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**EDITION 28**

**Rosh Hashanah / Fall 2016**

# Magazine



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**EDITORIAL**

*Shana Tova*



It is with great pleasure that I present the Shalom Magazine High Holiday edition. The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are a time of reflection, repentance and forgiveness. As we begin a New Year, we reflect on all of the events that have transpired around the world, and reflect upon what we did or did not do to make a difference.

Very often I hear about Tikkun Olam, our call to "fix the world" and fight for justice. But sometimes, almost in a state of denial, we forget to look in our own backyard.

I want to caution organizations, both Jewish and non-Jewish, to never be negligent in their obligation to pay workers on time, and with a fair wage. When any nonprofit organization raises thousands or even millions of dollars, it must recognize the needs of the people who have been part of their own community for years. That is a great justice. When institutions rely heavily upon the work of volunteers, then these individuals must not be treated as of lesser importance than their top-paid executives. That is also a great justice.

I believe that our challenge today as a Jewish community is not just to save the planet. We cannot also become insensitive to the needs of our next door neighbors. We must address the issue of poverty among our own, the presence of discrimination in our own towns and neighborhoods, and be aware that more and more Jews are choosing not to be a part of our community, either due to their financial situations, or because they do not feel welcome.

It is important for us as a community to welcome all of our members, regardless of their views, choices and finances. Even when the most vulnerable in our own area is embarrassed to ask for help, we must find ways to reach out.

In my 25 years as a journalist, I have witnessed the power of the media in connecting, informing, and reaching out to people. In this edition of Shalom Magazine, you will find a variety of viewpoints from people throughout our community. My hope is that we all reflect and take action on what we feel is needed to make a difference. A strong and united community is made up of different mindsets, but we must be able to listen to all with open hearts.

I would like to thank all of our advertisers who have been supporting our magazine since its beginning in April of 2009. I would also like to thank our readers and writers who keep encouraging us to grow, and to include more and more new voices.

May you and your family be blessed in the year ahead with health and peace.

*Shirley Farber - Shalom Magazine Publisher*

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Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Karyn and I would like to wish the Jewish community L'Shana Tovah, Happy New Year.

Rosh Hashanah is a time to celebrate rebirth and renewal. We look forward to a renewed dedication with the Commonwealth's Jewish community as valued partners in the work we do to help make Massachusetts great in every zip code.

*Shalom Magazine* serves as an important resource for the Jewish community across the Commonwealth, and it holds a special place in stores, restaurants, and temples around Massachusetts. Thank you for continuing to work together with us.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

Sincerely,

**Charles D. Baker - Governor**



***Cranberry Shabbat***

***Saturday, October 15, 10:30 a.m.***

Gate 8, Wachusett Reservoir

Intersection of Rt. 70 and Cross Street, Boylston

Join Ma'yan Tikvah for the annual Cranberry Shabbat, a time to intermix songs and prayers with cranberry picking beside Wachusett Reservoir and share a late fall potluck picnic lunch. Bring something to share for lunch and your own drinks and utensils. Also please bring containers for the cranberries. You can pick some berries for yourself, but most of the pickings will be given to a homeless shelter for their Thanksgiving dinner.

Our Shabbat adventure will take place at the wild cranberry bogs by Wachusett Reservoir. RSVP to [rabbi@mayantivkah.org](mailto:rabbi@mayantivkah.org). There is a maximum of 25 people. This event is co-sponsored by the One Earth Collaborative of Open Spirit and Mosaic Jewish Outdoor Club of Massachusetts. For more information, go to [www.mayantivkah.org](http://www.mayantivkah.org).

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to extend a warm greeting to the local Jewish Community, marking traditionally Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year holiday. The Jewish holiday begins October 2nd, at sundown, of this year. This represents a special time for families and friends to reunite and strengthen their relationships.

As the Jewish people in Boston celebrate Rosh Hashanah, I share in the belief that the contributions and participation of all people from all cultures and backgrounds are what makes Boston a great city.

I would also like to express my heartfelt congratulations to Shalom Magazine and best wishes for your continued success in the year ahead.

It is my hope that this holiday will be one filled with happiness, prosperity, growth, and improvements for every resident.

Best wishes,

**Martin J. Walsh - Mayor of Boston**



***Zamir Chorale of Boston***

***Monday, November 16 at 7:30 p.m.***

The Zamir Chorale of Boston presents Divine Majesty Series - The Majesty of Hallel at Temple Shalom, 175 Temple St, Newton.

"The Majesty of Hallel" is the third performance in the Divine Majesty Series and will feature Hallel settings (Psalms 113-118) by Lewandowski, Sulzer, Naumbourg, Halévy, Alkin and Mombach. We will also feature celebratory non-Hallel Psalms by these composers.

With soloist Cantor Peter Halpern of Temple Shalom of Newton, this music is not only awesome, it is extraordinarily beautiful. The Divine Majesty Series is made possible by an anonymous underwriter in memory of Mary Wolfman Epstein and Cantor Barney Mould.



Admission is FREE, reservations required at [www.zamir.org](http://www.zamir.org).

*for more events, follow us at*  
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# Rosh Hashanah L'Shanah Tovah!

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*CJP's Social Innovation Showcase is an event that highlights some of the inspiring work being done by young, Jewish social entrepreneurs in the Greater Boston Jewish community. Each of these entrepreneurs worked to develop social ventures over the course of 10 months that they then presented to the broader community this past June at Hatch Fenway in Boston.*



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# L'Shanah Tovah!

May the New Year bring health and happiness to you and your family.

-Massachusetts Senate President  
Stan Rosenberg  
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# YJP's White Party

Photos by Yu Chang



YJP (Young Jewish Professionals) Boston's White Party was held on a starlit night on August 17 at the Revere Hotel. This rooftop party had hundreds of Young Jewish Professionals joining in for a night of Jewish love.



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# YJP's White Party

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Suzi Schuller  
and Boston City  
Councilor  
Josh Zakim**

On September 18, Yad Chessed, (“Hand of Loving Kindness”) Fund Inc. held its community celebration, “Honoring the Past and Celebrating the Future,” at Temple Aliyah in Needham. More than 200 people gathered to be informed, inspired and to learn how to become involved.

Keynote speaker Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim spoke about the issue of poverty, and Yad Chessed client Yuliya Ziz bravely shared her need for Yad Chessed’s services.

Robert Housman founded Yad Chessed in 1989 to help Jewish families and individuals by alleviating economic distress and providing ongoing support. For more information about how you can be involved in making a difference in our community, please go to [www.yadchedded.org](http://www.yadchedded.org), or email [info@yadchedded.org](mailto:info@yadchedded.org).



**Yad Chessed  
Board President  
Sandy Remz,  
Yuliya Zis and  
Lyudmila Kayem**



**Pearlman, Emily Leventhal, Nicole Vaughan, Sari Anne Rapkin, Rabbi Daniel L. Lehmann, and Amanda Clayman**

Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) held its annual *Strength to Strength* event on September 7 at Temple Emanuel in Newton. The event marked the beginning of CJP’s Annual Campaign and also recognized leaders who are making a difference in Boston’s Jewish community and beyond.



**Gil Press, CJP Executive VP; CJP Annual campaign co-chairs Dana Boronkay Rashes and Geraldine Acuna Sunshine**



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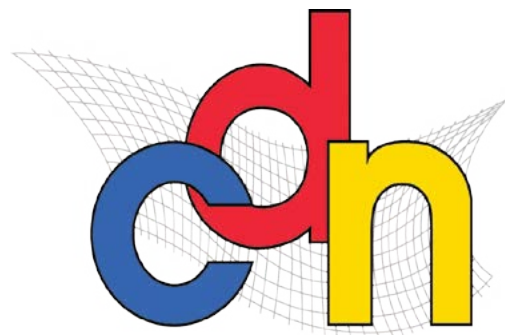
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# Shaloh House celebrates 30 years



Shaloh House Chabad is celebrating 30 years of synagogue services in Stoughton. It was in August of 1986 when Rabbi Mendel Gurkow, then only 23, embarked on what would later prove to be the home of Jewish life for thousands of Jewish families in the South Area. The first Shabbat Minyan was then established, and a dream became a reality.

