was expecting (I was always extremely grateful to the *Ribbono Shel Olam* that at least conceiving was not difficult for me), and I made it past the three and four-month humps that I hadn't passed earlier. This time, the doctor did find another problem (who would expect one person to have two different issues that could cause pregnancy losses at different stages?), and *Baruch Hashem* we were able to treat it. I gave birth to a healthy baby!

I can't say that after the birth of my first live child I didn't have

any further issues; I had more than one miscarriage in between the births of my other children. They were easier to handle than the losses that occurred before I had been blessed. What I think was most difficult was that somehow



I had naively assumed that my troubles were over. (Spoiler alert: We get *nisyonos* and challenges throughout our lives until 120! In fact, that's what we're here for!) I realized that everyone has

challenges. I found my *bashert* easily, but having children didn't come easily. Other people deal with *parnassah* or health or *shalom bayis* challenges. We're here to take what Hashem gives us, because it's tailor-made for what we must work on to achieve our *tikkun*, and we deal with it as well as we can.

A few years ago, Feldheim published a biography of Rav Shmuel Berenbaum, *zt"l*, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Mirrer Yeshiva in Brooklyn. It has a chapter on being *mekabel yissurim* called "Overcoming Adversity." (Rav Shmuel lost two of his adult children, *r"l*, in his lifetime, besides having two heart attacks...) Here's a quote from the book:

"Rav Shmuel saw the *Ribbono Shel Olam*'s pain over our suffering as a great source of strength as well. He would often repeat the words of *Rashi* in *Parshas Mishpatim*, who explains that the reason Hashem had a 'brick' in front of Him during our years in *Mitzrayim* was to serve as a constant 'reminder' of our agony. So great is Hashem's love for us, Rav Shmuel would say, that He does not want to forget about our anguish even for the slightest moment; hence the reminder. But

then Rav Shmuel would add an amazing insight: Why was the brick a *'livnas hasapir* — a block of sapphire'? Wouldn't a coarse cinderblock be more appropriate?

The answer, Rav Shmuel would say, is that if it were a regular brick, Hashem would find the pain simply unbearable. The only way He could tolerate the pain was by reminding Himself, *k'vayachol*, that ultimately the suffering was for our benefit, and that we would eventually emerge as a precious stone to be cherished. And that, Rav Shmuel would conclude, is what we must remind ourselves as well."

Another thing that sometimes helped me was to remember the words of *Chazal* that Mashiach will come only when all the *neshamos* in *'Guf* have come down to the world. In one way or another, every *neshama* has to come down to this world, for however long is necessary. So, I guess those of us who had 'extra' pregnancies, even if we didn't get to have a child from them, are helping bring *geulah* closer!

May we all be comforted for our own personal losses and the losses of all of *Klal Yisrael* with the arrival of Mashiach, *bimheirah b'yameinu*. 🌟



Reflections

Malkie Klaristenfeld

Loss Amongst Greatness

Parshas Shemini discusses the death of Nadav and Avihu, two sons of Aharon Hakohen. The *pasuk* states “אִתּוֹן אֶת־פִּי”- and Aharon was silent.

Why was Aharon silent after the death of his children? Why did he not respond? What was this silence about, we wonder. Was this a silence of submission? Was it a silent protest? Was it, perhaps, that his pain was so deep he could not express it in words? Or, maybe it was all of the above and more?

Our *chachamim* say that as a

reward for his silence, Hashem spoke to him directly. But how was that a reward for his silence? Had he responded to the loss verbally, would Hashem not address him directly? Why was it his silence that warranted this reward?

This was not a silence of passivity or resignation. It was a silence that comes from the profound awareness that some things in life are beyond words, beyond descriptions, and beyond language.

Silence allows us to trust that

even as we do not understand a thing, Hashem is holding our hands in every moment and through every experience.

Aharon’s silence allowed him to appreciate that Hashem was with him even in this infinite darkness. How? Why? For what? He did not need to wrap his brain around it. He embraced the silence of the moment. And what was the result and the reward? He indeed heard Hashem speak to him directly and personally. He experienced feeling Hashem’s presence with him. ✨



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

To My Dear

Shira N.

To my Dear Little One,

Today I went to the cemetery. I stood before a freshly dug grave, unmarked. There was no identification and there was no tombstone. Just you and me. Alone. My precious child, my sweet baby. I was very lost. What to do? What to say? What to feel? How is one supposed to feel when they are beside their baby's kever? I was kind of in a daze - not believing. Choosing not to believe and instead to stay in my fantasy world where I was still pregnant and there was still a precious baby resting peacefully inside of me. But this freshly dug grave made reality hit hard. So calming. So restful. So final. My precious neshama'la, it's final. We are now apart. The tears begin to flow down my cheeks. I wipe them away. I'm strong. But in your final resting place I wonder - do you miss me too? Do you think about the life we would have had? The endless days as mother and son? What were your dreams and aspirations? My precious one, we'll never know. So I stand here by your special spot, one that is known to few, and I daven for hope, for courage, and for strength - the kind only Hashem can provide. I miss you as only a mother can.

-Your Beloved Mommy 



Answers on the Mark

Chumi Friedman

I often wonder about the child(ren) I never knew and how I would love it if my family and children would know about them. Should I tell my other children that they had another sibling, and at what stage is it the right time to give them this information?

-Unsure how to proceed with family

Dear Unsure how to proceed with her family,

There is no single answer to this question as each family has its own dynamic and its own way of dealing with trauma and loss. We can view this issue in two separate parts:

1. You're wondering about your baby and wanting it to be part of your family.

2. Discussing this baby with your children.

It is very natural to think about the baby you lost and to wonder how your life might be different if he or she had survived. This thought may come to mind as your living children get older, or as a niece/nephew who was born around the time of your loss gets older. The "could have been" or "should have been" thoughts may linger in your mind at every

possible milestone, i.e. *upsherin*, first day of nursery, *siddur* play, etc. This is very common and to be expected.

From the second part of your question it seems you have not yet told your children about the loss. I assume that is a decision you and your husband made because you felt it was right for your family at that time.

Will that change?

It could as your children get older and become teens or young adults. You may want to tell them about the sibling who was with you for such a short time.

Should you?

That depends on your children, on their level of maturity, and on how they process information that is sad and challenging.

Telling them about the baby means talking about pregnancy

and loss, and you have to know that you are prepared to have the complete conversation. This is not information that can be shared unless you're prepared, because they will have questions that you'll need to answer.

As you can see, there is much to consider, the most important things being why you feel the need to share and if your family benefits from knowing this information.

This column addresses issues in the most general way possible. Please feel free to call or email me to discuss your specific situation and needs.

Chumi Friedman

Director, ATIME/HUG Program

718-686-8912 Ext 225

Cell: 347-986-6443

chumi@atime.org 

A Mother's Thoughts

Shaindy W.

If only words could hold the pain I feel without you.
If only I could wrap you in my arms again
I could dream once again
About how life would have been together
All of us.
If only it was clear, why,
And how this could be,
Or when you will rejoin us
Two beautiful little *neshamos*-
Our babies-
Now together up above
In a cloud's caress,
In Hashem's embrace,
Taken to the highest of high,
Without a question or a piercing why.
The pain that's left behind
Confuses,
Shatters,
And remains hazy,
Leaving an emptiness so deep
Once again.
Devastation in its purest form,
Holier than what we can see-
Then what we are privileged to see-
But knowing it's out of our control.
Two precious babies,



My
Beloved
Babies,
Staying together,
Davening,
Beseeching
For the miracle we so desperately yearn to see:
All of us parading in Hashem's closest quarter ,
Basking in His *shechinah*,
Glorifying His name,
And creating havoc so the gates open for you,
Our dearest parents.
Don't forget us.
We love you! ✨

All Together

Comfort Food

Esti S.

Iced Coffee

Summer is on the way and there's nothing better than a good old iced coffee!

I've shares 2 recipes below (both tried and tested) so you don't have to keep overpaying for your favorite summer drink.

#1 Iced Coffee

Ingredients:

½ cup hot water

3-4 Tbsp coffee

6-8 Tbsp sugar

½ tsp vanilla sugar

1-2 Tbsp chocolate syrup

Optional: 1 Tbsp chocolate liquor

8 ½ cups of milk

Instructions:

Dissolve all ingredients besides milk into hot water. Pour coffee mixture into milk and shake well.

You can serve as is or freeze for a few hours until icy.

Note: This one is perfect for feeding a crowd! Or just yourself if you're a true coffee addict.



The slushy texture of this iced coffee is a close second to the shop's!

#2 Coffee Ice Cubes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups hot water
- 4 Tbsp coffee
- 6-8 Tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla (or more to taste)
- 1-2 cups of milk

Instructions:

1. Dissolve coffee and sugars in water until fully incorporated. Pour into ice cube tray or bag and freeze.
2. Take out 4-6 coffee ice cubes and blend with approximately 1 cup of milk.

Optional: Add some vanilla ice cream when blending for an extra creamy version

Enjoy! 

Humor Me

Y. Freund

There's an idea that our choices and reactions are similar to how hot water changes whatever is placed into it. While the potato gets soft, the egg turns hard, and the coffee brews the water.

Lately I've been giving this some thought. Being that I am now deep in hot water, I see myself like an egg: scorched and cooked through and through. I am now in a different form than before I was thrown into this situation. I saw this eggsplicitly after my most recent loss, and I am now smashed to pieces.

How much eggcitement can one miserable woman handle in a day? There was a blackout during the night, or at least I assumed so, when I opened my eyes a crack and found my alarm clock blinking "12:00." Then I blinked again before I yelled. There was a mad dash and a scramble of shoes, and clothing and makeup before I was running out the door lest I be late for work (again). All I had managed to eat for breakfast was one hardboiled egg.

Work: meetings, greetings, deadlines.