30 years later, many bar and bat mitzvahs have been celebrated, as well as weddings, other happy family celebrations, and family memorials, all of which have connected many people together within a warm and vibrant community.

Students of the preschool, Hebrew school and bar/bat mitzvah classes have remained connected in various ways, and many of their children are now attending one of the educational programs at Shaloh House Chabad.

Many can proudly say that they are a member, participant or beneficiary of Shaloh House Chabad. But still many others have not attempted to inquire about what Shaloh House can be for them, as well as their children. The truth is, Shaloh House is not what one may think it is. Chabad is the only all-inclusive, non-conditional Jewish home for all your religious needs. It crosses all spectrums of Jewish denominations and affiliations, and reaches those who are not yet affiliated.

Over the last 30 years, Shaloh House Chabad, led by Rabbi Mendel and Chana Gurkow, has created and operated a wide range of programs impacting the greater community, such as music festivals attracting as many as 6,000 people, Jewish family expos, and Torah study lectures. In 2008, Shaloh House expanded and upgraded its facility in a \$750,000 building project that has allowed for more classrooms and community program rooms.

Both Rabbi Mendel and Chana have been successful in drawing people to their individual adult classes with skilled teaching styles, as well as children to preschool and Hebrew school with the ability to explore the individual learning needs of each child. Today, the preschool has a full teaching staff headed by our very talented director Marilyn Rabinovits, who has held this position for nearly 15 years.

Readers are invited to take advantage of our Hebrew school, infants and preschool programs, and our adult education. We also have a seat for you for the upcoming High Holiday services. To learn more, please visit [www.shalohhouse.com](http://www.shalohhouse.com) or call 781-344-6334.

Shaloh House Chabad of the South Area wishes you a Happy and Healthy New Year.

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## Women of Valor Luncheon 10th Anniversary Honoring Sandy Edgerley

Friday October 21, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
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The Women of Valor Award recognizes remarkable women leaders who are committed to making a difference, and are willing to personally invest in the future of a safer society.

The Women of Valor Award is given in the fall of each year to individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to fighting hate, building bridges of understanding, and safeguarding liberties for all. This year, Anti Defamation League (ADL) is proud to recognize Sandy Edgerly as the 2016 Woman of Valor. Sandy's dedication to education and social justice embody ADL's mission.

*"Honor her for the fruit of her hands; Let her be praised for her accomplishments." - Eshet Chayil (A Woman of Valor) Hymn*

Tickets are available for \$200. Visit the event website: [www.adl.org/WOV2016](http://www.adl.org/WOV2016) for more information and sponsorship opportunities.

The Anti-Defamation League

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wishes you, your family, and your friends a sweet and happy

Rosh Hashanah.

Harvey J. Wolkoff  
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## The 2016 Abraham Joshua Heschel Interfaith Relations Award Dinner Honoring Thomas N. O'Brien

Wednesday, November 16, 6 p.m.  
at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel

The fight for justice demands collaboration and support from diverse and numerous communities and leaders. Anti Defamation League (ADL) is fortunate to have such a partner in longtime board member, supporter, advocate and friend Thomas N. O'Brien.

On November 16, 2016, ADL will honor Tom and his family, and recognize their many years of commitment to social justice, diversity, and creating opportunities for success for all. Much like Abraham Joshua Heschel, the namesake of this award, Tom is a man whose devotion to his faith compels him to embrace all humanity.

O'Brien is the Founding Partner and Managing Director of The HYM Investment Group, LLC. HYM is leading the development of over nine million square feet of mixed-use commercial real estate development in Greater Boston. Tom and his wife Patricia are the parents of five children: Lucas, Nina, Tomas, Marisol, and Dureti.

O'Brien has served as the Director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, Chairman of The Greater Boston Real Estate Board, and is currently a member of the Board of the Taubman Center for State and Local Government at Harvard University. He has been appointed to the Board of the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, and is also an appointed member of the Board of Trustees of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy.

Tickets will be available online for \$350 in early September. Please contact Alisha Elliott at [aelliott@adl.org](mailto:aelliott@adl.org) or 617-406-6337 for sponsorship opportunities and event information.

*"To be is to stand for." - Abraham Joshua Heschel*



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## From teacher to coach -

## From school to experience

By Sandra Lilienthal, Ed.D.



We have all either experienced firsthand, or heard stories of children complaining about going to Hebrew/religious school. And, of course, of parents frustrated because their children do not want to go. So what are we to do? How are we to convince them that coming is something valuable?

There is only one way: offering something they WANT to come to. It is about time we redesign Jewish supplementary education. The world of education has changed, and we have not been

changing as fast as we should. It is not just about technology and methodology, although these are, without a doubt, important! What we need is to find a new way to succeed in raising Jews who are passionate about their religion, their culture, their identity.

For most children, receiving supplementary Jewish education is part of a process which leads to the celebration of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. One becomes a Bar or Bat Mitzvah (a child of the commandments, responsible for his/her own Jewish journey) with or without a specific ceremony; however, we have come to expect that our children lead part of the service and read from the Torah and Haftarah of the day. Because of this, a significant focus of “religious education” has been placed upon preparing the youngster for a 2-3 hour event, leaving aside the fact that we should truly be preparing a Jew to live Jewishly (with the different meanings this may have for different movements). It is time we shift our focus. It is time we think of meaning and connection before we think of information or factual knowledge.

Jewish information is available literally in the palms of our students’ hands. They can find the information on their screens faster than any of us educators can present it to them; and in more interactive and fun ways. We need to understand that our role as educators has completely changed in the last 20 years or so. We cannot expect children to sit and read from books after having spent six or more hours in school that day. We cannot continue thinking and acting as if our role is to transmit

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# From teacher to coach - From school to experience

information. Our role is to take every Jewish student who walks into our programs to a point in which he/she can find a point of connection to this enormous, broad, concept of Judaism.

Just last week, I met with a colleague, Sheryl Witlin, Director of Educational Excellence for Orloff Central Agency for Jewish Education in Broward County, Florida. While it was not the original reason for our meeting, we ended up having a long conversation about what can (and should) be done to reinvigorate supplementary Jewish education. Orloff CAJE, I am told, is embarking on the difficult but necessary road of change.

What was brought to my attention was how even the words we use should be reviewed. Do we want to have teachers? Or transformational coaches? Sheryl spoke about the meaning of the word coach. Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why the same word - coach - is used to refer to a carriage and motorbus, and, to the one who trains or prepares athletes, students, actors? What do these two things have in common? A carriage takes people from one physical place to another. A coach takes people from one place to another in life. He or she prepares the person to succeed in a certain area. So it makes a lot of sense, to me, that we prepare our educators to be coaches -- Jewish transformational coaches, who are able to determine the interests and strengths of a given student and help them achieve a place of real connection to Jewish life based on those interests.

For some students, participating in social projects will be profoundly rewarding. For others, there will be a ritual or two that moves them. For another group, the history of our people will speak volumes, while there will be those who will be fascinated by current Israeli/Palestinian issues. Some students will connect to Bible stories, and will be able to extract from them life lessons that speak to their personal lives. You may ask, which of these aspects is the most important? And my answer is, that which gives the student a reason to want to be Jewish, to want to be involved Jewishly speaking, to be proud to be a Jew.

Jewish education in supplementary school should strive to help each student build a personal connection to Judaism, to the Jewish community, and to Israel. As we prepare coaches to guide our children, we need to reframe the environment they work in. Supplementary is not exactly a fitting term, as it sounds almost as something that is

superfluous, not something our Jewish youth need to function as Jews. Hebrew school? Not really - with the limited time we have with our students, Hebrew is not the priority. No student who attends a few hours a week of afternoon or and/or weekend Jewish education will be fluent in Hebrew. Religious school? Probably not a good idea, as the word religious means different things to different people. Maybe we should stop calling it school altogether - after all, who would be excited to go to school after already having been in school for at least six hours?

But this is so much more than just a change in the name! It is a change in how we define the goals of educating our youth and the effective ways to achieve our goals. This is just the beginning of an important conversation, which has already been started in some communities around the country. We cannot afford to sit, watch, and cry over what may not be working. We can, and we must, do better. We have an obligation to ensure the continuity of the beautiful chain of transmission which started thousands of years ago. I call all Jewish educators to join in this conversation: with your local colleagues, with your local agencies, and at a national level. And I call on you - Jewish parents and grandparents - to participate in this discussion. After all, this is about ensuring continuity through a love of being Jewish.

*Dr. Sandra Lilienthal is a Jewish educator with over 25 years experience. She holds a Master's in Jewish Studies and a Doctorate in Jewish Education, and is the author of the Pillars of Judaism curriculum.*

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# Yad Chessed: "Hand of Loving Kindness"

## This New Year, Reaffirm Your Commitment to Tzedakah

Tikkun Olam is part of our rich Jewish tradition, yet each and every day, many Jews among us are suffering. Yad Chessed, which means "hand of loving kindness," is a small Jewish organization whose mission is simple: to help relieve the financial distress of needy Jewish individuals and families, while preserving their dignity.

In 1989, Robert Housman, having witnessed many Jewish individuals and families in financial trouble, personally decided to address this problem. This year, almost three decades later, Yad Chessed, the organization he founded, has distributed more than \$650,000 to 825 families.

Our professional leadership and staff administer this aid. Our assistance, emergency or monthly, helps clients with food and clothing purchases, rent or mortgage payments, utilities, medical expenses, and even interest-free loans.

We also provide additional food subsidies at Rosh Hashanah and Pesach. Our best known program, the Purim fundraiser, engages over 60 synagogues, Hillels, minyanim, day schools, and other organizations to raise money for food purchases, which are distributed on the day of Purim.

This past year, 654 families received \$134,500, thanks to the involvement of the larger community.

Yad Chessed is the last call someone wants to make. Therefore, our social workers try to help alleviate the shame, and preserve their clients' dignity. Imagine having to choose between eating and keeping the lights on, or imagine hesitating to go to the doctor or to fill prescriptions for lack of money. We have clients who were evicted from housing because they have lost their jobs and cannot pay their rent. We work with parents who must choose between working a full-time job, or helping their handicapped or ill children. We have young clients in their 20s with illnesses and disabilities who cannot work for a period of time, and may need help applying for disability. We have clients, young and old, living on less than \$1000 a month (it may be social security or disability), who, thanks to the community's contribution to Yad Chessed, receive monthly food cards.

Each and every day, our social workers give those less fortunate in our community hope.

Yad Chessed partners with the CJP Anti-Poverty Initiative, Warmline, which can be contacted at 1-800-CJP-9500, and is an access point into the Jewish community for services. Thanks to this partnership and our own outreach, this past spring Yad Chessed received more than 180 requests for applications, about 100 more than we would normally receive in the same three-month period. This past year, we have increased the number of clients receiving monthly food assistance by 78 percent, and emergency financial support by 40 percent.

As we begin 5777, we reflect on the past year while considering our fortunes for the coming year. We at Yad Chessed believe that our deeds help determine who will have a good life and who will not. According to our tradition, tzedakah, usually in the form of charity, is one way to ensure that we are inscribed in the Book of Life.

Reaffirm your own commitment to tzedakah by going to [www.yadchessed.org](http://www.yadchessed.org) to learn more about our work and to donate, or send your tzedakah to Yad Chessed, PO Box 470752, Brookline Village, MA 02447.

Wishing you and the entire Jewish community a Shanah tovah u'metuka.

*Suzi Schuller is the Executive Director of Yad Chessed Fund, Inc.*

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## SAUSY shines at Spring Convention

Temples Ahavath Torah Congregation, Temple Beth Am, and Temple Emunah are home to the South Area United Synagogue Youth Chapter (SAUSY), which is part of the New England Region United Synagogue Youth (NERUSY).

At the annual NERUSY Spring Convention held in May at Doubletree Hotel in Milford, SAUSY was honored with numerous awards. For their outstanding year of leadership, service, and community outreach, the chapter was awarded The Herb Musmon Memorial Award for Most Improved Chapter, and The Chapter of Excellence Awards for Silver, Membership Outreach, Synagogue Involvement, Israel Affairs, and Tikun Olam Donation.

SAUSY encompasses youth from South Shore communities, offering teens the opportunity to immerse themselves in various local, regional, and national programs. Lounges and meetings are held during each month at Ahavath Torah Congregation in Stoughton, and Temple Beth Am in Randolph. Chapter events are organized by youth and advisors, and include lounges with themes, activities in and around Boston, and social action projects. Regional events include conventions, week-long summer encampment, dances, boat cruises, leadership retreats, grade level activities and so much more. Youth in grades 3-12 are welcome.

For more information, please visit Facebook: "South Area USY"



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# Introducing Memory Café, Jewish Style

A new program series called a “Memory Café” is being offered at Temple Emanuel in Newton. A Memory Café is an innovative model of social programming that serves as a welcoming and warm gathering for people with forgetfulness, or any changes in thinking.

Temple Emanuel is honored and humbled to be the only congregation in Massachusetts to host a Memory Café that uniquely draws upon Jewish themes as conversation starters, and features Jewish-related programming. Emanuel’s Memory Café will continue at the same time on the third Thursday of the month.

Tracy Schneider, coordinator of the L’CHAIM group of seniors, is spearheading this new initiative in partnership with Dana Gitell, Director of the NewBridge on the Charles Memory Care Assisted Living Community in Dedham. NewBridge is generously co-sponsoring and underwriting these programs, which will be offered at no cost to Temple Emanuel members, as well as to participants from the broader community.

Schneider believed that synagogues should not abandon programs for their most vulnerable population, but rather, should embrace their longtime, active and vibrant members.

Schneider read about the Memory Café movement and approached Temple Emanuel Executive Director Carrie LaVoie. After visiting Memory Cafés at area Senior Centers as well as at the Jewish Children’s and Family Services in Waltham, she was ready to create a Jewish version of Memory Café. She received guidance from Beth Soltzberg, the Director of the Alzheimer’s/Related Disorders Family Support Program of JF&CS, who developed the Massachusetts Memory Café Toolkit. Their shared ideas fostered research on forming the new Memory Café.

While visiting a Memory Café at the Newton Senior Center, Schneider met Gitell. The two women instantly decided to pool their resour-

ces to create a new and dynamic program for the Jewish community. Schneider is reaching out to the Temple Emanuel and wider community for volunteers who can greet new faces as well as help to flood the room with “others,” so that participants feel integrated and not isolated.

Schneider will grow her program by joining a Percolator Network, a monthly gathering of coordinators of area Memory Cafés that is led by Beth Soltzberg at the JF&CS office. “I can swap ideas with other Memory Café leaders, as well as problem solve,” she said, adding that

Temple Emanuel will be a model for other synagogues and Jewish institutions to put their own unique spins on a Memory Café.

Questions at Temple Emanuel’s Memory Café will feature Jewish themes such as “Why were you given your name? Does it have special meaning? Who were you named after?” Other questions will carry a theme, such as “Some think of Rosh Hashanah as the Birthday of the World. What do you wish for the world in the coming year?”

Renewal, birthday and Rosh Hashanah were the themes of the September event at Temple Emanuel, a creative workshop structured to “paint your hopes for the New Year.” Art

therapists Elena Clamen and Esther Freidman led a workshop with painting, but also, a twist on a theme of renewal and hope. For Jews, the question of a birth name is central to the concepts of family and “Kavod,” honoring those who came before. In participants with memory loss, this question will prompt answers that may not be exact. But with the loving help of a spouse, friend, caretaker or volunteer, it is the communal give and take of a dialogue that counts.

Upcoming Memory Café programs are planned for October 20, November 17, and December 15.

Registration is required; please call 617-959-4928.