Finally home, I kicked off my shoes and closed my eyes on the couch for just a few minutes until the next obligation kicked in when my phone vibrated. I knew enough not to eggignore my sister when she called, so I made this noise, ya know, like when there's an egg stuck in your throat, croaking hello, although she seemed not to realize that she woke me from my after- work slumber. Whaaaat?! Why is she yelling? It took some time to hear the words through her eggstra loud eggcited voice that was babbling away.

Oh. So Rivka had TWINS.

In a moment I was alert and ready to fight. Instead of dealing with my emotions on her new 'single' addition, I would be dealing with 'two'?? And so the call was promptly disconnected. The tears were messily running down my face, like the egg dripping on the clean stovetop.

That night, all I could manage to serve was freshly boiled eggs to be mashed as egg salad along with bread and fresh vegetables. How gourmet? And this eggciting day finished off with overcooked eggs flying up to the ceiling, covering my counters and shades and floors with a mess of hard boiled eggs and their crushed shells.

So now I am fully cooked. No softness in me at all. Hard and boiled and untouchable.

Eggsactly. ✨

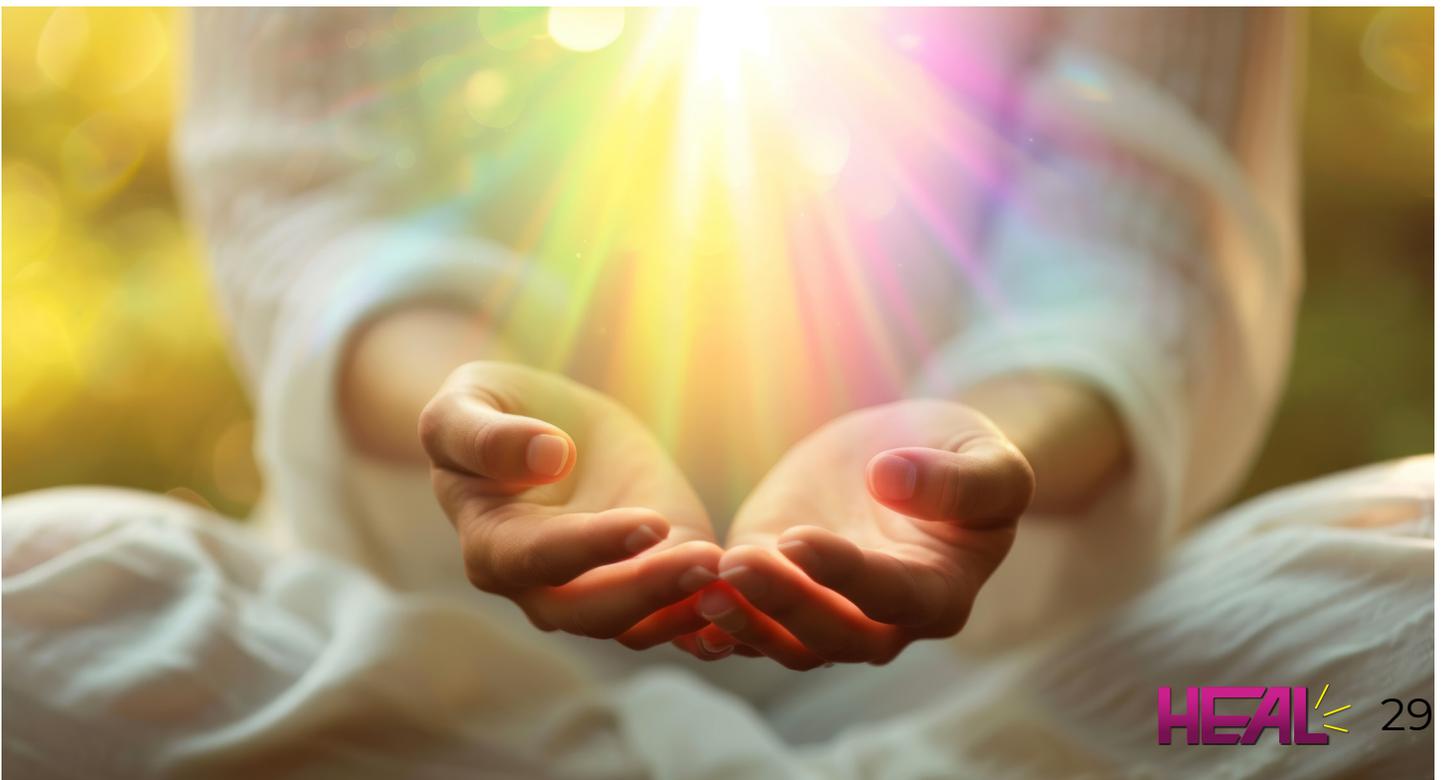
My Eggstra-ordinary Day

Living Miracle

Each person living in this world is a walking miracle. Hashem in His infinite wisdom created the world in seven days. However, as His beloved children, each one of us was molded in our own separate way for nine months. We are all living off His benevolence, because Hashem chose us to be here today.