*Dana Gitell and Tracy Schneider*



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# “March of the Living” Is Recruiting for 2017 Teen Trip to Poland, Israel

## An eye-opening, life-changing heritage journey

By Stanley Hurwitz

Recruitment is underway for the 2017 March of the Living (MOTL), when 10,000 teens from around the world will join hands and hearts as they experience the pain of World War II Poland and the pride of 21st century Israel. MOTL was established in 1988. (Visit <http://motl-newengland.org/>)

Irv Kempner, MOTL Chairman of Sharon, Massachusetts, is the father of 3 grown children and grandfather of 10, a son of Holocaust survivors, and a former business executive. He aims to recruit at least 20 Massachusetts teens to participate in the upcoming trip, to take place from April 19 - May 3, 2017.

Kempner called the annual spring trip a life-changing event. “Where else would your 17 or 18 year-old be able to participate in a pilgrimage, where the primary goal is to teach lessons of the Holocaust through an emotional experience outside of school, and inspire them to lead the Jewish community into the future, vowing ‘Never Again?’” he asked. Kempner himself has participated in several MOTL teen and adult trips.

In addition to achieving its 2017 recruitment goal, Kempner’s committee plans to raise an additional \$60,000 to pay half the cost for each participant. The trip coincides with Holocaust Remembrance Day, with tours of Nazi concentration camps and former shtetls in Poland, and the next week, it marks Israel Memorial Day and Israel Independence Day in Israel with trips to Masada, ancient Jerusalem, modern Tel Aviv and other sites.

“As parents prepare to send their sons and daughters off to college, many Jewish parents want to provide guidance on how to deal with situations their kids may encounter, and teach them why it’s so important,” Kempner says. “We’ve seen Israelis being discriminated against at the Olympics, and have witnessed the growing BDS movement as well as rising incidents of anti-Semitism in Europe and on college campuses. Anxious parents are asking, ‘What I can I do to make sure that my child is prepared to face the challenges of an ill-informed anti-Jewish bigotry?’” he said.

One 2015 participant referred to the trip as an amazing experience.

“We were with a survivor who shared her experience, which was similar to my grandfather’s. I saw the Holocaust in a new way, and I feel that the trip will keep the memory and lessons of the Holocaust alive.”

A 2016 participant said, “The March gave me an appreciation for Israel and allowed me to bond with Jewish teens from around the world.”

Groups are accompanied by local guides, historians and survivors. A 2015 study showed that participants in MOTL-type trips have higher levels of identification with Israel and are more likely to value marrying Jews than the general Jewish population.

After visiting the remnants of Jewish Poland - once the home to 3.2 million Jews - the March of the Living continues its heritage journey in Israel where teens experience the rebirth and vitality of the Jewish state.

Kempner says the following excerpt from a poem by San Diego teen Gabrielle Katzenelson, a 2016 MOTL participant, says it all:



### Why I Marched

*I marched for Roman Myron Lubetzky.*

*I marched for my grandfather and for all of those who suffered his torture.*

*I marched for the 6 million Jews that were murdered, and for the 5 million other victims that endured the same fate.*

*I marched so that this atrocity never happens again.*

*I marched for a safe country to call home. I marched for Israel.*

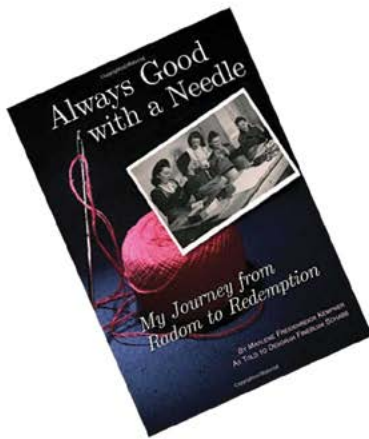
*I marched because we as a Jewish people are not going anywhere.*

*I marched because we are here to stay.*

Donations of \$1,000 will be matched dollar for dollar by the Kempner Foundation. Tax-deductible donations may be made online: <http://motlnewengland.org/>.

For information about MOTL teen or adult participation options, scholarship donations, and other questions, visit <http://motlnewengland.org/> or contact Irv Kempner at [IrvKempner@gmail.com](mailto:IrvKempner@gmail.com) or 617-285-8620. Look for highlights of the 2015 and 2016 trips on youtube.

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By Marlene Freidenreich Kempner

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In her teens and 20's, Marlene Freidenreich Kempner of Radom, Poland, struggled to survive and safeguard her family from the Nazis. Ultimately, after narrowly escaping death in labor and death camps, only she and her younger sister survived, blessed with the opportunity to begin life again in a new land.

In her 94th year, the author summoned the courage to share her story - a cautionary tale of terror that also testifies to the power of courage and hope.

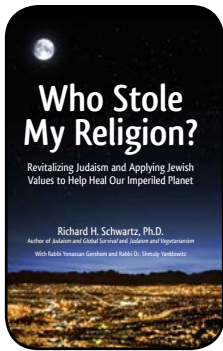
*Proceeds from book sales will help fund scholarships to send teens on the N. E. March of the Living heritage trips to Poland and Israel in 2017 and 2018.*

Donations of \$500 or more to March of the Living will receive a free book. Donations of \$1,000 will be matched dollar for dollar. Tax-deductible donations may be made online: <http://motlnewengland.org/>

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# Who Stole My Religion?



By Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D.

For many years I have believed that my religion, Judaism, has been stolen. Why? Because Judaism is a radical religion, with powerful messages on peace, justice, compassion, sharing, and environmental sustainability that can help shift our imperiled planet onto a sustainable path. Yet, most Orthodox Jews are in denial about climate change and other environmental threats and are increasingly supporting politicians who promote benefits for the wealthiest Americans and highly profitable corporations,

at the expense of average Americans.

I have been a member of a modern Orthodox synagogue for 48 years, prior to moving to Israel on August 3, 2016. I have found that members of the synagogue excel in acts of kindness, charity, and learning. Their dedication to Judaism is outstanding. However, while a strong majority of Jews support progressive policies, a similar majority of Orthodox Jews is conservative and hawkish. In the 2008 presidential election, while Barack Obama received 78% of the Jewish vote, about the same percent of Orthodox Jews voted for Senator John McCain. A poll of Florida Jews during late August 2016 found that while overall, Jews support Hillary Clinton by a margin of three to one, Orthodox Jews favor Donald Trump by the same margin.

While Orthodox Jews generally know far more about Judaism than less religious and secular Jews, they are far less involved in applying Jewish values to today's critical threats, at a time when this involvement is very much needed. Also, Orthodox Jews, like most Jews, are ignoring or downplaying Jewish teachings on veganism, the proper treatment of animals, and environmental stewardship. For these reasons and others, I think my religion has been stolen and primarily by the Orthodox Jewish community. I make this criticism reluctantly because so many Orthodox Jews are doing wonderful things in their communities, but feel that I must do so because the future of Judaism and humanity is at stake.

Because I think it is urgent to get this message out, I wrote, *Who Stole My Religion? Revitalizing Judaism and Applying Jewish Values to Help Heal Our Imperiled Planet*, (written with Rabbi Yonassan Gershom and Rabbi Dr. Shmuly Yanklowitz), and it was published in August 2016 by Ktav/Urime Publications.

In the book, I argue that Judaism is a radical religion, in the best sense of the word, and that Judaism's progressive teachings should be applied to help shift our imperiled planet onto a sustainable path. Among the Jewish teachings that I discuss are the following:

- Justice, justice shall you pursue (*Deuteronomy 16:20*);
- Seek peace and pursue it (*Psalms 34:14*);
- Be kind to the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt (this verse in various forms occurs 36 times in the Jewish scriptures, more than any other teaching; because of this, Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, former chancellor at Bar Ilan University argued that Judaism teaches a special kind of justice - empathic justice, which considers

the conditions and needs of others);

- Love thy neighbor as yourself (*Leviticus 19:18*);
- You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God am holy (*Leviticus 19:2*);
- Jews are to be a "light unto the nations" (*Isaiah 49:6*).

My book is meant to be a wake-up call, the strongest that I could make, to the need for Jews to apply Judaism's splendid teachings in response to current threats. However, "denial is not just a river in Egypt," and, like most others, many Jews are in denial, in effect, "rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic while the world heads toward a giant iceberg." I want my book to ring out like a shofar, to awaken people to the urgency of applying Judaism's wonderful values in response to current crises.

Among the key points in the book are:

1. Jews should be vegetarians, and preferably vegans, to be most consistent with Jewish teachings on compassion, health, environmental sustainability, resource conservation, justice, reducing poverty, and other issues, and to help reduce the current epidemic of diseases in the Jewish and other communities and to reduce climate change and other environmental threats to humanity;

2. Jews should be advocates for an end to current widespread abuses of animals;

3. Jews should be environmental activists, leading efforts to avert a climate catastrophe and other environmental disasters;

4. There should be a global Marshall-type plan, in which the U.S. and other developed nations devote a small percent of their income to efforts to significantly reduce poverty, hunger, illiteracy, illness, pollution, and other societal ills. This would help improve the image of the U.S. and other countries that joined the effort, including Israel, and thereby help reduce the potential for terrorism and other violence.

5. Israel needs a comprehensive, sustainable, just resolution of her conflict with the Palestinians, in order to avert continued and possibly increased violence and increased diplomatic criticism and isolation, respond effectively to her economic, environmental, and other domestic problems, and remain both a Jewish and a democratic state. This is also the view of many Israeli strategic and military experts.

6. The economic system most consistent with Judaism is democratic socialism.

7. While most people look at the world in terms of good versus evil and us versus them, demonize opponents, and listen almost exclusively to arguments that reinforce their views, it is essential to find common ground and solutions to current problems.

8. It is essential that Jews actively apply Jewish values to current critical problems. Jews must be God's loyal opposition to injustice, greed, and immorality, rousing the conscience of humanity. We must shout "no" when others are whispering "yes" to injustice. We must involve Judaism in the universal task of "comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable." We must act as befits "descendants of the prophets," reminding the world that there exists a God of justice, compassion, and kindness. Nothing less than global survival is at stake.

The afternoon service for Yom Kippur includes the prophetic reading of the book of Jonah, who was sent by God to the city of Nineveh to urge the people to repent and change their evil ways in order to avoid their destruction. The people of Nineveh listened and changed their actions - but will we? Today the whole world is like Nineveh, in danger of annihilation and in need of repentance and redemption. Each one of us must be a Jonah, with a mission to warn the world that it must turn from greed, injustice, and materialism, in order that we may avoid global catastrophe.

Anyone interested in working to help spread the progressive messages in my book should please contact me at [VeggieRich@JewishVeg.com](mailto:VeggieRich@JewishVeg.com). Also visit [JewishVeg.com/Schwartz](http://JewishVeg.com/Schwartz).

**Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D., is president emeritus of Jewish Vegetarians of North America and the author of *Judaism and Vegetarianism*, *Judaism and Global Survival*, and *Who Stole My Religion?***

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LimmudBoston 2016 will be held at Newton's Temple Reyim on Sunday, December 4. Participants will be able to choose from multiple sessions each hour, including food demonstrations, text study, storytelling, music, and discussions on Israel, Jewish parenting and more.



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While the full conference schedule will be available at the end of October, a LimmudBoston sneak peek includes sessions on G-d's Ears, daily blessings, Jewish genealogy, being happy, Reiki, Jewish songs of miracles and self-discovery, and how to advocate for Israel in "five minutes or less."

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The LimmudBoston website features many ways to get involved on Sunday, December 4. Earlier in the weekend, LimmudBoston presenters will speak in area congregations. See [www.LimmudBoston.org](http://www.LimmudBoston.org) for a full listing of weekend activities.

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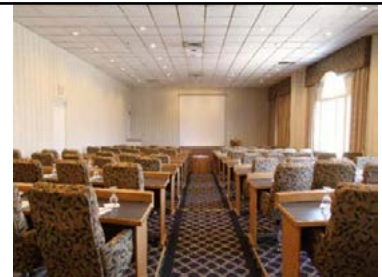
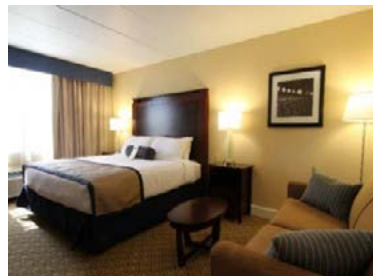
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*Portales de San Francisco*



*Text and photos by Shirley Nigri Farber*

Early this summer, my husband and I visited the area of Campeche, Mexico. You've never heard of it? Neither had I, but we were happy to "discover" this lesser-known destination. We were invited by Aeromexico and the Secretary of Tourism of Campeche, along with members of Boston Latino Media, and various travel agents.

When I think about Mexico, the first thing that comes to my mind is what I see on television commercials - people lying on white, sandy beaches sipping margaritas. While I can see myself relaxing near the ocean under the sun, my husband and I could never agree to spend a whole week at a resort without the opportunity to walk around the town and explore the city and the local culture. I was intrigued by the fact that we were going to be near the ocean, and at the same time, visiting a pyramid.



*Fish at Casa Vieja*

The city of Campeche has it all: nature, history, beautiful Spanish architecture, and very hospitable people. It is located on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, six hours' drive from Cancun. From Boston, we flew to Mexico City, and from there, it was a short flight to Campeche airport.

People who follow me on Facebook were amazed by the colorful facades of colonial-style buildings in the photos I posted. When they asked about the location, I felt like I was the first of my friends to discover Campeche.

The things that make traveling a pleasure for me are meeting new people, visiting new places, and enjoying new foods. That's how I could summarize the trip. But if you are curious, I will continue with details of our four days there.

We stayed at the charming *Hotel Socaire* in the historic city of San Francisco de Campeche. The area, discovered by Spanish conquerors, was fortified by walls as protection from pirates. It was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999.

Our first day began with a visit to one of the most important archaeological sites in the Mayan world, the *Edzna*, where our knowledgeable guide Eric explained the history of the Mayan people while we walked up to the pyramid. The area is not crowded with tourists, so we had a peaceful walk and were able to film and take photos while absorbing the history of a city built in 400 B.C. While listening to our guide, I had a chance to reflect on the rise and decline of the Mayan people, and the role of religion in ruling the people.

From there, we visited *Hacienda Uayamon*, a rural propriety built in 1700 and transformed into a boutique hotel and wedding venue. We walked around its gardens, colonial pillars and ruins that were reminiscent of the farm (hacienda) that once stood there. It was late June, and as one would expect in the rainforest, hot and humid. We were eventually caught by a quick shower at the end of the day. But we were rewarded with a surprising rainbow sunset and by dinner time our clothes were dry.

I knew that because we were near the shore it would be easy to find a good fish option at restaurants, since I eat kosher style. Each time it I had a chance to try a fish cooked in a different way, from whole fish fried, to "la plancha" style (a grilled filet), to a refreshing ceviche (marinated in lemon with avocado). Some of the restaurants we ate at were *Casa Vieja Del Rio* on the main square, with a veranda that offered a view of the main Cathedral, built in 1758 and beautifully lit at night; and *La Palapa del Tio Fito*, where I had the ceviche, which



*Hacienda Uayamon Hotel*



*Campeche Country Club*



*Edzna*



was overlooking the ocean. At *Casa Vieja*, the owner sat down to talk with our group about growing up in the area, and cooking with local produce.

At *La Palapa*, when I tried to explain to the manager that I eat kosher, he said he worked with kosher foods while in Canada and offered to grill the whole fish wrapped in aluminum foil. He said that he was born in Beit Lechem (I thought it was interesting that he did not say Palestine). We had a fun conversation about growing up in Israel and the fact that both of us grew up with parents speaking in Arabic, while he is Christian and I am Jewish.

Campeche is a quiet, small city, but if one must party at night, there is *Calle 59* with its outdoor cafes and bars. From our hotel we could walk to most places in the historic downtown such as *Centro Cultural Casa 6*, *Portales de San Francisco*, and *Palacio Municipal*. I was amazed by how clean the city is and how well preserved is its baroque, colonial architecture.

One our last day, we watched a motorboat competition in the presence of Campeche Governor Alejandro Moreno. We visited the modern *Campeche Convention Center* located on the beachfront, and before leaving for the airport, we visited the beautiful *Campeche Country Club*, located on the beach. The property includes a golf course and newly built condos.