There was a great *gadol* who was very ill. He was in immense pain and his *talmidim* knew it was just a matter of time before he passed away. The doctor came to see how he was doing and told the *rav* that, in his condition, it was a miracle that the *rav* was still living. Not pausing for even a moment, the *rav* replied, "And you are living off of a miracle too."

This is an important message for us to remember. Although, the situation looks bleak and we have had countless losses, we know it's all from Above. We may feel like the only ones in such a dire situation, and that what we are waiting for is impossible. However, the same way He can make someone carry a full term baby with no issues, He can - and we *daven* that He will - do the same for us. Nothing is too great or too small for Hashem. We must remember we are all living off of the same Heavenly miracle every day. ✨



Hugging 'Treat'ment

Esti S.

Adult Coloring

Some reasons why Adult Coloring books are good for you include:

- Induced meditative state
- Improved brain function
- Improved sleep
- Reduced anxiety
- Reduced stress

By coloring, you're helping more than just your mind to relax and function better. You're also helping your body. The stress relief that comes from coloring helps reduce the anxiety you're feeling.

When you relieve stress and tension from your body, you start to feel better. Coloring is a repetitive activity that requires attention to detail, thus putting your mind in a meditative state. By focusing on a singular action like coloring, you're not paying attention to other things that may have caused stress during the day and this can relax you and help you feel better physically and emotionally.

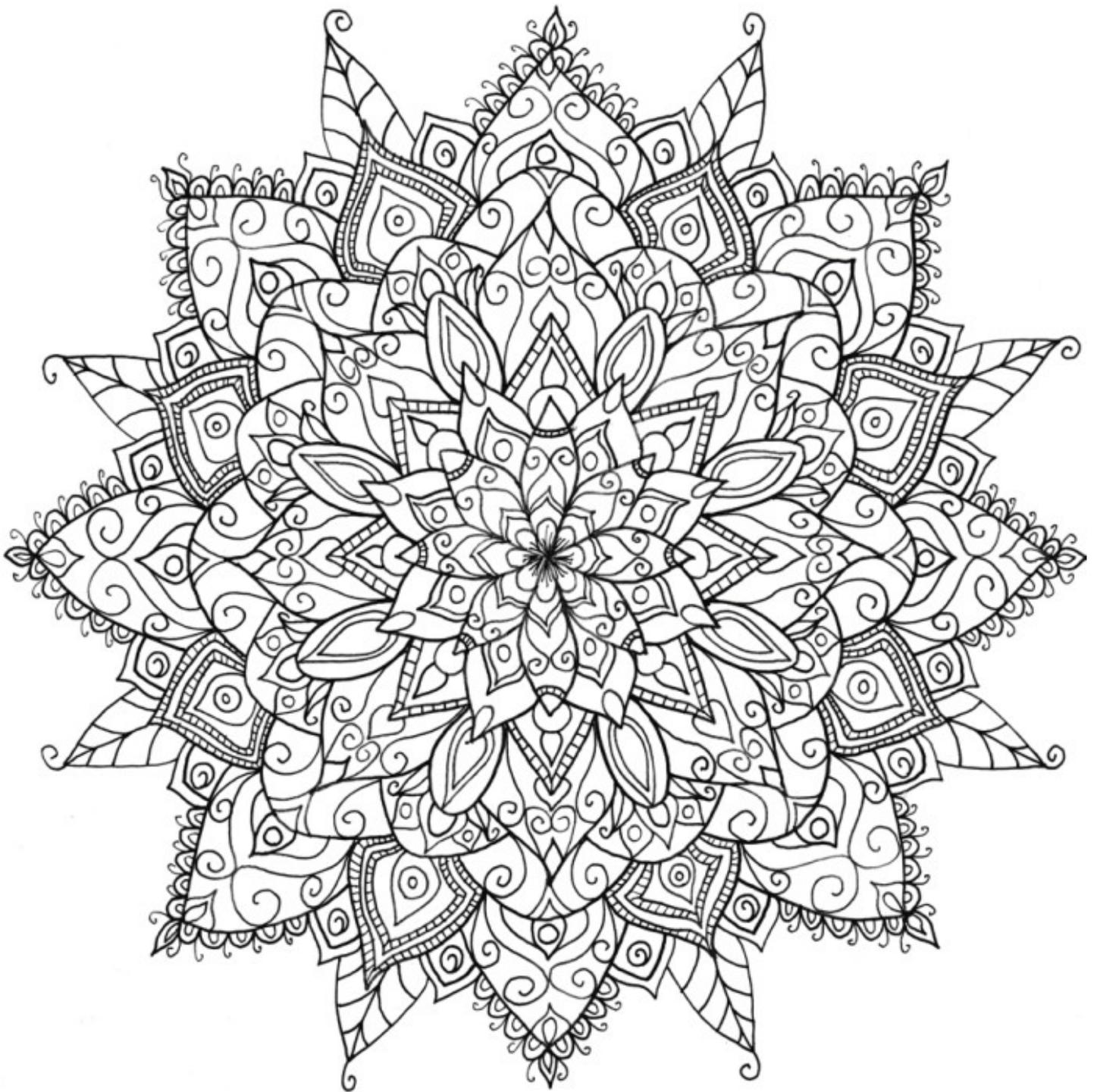
You can buy an adult coloring book on Amazon, or at your local store.

Here are a couple of pages for you to enjoy! 

Article adapted from web.md. For full article:

<https://www.webmd.com/balance/features/benefits-coloring-adults>





Loss hurts.

But you don't need to hurt alone.



Knafayim eases the pain of pregnancy loss with compassion and unconditional support.

Perinatal loss • Baby loss • Termination (TFMR)
Post-hysterectomy • Loss following infertility
Fetal anomaly pregnancy & delivery • Father support
Pregnancy after loss • Recurrent Pregnancy Loss

**REGISTER FOR OUR
ZOOM LOSS SUPPORT SERIES
BEGINNING MAY 21, 2024.**

For more information:

Email support@knafayimwings.org
Call or Text 718-925-2113

Knafayim
WINGS of HOPE

718-925-2113
www.knafayimwings.org
info@knafayimwings.org

*Because no one
should walk the
journey of loss alone.*

Chizuk from Within

Feigy Singer

I'm going to sum it all up for you even before we begin. Attitude is everything! That's it. I know it's been said before and it's nothing new. I don't profess to have some secret knowledge or insight regarding survival. What I do know is that it's simply about one's attitude. Early on in my infertility years, I made a decision: I'm going to live my life. I am not going to let infertility push me to the sidelines as I'm waiting for life to begin. I'm not saying that it has always been easy, because let's face it. Infertility is a hard deal and a tough pill to swallow. But, nevertheless, it was MY pill to swallow and I chose to wash it down with the lemonade made from the sour lemons which

my particular challenge produced.

This time of year - summer, has always been especially difficult for me because each of my pregnancy losses occurred during the summertime. And of course, with each loss came an entire flood of emotions: sadness, anger, frustration, and fear. As a person who does her utmost to find humor in challenging moments, I refused to allow myself to remain in a state of negativity.

My husband and I came to an agreement that molded the way in which we were going to deal with our infertility. There were two tools we were going to use: the first was always to be very aware of the source of these challenges.

We were constantly reminding ourselves that our *emunah* must play a very large role in our lives. We helped each other by encouraging one another and anyone else we came across who was going through similar experiences. We acknowledged that for whatever reason we had to go through this pain and frustration, there had to be a purpose.

Secondly, we were also going to use humor in any way appropriate to help alleviate the emotional and social discomfort of this very public, yet very private, ordeal. Whenever we found ourselves in one of those sticky conversations revolving around children or pregnancy, or if uncomfortable