Buying traditional products is part of any trip, and we found unique items at handicraft shops, as well as from individual people selling on the streets. I bought a delicate hair piece made of bull bones, and a colorful woven purse perfect. We also brought some local honey that I will be enjoying with apples during my Rosh Hashanah dinner, while remembering the great time I had in Mexico.

My husband and I would like to thank Gabriela Salas from *Aeromexico*, Erik Mendicuti from the *Secretary of Tourism of Campeche* and the *Government of Campeche* for this enchanting and unforgettable opportunity that was part of the celebration of the Year of Campeche in Boston. For more photos, please see [www.Facebook.com/ShalomMagazine](http://www.Facebook.com/ShalomMagazine)



*Historic city of Campeche*

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*Shirley and Scott Farber at Hotel Socaire*



*Campeche Cathedral*



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## A CONTRADICTION OF CALENDARS



By Jessica Lowenthal

The Jewish calendar is often taught in religious school or hung on the kitchen wall to remind us when certain religious holidays fall. Although we keep track of the Jewish calendar, we don't truly live within it.

The time leading up to the high holidays is a special opportunity to experience the Jewish calendar in a truly meaningful way. Beginning with Tisha B'Av, the 9th of the month of Av, the Jewish people experience a powerful memory, the destruction of the Temple. This is a fast day, a day of intense mourning, where we compress all of the Jewish historical tragedy into one agonized experience. Every past destruction, every expulsion, every brutal pogrom, is felt on this day. In the Jewish calendar, this is one of the most painful days of the year.

However, it often falls within the month of August, the height of the summer season when young people are at camp, families are on vacation, and the commute to work flows. Our religious and secular calendars seem to be at odds, one telling us to wear black and rent our clothing, while the other telling us to take advantage of the beauty and freedom of summer. Finding ways to balance those contradictory messages is one of the biggest, yet most important Jewish challenges we face.

As we move forward beyond Tisha B'Av, the tenor of the calendars change. The Gregorian calendar reminds us that summer ends, and back to school shopping begins, and everyone is back to work. However, the Jewish calendar tells us to begin preparing for the holiest days of the year, a time of deep contemplation and renewal. Rosh Hashanah often falls during a time of seasonal transition and for many, an overwhelming workload. Often, the holidays come at "the worst time of the year." For those on an academic calendar, some of the first conversations with professors might be that the student will be missing class, advocating for the school policy around religious observance. During a time of change, especially for freshmen who are transitioning from high school to college, the High Holidays can pose a serious challenge.

It is precisely at this difficult time that I advocate for serious reflection on the Jewish calendar. While it seems that the holidays are at odds with the secular world, they can actually be a gift. The month of Elul

is a time of transition, of fluidity. We are moving from despair (Tisha B'Av) to a time of joy (Rosh Hashanah). This can be scary, exciting, and intimidating, all at once. The emotions of Elul actually mirror the emotions of change that many of our students are experiencing as they enter or re-enter college. While initially it seems that our calendars are out of sync - sadness during vacation time, joy during change - those who can tap into the emotions between the holidays can find support for their subliminal experience.

Rosh Hashanah is not only the Jewish New Year. It is the culmination of a period of change and transition, which always ends in joy. The Jewish calendar embodies the emotional rollercoaster that can be anxiety provoking, but reminds us that those changes always end on a high note. Our calendar guarantees that the most painful day of the year turns into the most joyous one.

As students return to campus, some for the first time, they will grapple with the challenges of transition. They will need to find new groups of friends, new relationships with professors, and new personal venues on campus. Some will gear up for political fights on their campus, renewed each year around Israel and BDS. This can be exciting, invigorating, and draining all at once. Many may be tempted to ignore the High Holidays in the midst of so many other important things going on in their lives.

I would urge everyone, especially our students, to take a moment and really explore the season of Rosh Hashanah. Delve into the Jewish calendar. Experience the buildup to the holidays, the energy of transition. Explore the intersection of change that is present within the calendars. Just as in life, the calendars that seem to contradict each other can actually be balanced together. As we go into another year full of excitement, surprise, and inevitable difficulty, know that the Jewish calendar, as well as the Jewish community, are there to support you. For students returning to campus, know that Hillel is there to support you as well. Whenever you run into difficulty, be it between friends or with a professor, Hillel professionals are there to listen, to advocate, and to empower you.

*Jessica Lowenthal is the Director of Jewish Student Life at Northeastern University Hillel and a Rabbinical student at Hebrew College.*

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## HOW WAS YOUR SUMMER?

## HOT AND DRY, WE'LL BET!



By **Susie Davidson**

The holidays herald an end to the summer months, which this year, literally gave new meaning to the terms hot and dry. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, July 2016 was the Earth's warmest month of any month on record, dating back to 1880.

As far as Boston, the National Weather Service deemed August the hottest month ever in the city since it began observing weather conditions in 1872.

"Global climate change has already had observable effects on the environment," warns NASA'S web page on global climate change. "Effects that scientists had predicted in the past would result from global climate change are now occurring: loss of sea ice, accelerated sea level rise and longer, more intense heat waves."

In 2014, a National Climate Assessment report cited the burning of fossil fuels and other earth-damaging human activity.

And Plantmaps.com finds about a third of Massachusetts to be currently under extreme drought conditions, with the rest of the state under severe drought.

Jewish history stems from an agrarian background, to which rain is both central and critical. Indeed, many of our holidays and observances revolve around water-based issues such as the harvest and spring rains, and on fast days, the abstinence from food or water.

Therefore, our current situation appears foreboding, and some would say, even ominous. Knowing that we personally do not have control over natural elements, we can look to our Judaic traditions and our prayers.

The August 27 Torah portion read in the Diaspora, Eikev (*Deuteronomy* 11:13-14), relevantly states, "If you obey the commandments that I enjoin upon you this day ... I will grant the rain for your land in season."

From the water that sprung forth from Moses' rock, to the Mikvah ritual, to the traditional washing of hands, to the great flood chronicled in the story of Noah, to current desalination efforts around the land of Israel, rain and water have always played a pivotal role in our heritage.

Those of us in the environmentally activist community strongly believe in personally and collectively following the biblical guidelines cautioning against wastefulness and imploring us to safeguard the gift of the Earth. That means not only to practice an ecologically responsible lifestyle, but to also fully cooperate with the guidelines of our municipal authorities. As Jews, we should responsibly heed all municipal water restrictions.

Weather conditions, hopefully, will soon change for the better. But we ourselves, especially at the brink of the Jewish New Year, always possess that internal opportunity to do the same.

**Susie Davidson is the Coordinator of the Boston chapter of the COEJL [www.bostoncoejl.org](http://www.bostoncoejl.org).**

## Hadassah Northeast Events

**Thursday, October 20, 7 p.m.** - Author Tour featuring Susan David, author of "Emotional Agility," at Hadassah Northeast in Newton Centre.

**Sunday, October 30, 7 p.m.** - Keepers of the Gate Reception featuring acclaimed Israeli pianist Tal Zilber at NewBridge on the Charles in Dedham. Cost: \$54

**Wednesday, November 2, Noon** - Author Tour featuring Linda Cohen Loigman, author of "The Two-Family House," at Hadassah Northeast in Newton Centre.

**Sunday, December 4, 11 a.m.** - Discussion with Hans Fisher, a surviving passenger on the ill-fated SS St. Louis and showing of the movie "Complicit" at NewBridge on the Charles in Dedham.

**Tuesday, December 6, Noon** - Author Tour featuring Juliette Fay, author of "The Tumbling Turner Sisters," at Hadassah Northeast in Newton Centre.

For further details on upcoming programming, please contact Hadassah Northeast at 781-455-9055 or [hne@hadassah.org](mailto:hne@hadassah.org).



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# Black Lives Matter - And So Does Israel!

By Colette A.M. Phillips



When the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement was launched two years ago (following the death of Michael Brown at the hands of a Ferguson, Missouri, policeman), I applauded the way young Black activists were organizing to advance social justice and civil rights.