The Me I Want To Be

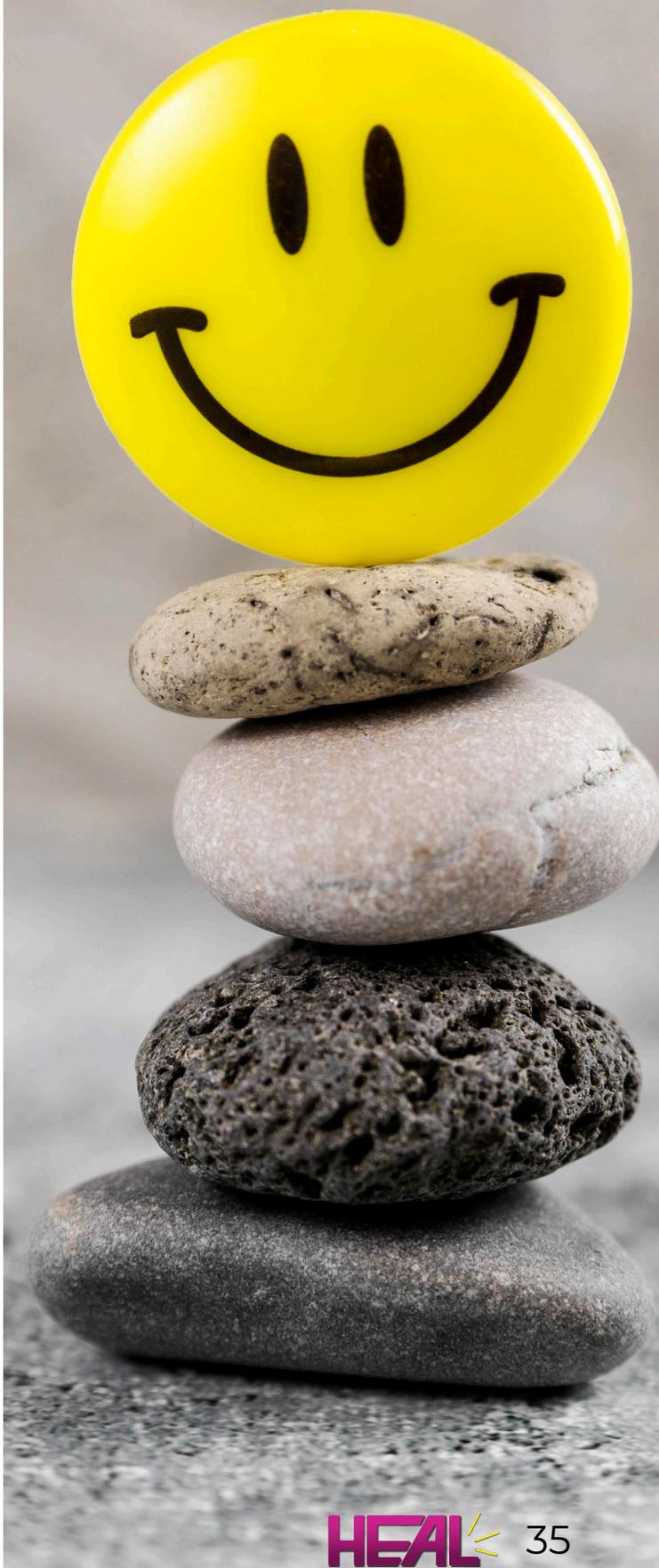


comments were directed at us - whether intentionally or not - we used humor to salvage the situation. Sometimes, when that wasn't possible, I would have to be very direct with a family member or friend by telling them that they had overstepped a certain boundary.

There is a story I have often repeated to A TIME family members regarding a particular conversation I had with an acquaintance the summer I had lost a pregnancy at 21 weeks. I met someone in a pizza shop in the Catskills, where she presumptuously asked me if I had taken my children to the Uncle Moishy concert. I said no, hoping that would end the conversation. Unfortunately, it didn't. She then proceeded to ask me which day camp I send my children to. Feeling engulfed in the fast growing discomfort of this conversation, I decided to use a little humor. I told her they go to Camp *Gan Eden* (I already had 3 up there). She scratched her head curiously and inquired as to where this camp is, as she had never heard of it before. "Oh, it's a bit up north," I informed her. Still not getting the gist of where I was going with this conversation, I felt bad for playing with her and told her very calmly that in actuality I had not yet been blessed with children. Before she had a chance to get flustered and apologize, I told her not to worry about hurting my feelings but to take this awkward situation and use it as a learning experience. Never make assumptions about other people's lives.

It is important for me to be able to rise above the challenge of infertility and stay a positive person. I don't want people to feel uncomfortable around me and act as if they have to walk on eggshells every time the "P" word is mentioned. I've learnt that the way you present yourself to others is the way they are going to react and respond to you. Subconsciously, we pick up on cues from one another on how to communicate with each other. It's part of the human condition.

Very often, people will ask me how I deal with insensitive comments. I do come up with quick, snappy responses to some of the more ridiculous comments I hear, but not



When I look back at my life 50 years from now, how do I want to see myself?

everyone can answer “*Yeshiva Shel Ma’ala*” when asked which school your children attend. You need to be yourself and feel comfortable with your responses. Using your inner strength takes practice. Although you may not feel strong, you can still act as if you do. Again, it’s all in your attitude.

My success throughout this journey, and with any other challenges, is not contingent upon other people’s view of my life. I need to be self-sufficient in overcoming adversity and challenge. I have found over time that most insensitive comments stem from ignorance or good intentions, but whatever the reason, how others see this challenge is not my problem and does not define me.

To be self-sufficient is to realize that all comments are completely irrelevant. Many times we fall into a mindset that our summer or our vacation or our Yom Tov will be much easier to handle if we just had that one person at our side who always says the right thing at the right time to us. Does such a

person really exist? Truthfully, we all have days when an innocent, benign comment is taken well, while the same comment a week later can be totally explosive. To expect our family and friends to keep our emotional radar at the top of their priority list is very unrealistic. Yes, it certainly would be nice to have such wonderfully sensitive people in our lives, but our success in overcoming this challenge is not dependent on those sensitive people. In order to be self-sufficient in this, we need to consider the thoughtfulness of others as a very pleasant bonus.

Our strength must come from within us - from our decision to be strong, and it is independent from other people’s testimonials. Worse than the *nisayon* itself is allowing yourself to fall into a pattern of negative thinking which can ultimately lead you down a very lonely, depressing journey. It becomes difficult to get your bearings and function productively as a healthy human being, and we need to stay away from this. I

remind myself that Hashem gave me infertility. Hashem gave me pregnancy loss. Hashem gave me a special needs child. If Hashem gave me these challenges, He also gave me the tools I need to deal with them. They may not be obvious at first, and sometimes it requires a bit of digging and self-searching, but they are there.

When I look back at my life 50 years from now, how do I want to see myself? I want to see myself as someone who looked challenges squarely in the eye and rose above them. I want to see myself as someone who did not allow herself to get derailed from life, not as someone who surrendered, letting the sadness and frustration overcome physical, mental and emotional well being. I want to be proud of how I dealt with this challenge and all of its issues, for Hashem charted this particular course for me. I want to know that I had the right attitude, and that I passed this test with flying colors! 🌟

GENERAL INFERTILITY, USA

Dr. Shoshana Karasick

Thursdays, 9:30pm

May 23
June 27
July 25
August 22
September 26

GENERAL INFERTILITY, INTERNATIONAL

Mrs. Joy Ehrman

*Sundays, 12:00pm NY
7:00pm Israel*

May 12
June 9
July 7
August 4
September 8

SECONDARY INFERTILITY

**Mrs. Ruchy Rosenfeld
Rebbitzen Malkie Spira, LMHC**

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

May 21
June 18
July 16
August 20
September 17

PREGNANCY LOSS

**Mrs. Chumi Friedman
Mrs. Yonina Kaufman, LCSW, PMH-C**

Tuesdays, 9:30pm

May 7
June 4
July 2
August 6
September 3

MOTHERS OF COUPLES EXPERIENCING INFERTILITY

Mrs. Rivka Feit

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

May 14
June 18
July 16
August 20
September 17

MALE FACTOR, WIVES

Sundays, 8:30pm

May 12
June 16
July 14
August 11
September 22

WOMEN'S FERTILITY AFFECTED BY CANCER

**Mrs. Yonina Kaufman, LCSW, PMH-C
Mrs. Toba Wolf**

*Sundays, 10:00am NY
5:00pm Israel*

May 19
June 16
July 14
August 11
September 15

ADOPTION

Dr. Sara Barris

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

May 28
July 30
September 24

ENHANCING YOUR MARRIAGE

**Mrs. Brany Rosen
Mrs. Suri Moskowitz**

*Wednesdays,
9:30pm*

May 8
June 5
July 10
August 14
September 11

POST-HYSTERECTOMY

Dr. Shoshana Karasick

Mondays, 9:30pm

May 20
June 17
July 15
August 19
September 16

UNSUCCESSFUL IVF CYCLE

Dr. Sara Barris

Tuesdays, 8:00pm

May 28
June 25
July 30
August 27
September 24

MOTHERS OF GIRLS WITH TURNER SYNDROME

Mrs. Joy Stimmel, LCSW

Tuesdays, 9:00pm

May 7
June 4
July 9
August 6
September 10

GENERAL INFERTILITY, MEN'S GROUP

Mondays, 10:00pm

May 20
June 24
July 22
August 19
September 23

SINGLE GIRLS WITH KNOWN FERTILITY ISSUES

Wednesdays, 9:30pm

May 22
June 19
July 17
August 14
September 18



Small Talk, Big Talk

If my baby's *neshama* is perfect, is it wrong to want to do something as an *illuy* for his *neshama*? I know I am not able to discount what the *rabbanim* say, but my heart aches to do something so he will never be forgotten by others. However, if his *neshama* doesn't need it, what can I do to honor his memory without overstepping a *halachic* boundary?

Every one of my children brings out another one of my strong or weak points, and my *tzaddik* up there is NOT an exception.

Sometimes it takes all my strength to deal with a specific child, and when I remember my *tafkid* (that each child is an *olam malei* and it's me as the mother that has the *zechus* to be involved in the workout so I can get closer to Hashem), it makes it easier to handle.

The same is with my *tzaddik*... actually, almost the same. It's just on a different level - an emotional level.

When I speak openly about my *tzaddik* and the whole loss experience, I try to make a *kiddush Hashem*. When the family member/ neighbor/ friend I am with sees a person - a mother after loss - smiling, coping, doing, and TRYING.... I feel that it's the biggest *aliya* for the *neshama* - for my *neshama*!

And that's my point; each child should bring out the unique *tafkid* to elevate us in our *avodas Hashem*.

Thank you and lots of *hatzlacha*!

B. Fried

This week will mark a year since the sudden passing of my ten-day-old baby. When I *bentch licht*, I light an extra candle for this precious child. I wanted to continue after already having added a candle that first week (and my Rav's *psak* was that it's my choice if I would like to continue doing so or not). In addition to this, I still felt that I wanted to do something more 'tangible' in honor of the *yahrtzeit*.

Instead of a regular Shabbos party, we have a *brachos* party where the kids enjoy their nosh while saying *brachos* out loud with *kavana*. These *brachos* and the *amens* will be for our *zechus* of having had a baby. I bought special pastries and exciting box-drinks, and we are all looking forward to this *yahrtzeit* Shabbos.

Anonymous

Our *rabbanim* told us that our precious baby doesn't need anything. A *neshama* that is by the *kisei hakavod* doesn't need to soar higher. However, for us as the parents who long to do something, we were told to do something that would be meaningful yet not done as a *zechus*. We donated

seforim to a *beis medrash* that my husband learns in and we wrote that it is given in honor of our family. It really meant a lot to us and we felt that our baby now had a special place that would always remember him when they learned.

S.N.

At first I was disheartened to get the *psak* not to light a candle for my baby. It was something I had really wanted to do. Yet, as time passed, I saw in hindsight that it was my fear of forgetting that wanted to do something tangible. It's been five years and I can emphatically say it out loud: I did not forget. I constantly remember, even though I don't light a candle for him.

S.K.