I thought that I was witnessing the rebirth of the civil rights movement of the late 1950s and 1960s. The movement was aiming a spotlight on the disparities and inequalities in the American criminal justice and judicial systems. It was also highlighting a double standard in the way law enforcement interacted with members of the African-American community. And they were leveraging social media and smartphones to get their message out, an advantage that their forbears in the civil rights movement could only have dreamed of.

More recently, however, I have noticed things that have troubled me. I witnessed BLM advocates blatantly disregard advice from elders and veterans of the civil rights movement. I was horrified to see civil rights legend and icon Congressman John Lewis shouted down as he attempted to speak at a Black Lives Matter rally. Last year, members of the movement rudely took over Bernie Sanders' microphone to make a point. And in February of this year, leaders of the movement refused an invitation to dialogue from President Barack Obama.

My doubts about the BLM movement were enhanced when in its recently released platform, the BLM Movement singled out Israel, the one democracy in the Middle East and accused it of genocide and apartheid. This accusation was both egregious and false. It also reflected a disturbing lack of moral and intellectual honesty.

I understand the movement's desire to broaden its reach and expand its platform to become more international. If this is truly the case, however, they should have done this by looking at countries around the world where Black lives are truly in danger. Black Africans have desperately been trying to get into Israel to escape their homelands. In places like Sudan and Mauritania, the practice of slavery continues unabated. How about the United Kingdom, where black people have

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# Black Lives Matter - And So Does Israel!

been demonstrating to call attention to discrimination by law enforcement? Or perhaps, one might focus on Italy or France, where many African and Muslim immigrants do not feel welcomed or integrated.

If indeed Black lives globally are truly of concern to the BLM movement, then why has this movement not addressed the ISIS-inspired Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram that has murdered thousands of Nigerians and other Africans from neighboring countries such as the Cameroon, not to mention the 200 school girls that they kidnapped more than two years ago who are still missing? If they are genuinely concerned about genocide, how about speaking out and taking a strong stand against the 400,000 Syrians who have lost their lives at the hands of the Syrian dictator Assad and the thousands killed by ISIS in Iraq, Syria, Libya and other Middle Eastern countries? For that matter, if they are looking for common cause with other indigenous peoples, why didn't the BLM Movement turn their attention to Native Americans, fellow Americans right in their backyard, with no less bitter of a history.

Israel is not a perfect country. Critics eagerly point out its faults and they are real. Yet, the same could be said about the United States and so many other democracies that struggle to accommodate diverse populations. The key word is "struggle" and Israel, a democracy surrounded by people dedicated to its destruction, faces struggles far greater than anything we in America know. So why, with all the sorrow, pain and injustice in this world, does the Black Lives Matter Movement single out Israel? It is disturbing to contemplate the answer to this question.

Jews in America have always been among black people's strongest allies. True, there has been times of tension. Yet, for decades they have been allies in the fight against discrimination. In the Freedom Summer of 1964, for example, many of the marchers were northern Jews who traveled south to join in the movement. Two of the three

activists killed by the Ku Klux Klan in Philadelphia, Mississippi, that summer were Jewish. In the Selma civil rights march in 1965, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel marched alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

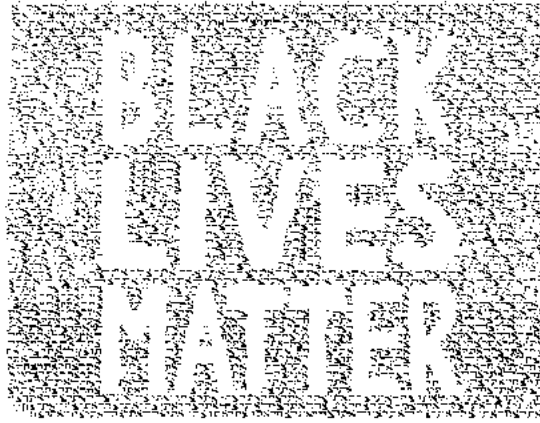
What binds us together is that we believe in pluralism and we believe in democratic life and we believe in working together to fight against racism and anti-Semitism. We see in Israel a nation and a people struggling to survive in one of the most hostile parts of the world. We understand what it means to survive in a dangerous place and so it is only natural that we find common cause with American Jews a people who share our hope that one day a high regard for pluralism, democracy and civil rights will protect our children from the dangers we know today.

It is also troubling to realize how quickly this young movement has begun to undercut its own goals. Singling out Israel will not help advance any of the goals of Black Lives Matter. On the contrary, it will alienate many allies, including Jews, who will understand why Israel alone is a target of the movements venom - just as young Blacks understand why police stop them so frequently.

The Black Lives Matters Movement foolishly and without understanding, turned its back on this relationship and on the very cause that it claims to promote. This is a tragedy for Black Americans and it is a tragedy for our country. Black Lives Matters had something to say. Will anyone listen anymore?

**Colette A.M. Phillips is President and CEO of Colette Phillips Communications, Inc. and Founder of Get Konnected!**

*Art by Rachel Stone, a middle school teacher from Oakland, Calif. The Hebrew text is "lo tirtzach" ("do not murder"), from the Ten Commandments, repeated. There's an idea that the Torah/Bible is black fire (the letters) and white fire (the spaces), and the spaces say just as much as the text.*



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# Are you an Angel or a Mensch?



Does the following sound familiar?

Your kids clamor for attention. At the same time the doorbell rings. At the same time the pot is boiling over. At the same time the phone rings, and your WhatsApp pings...Wow. You take a deep breath and think, "I can't do it all; I am, after all, a human being."

You are trying to cook healthy foods. At the same time, your aging mom needs you. Your teen has a homework assignment due, and your boss just scheduled an emergency meeting. "I am only - human," says the voice in your brain.

It turns out though that being a mensch is actually far superior to being an angel! Who knew? Do you know why G-d sent no less than three angels to visit our patriarch Abraham? Because angels can't do it all. Each one had a separate mission and message. Angels can't move upwards, downwards or sideways. Angels, albeit celestial, are stationary.

Humans, however, can harness their "menschly" powers and overturn the world! We can use the power of **momentum** to achieve personal transformation, thus elevating our surroundings. We can in this way create a vessel for Hashem's bountiful blessings, something we all aspire toward at this auspicious time of year.

According to Dictionary.com, the definition of momentum is "the property or tendency of a moving object to continue moving." Newton's first law of motion states, "An object at rest stays at rest, and an object in motion stays in motion with the same speed, and in the same direction, unless acted upon by an unbalanced force." Applied to personal development, this means that forward movement is important. Once you start moving, it's easier to continue moving, according to the Law of Inertia.

So how does momentum get started, pick up speed and stay in a forward moving direction? Something has to start off the momentum.

For some people, it's a passion. For others, it's an event of divine providence, either momentous, or just the right timing. For example, when you met the right person at the right time.

And for others, it's dissatisfaction with the status quo that gives them

a push to thrive - like a ball bouncing low and springing higher, like a seed fermenting into a beautiful sapling.

**How to gain and maintain momentum?**

Here are some tips:

## 1. HAVE A CLEAR GOAL

Take a lesson from a tightrope walker. He never looks down. Keep your eyes on the finish line. This sounds simple enough, but some people take off without knowing their destination.

## 2. CREATE A DEADLINE

In your personal life, you might have deadlines looming, such as family celebrations, or your wife's birthday. However, very often there is no concrete deadline: lose thirty pounds, declutter the basement. Therefore, I'd suggest creating a deadline for yourself. Be proactive by blocking off time in your calendar. Remember that momentum takes time to build, so break up bigger goals into smaller, attainable chunks. Don't run a 10-mile marathon if you've been sedentary.

## 3. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

This is positive feedback from your environment. It is evidence that your plan is working. The same strategy of breaking your larger goal into smaller, attainable targets applies here as well. It is positive reinforcement from those around you, such as your boss or family members. However, if you are working or living in unsupportive circumstances, make sure to create that supportive structure for yourself! You can reward yourself periodically as a way of acknowledging how far you've come. Celebrate the small wins!