Some questions might need rabbinical guidance... I don't *pasken*, so I'll just share what helped me find meaning. Even though my *neshama* in *shamayim* may not need it, I needed it for myself and so I did some things to honor that. My stillbirth was in the height of Covid, and therefore, people had an easy excuse not to be there for me. I needed to do something with my pain, so I began a Friday night *Tehillim* group for the girls in my building. It was a great conversation starter for those who didn't know what to say.

Every now and then, I expand with new ideas. The year that would have been his *upsherin* the pain was intense, and since I had my loss on *Purim*, I started distributing special *mishloach manos* packages to mothers who experienced a loss and to people who were alone. These were ways that I found meaning and filled some of the void.

F.R.

Next Issue's Talk:

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

My Thoughts

Anonymous

My Prayer

Did you know there's a *tefilla* called the "I don't know" prayer? You just go off somewhere quiet and hidden and you walk right up to the "heart" of Hashem and you say, "I don't know".

I don't know where to go from here. I don't know what's happening. I don't know how to process this. I don't know what to do with these emotions. I don't know how to handle this situation.

It covers a lot of I don't knows.

And then, with whatever little dusty sand grain of faith you have, you say, "But You know."

And you leave it there.

Hashem most certainly hears that *tefilla*. ✨



My Thoughts

Sara S.

FEAR OF HOPE

Do you know what it means
To be afraid to hope?
It means being knocked to the ground
With a blow that sends you reeling
When you had just learned how to stand.
It means a punch in your face
When you finally, cautiously,
Venture to lift your head up.

It means lying in a crumpled heap,
Bruised, bewildered, and helpless,
Wondering,
Through the haze of pain,
If you had ever been standing at all.
And it's fighting the belief
That maybe you aren't
Ever going to get up again. ✨



Reprinted with permission from binah magazine

Emunah Insights

"If you have *Emunah*,
There are no questions.

If you have don't have *Emunah*,
There are no answers."

-R' Chaim from Sanz, "Divrei Chaim" ✨

Artistic Expression

Faigy K.



Sunset is the moment when the sky is most beautiful, but the light is fading out. We try to see the colors painting the canvas above us, but soon it becomes hard to see at all. As dusk settles and night begins, we wonder if the sun will ever rise again? And yet, although we may be lost in confusion and doubt, it rises again, every, single day without fail. The long, hard nights of personal struggle and of our nation's *galus* will not last forever, and with sunrise we will hear the singing of the birds and feel the rejuvenation of a brand new dawn. 🌅

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

Quote Me

"If only everyone would listen in order to listen, not in order to respond"

"The pain you feel today will be the strength you feel tomorrow"

"THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ORDINARY AND EXTRAORDINARY IS THAT LITTLE EXTRA"

Did You Know?

Rachel Aron

Worrying is a subconscious technique that we use to prevent bad things from happening (or so we think).

Instead, excessive worrying makes us stressed and fills us with a sense of impending doom and panic. This can lead to uncomfortable physical symptoms such as muscle tension, increased heart rate, and irritability.

How do we conquer those worries?

One way to combat them is by imagining a good ending. When doing this, don't worry about believing your good story, because your brain will fall for it and start to develop a tendency to imagine good things instead of the disaster scenarios created by worrying. ✨



DID YOU EXPERIENCE A LOSS?

You're not Alone. *Recuperate.*

ADVOCACY

DOULA SERVICES

CHEVRA KADISHA

SUPPORT

LUNCH FOR 2

A WEEK'S BREATHER

A SHABBOS REST


soar STRENGTH TO OVERCOME
AND RECUPERATE

Email SOAR@LRBCOL.ORG

Text 732.905.3020

Call 732.905.3020 ext. 151

ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Resources

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

A TIME

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

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

Haneshama

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

Our Tapestry

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

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

IVF Loss/Spa Box

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

Knafayim

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

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

RSK

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

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

Hug In a Box

E: support@huginabox.org

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

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

HEAL

Hope and Encouragement After Loss

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

Join H.E.A.L.- A Journey of Hope and Encouragement After Loss.

The carefully curated HEAL Magazine will accompany you during especially difficult times of the year such as at family gatherings, *yamim tovim*, and seasonal changes. Subscribe to hear the voices of fellow Jewish women who are experiencing loss and grief, to submit your own expressive pieces, and to feel the support of others who really understand what you are going through.

Please submit this form:

Call/Text: (570) 630-4419

Email: healandhope1@gmail.com

Mail: 3329 Palisade Ave. Union City, New Jersey 07087

Name (optional): _____

I would like to receive H.E.A.L. magazines via (you may select both):

Email

Email Address: _____

Mailed

Street: _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name to address the Envelope (If different than above): _____

Payment information

Check of 36.00 attached

Credit Card

Card Number: _____ Exp: _____ CVV: _____

With sensitivity and care, please share the subscription form with others who are experiencing the pain of prenatal / infant loss. As a token of comfort, the first issue for all new members is free.

We hope the read will bring you comfort.

\$36.00 Annual Subscription Fee