## 4. MAKE IT PERSONAL

We are all so different. We carry different baggage, walk at different speeds, and have different personalities. So it most definitely is not "one size fits all" when it comes to personal transformation! It has to work for you.

## 6. PICK YOURSELF UP WHEN YOU FALL

Failure is inevitable. The trick is being curious, coupled with a large dose of compassion. What did I do right? What went wrong? Remove feelings of guilt and don't over dramatize. When a small child is learning to walk, he will tumble and fall. Simply use your fall to learn to do better in the future.

Finally...

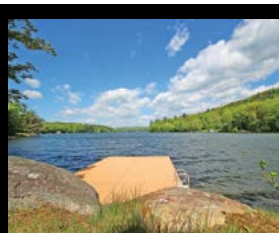
## 5. LET GO OF FEAR

Have you ever feared too much momentum? You feel like you're speeding down the slope on skis and it feels out of control. But know that this feeling is just stepping out of your comfort zone. It's like a bird lifting its wings and flying. You will take off and **soar**.

When you hear the sweet sounds of the shofar this Rosh Hashana, reflect on the past and commit to a better tomorrow. Ask G-d to grant you and your loved ones health, happiness and prosperity. However, remember: **Be a Mensch!** Shana Tova Umetuka!

*Chana Labkowsky is a personal and professional development coach and motivational speaker. Schedule a complimentary session by emailing [chana@insightcoach.pro](mailto:chana@insightcoach.pro).*

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# Why we support Hillary Clinton for President

“By the end of her speech at a June event near Faneuil Hall, Hillary Clinton’s pragmatism, warmth, brilliance, steadiness, sense of humor, and command of the issues left us inspired,” recalled Jill Goldenberg, Cindy Rowe, and Linda Whitlock in a joint statement. “We know that President Hillary Clinton will represent the values of tikkun olam, repair of the world.”

These women say fellow Jewish voters feel the same, and indeed, a Sept. 1 Newsweek article reports that American Jews are supporting Hillary Clinton over Donald Trump by more than a two-to-one margin.

Rowe cited Clinton’s track record of achievement. “Hillary has fought for her entire life for children and families, for our nation’s security and for Israel’s, for a woman’s right to make our own medical decisions, and for every person to be free to marry whomever they choose,” she said. “Hillary knows that there is no greater ally than the state of Israel,” said Sarah Bard, Hillary Clinton’s Director of Jewish Outreach, at this summer’s Democratic National Convention Jewish Roundtable.

New York Councilman David Greenfield, a leader of the New York Jewish Caucus, said that Clinton has a lifelong record of supporting both Jewish causes and the state of Israel. “The fact that she sent a letter to her own church, asking them to vote against BDS, proves that she is a true friend of the Jewish community and Israel,” he said in Philadelphia.

“After graduating from Yale Law School, Hillary could have picked any big law firm job,” explained Whitlock. “Instead, she took a job at the Children’s Defense Fund, where she worked to expose segregated schools in the South, and, in New Bedford, to help open schools to children with disabilities.”

“As First Lady, she fought for - and won - children’s health insurance (now covering more than 8 million children), and worked with Republicans to make it easier to move children out of foster care and into adoptive homes,” said Whitlock.

As Senator, Hillary introduced and cosponsored bills to support Israel, including funding for needed arms systems, and sanctions against Iran and Syria. According to the Clinton campaign, during this time, she “championed legislation to get tough on Iran, led the effort to crack down on Palestinian incitement in textbooks and schools; and fought successfully to have Israel’s Magen David Adom accepted by the International Red Cross.” Clinton also both introduced and co-sponsored many bills in support of Israel that aimed to disempower terrorist groups and their state sponsors; and against anti-Semitism in the Middle East, Europe, and the world.

“As First Lady,” said Goldenberg, “Clinton supported Israel’s search for peace and the fight against terrorism, saying ‘I understand the need never to compromise the security of Israel.’ She traveled repeatedly to Israel and forged a lasting bond and friendships with Israeli leaders and people.” Goldenberg added that Clinton worked with Elizabeth Dole and won the fight for Israel’s Magen David Adom to be accepted by the International Red Cross.

“As Secretary of State, Clinton led negotiations in 2012 to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, supported funding for the Iron Dome, reaffirmed the

US commitment to preserving Israel’s qualitative military edge, and ensured that the US blocked anti-Israel resolutions at the Security Council,” said Goldenberg, citing Israel’s Ambassador to the United States Ron Dermer, who said that Hillary’s diplomacy “saved many lives.”

According to her campaign, “Clinton’s State Department reaffirmed the US commitment to preserving Israel’s Qualitative Military Edge (QME) and requested increased assistance for Israel every year, from \$2.55 billion when she took office to \$3.1 billion in FY2013, a nearly 20 percent increase.”

Clinton’s efforts to strengthen defense programs for Israel have included upgrading Patriot missiles and the Iron Dome system, and helping to equip Israel with the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

HillaryClinton.com proudly states that Prime Minister Netanyahu credited the US’ “unprecedented” security cooperation with Israel during her tenure.

Clinton, the site states, also “led international efforts to pass UN Security Council Resolution 1929, imposing the harshest sanctions on Iran in history.” Her 2012 negotiations helped achieve a ceasefire in Gaza and end Hamas rocket attacks. She accused the UN Human Rights Council of a “structural bias against Israel;” criticized the Goldstone Report as “one-sided;” and ensured that the US blocked UN Security Council resolutions for Palestinian statehood.

“Hillary personally intervened to ensure that the Democratic Party platform and the Methodist Church defeated BDS measures,” said Whitlock. “Hillary knows that Israel’s security is essential to America’s security.”

Rowe said that perhaps most importantly, we want a president who respects the other - for we were once strangers in Egypt. “We want a president with empathy and who embodies the concept of b’tzelem elohim - that we are all created in the image of God,” she said. “That is not Donald Trump.”

Goldenberg agreed. “Trump says he can fix everything by himself, demonizes anyone who doesn’t look like him, makes fun of a reporter’s disability, tells women their worth is measured only by their looks, incites his supporters to racist and anti-Semitic violence, and demeans a military family,” she said.

Whitlock asked if Trump is someone we want in the White House. “Do we want him serving as a role model for our children, and making decisions for us and our country?”

These local Jewish women feel that Hillary Clinton has the experience, the temperament, and the wisdom to be the next president. “Friends from across the political spectrum are alarmed that the GOP has nominated a bigoted candidate who dog-whistles racist and anti-Semitic messages to the alt-right,” said Goldenberg.

Goldenberg, Rowe and Whitlock are inviting others to volunteer, attend a “Massachusetts Jewish Community for Hillary” event, or work to get out the vote ([www.hillaryclinton.com](http://www.hillaryclinton.com)).

***Jill Goldenberg is on the National Steering Committee of Jewish Women for Hillary. Cindy Rowe and Linda Whitlock are Co-Chairs of Mass. Jewish Community for Hillary.***



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# Eight points for 8th graders who are considering college

By Larry Dannenberg  
CEO, [www.CollegeSolutions.com](http://www.CollegeSolutions.com)

Getting started early by talking about college with your child will not only help prepare them for the process of finding the right one, but will also help he/she to discover interests and passions that will lead them toward an ultimate career path.

It all starts with getting involved early in academics, extracurriculars and college research. Here are some tips for how to get started while your child is in middle school:

## 1. Talk about college

Set expectations that your child will go to college, and that there are lots of colleges to choose from. Talk to your child about his/her interests and how they might translate into a college major and career.

## 2. Choose a high school, if you have a choice

Many families have a choice of where to send their children for high school: private, public, charter, or governor's school. Explore the academic and non-academic programs that each offers, the different grading systems, average SAT or ACT scores of students, and the colleges that graduates ultimately attend. Find a high school that will support your child's interests and dreams.

## 3. Understand the grading system

High schools have different policies for course selection and grading. Some schools do not "weight" grades, so an "A" in the hardest course looks the same as an "A" in the easiest. Colleges will not realize this; they see an "A" as an "A." Some high schools limit which courses students can take, depending on how they performed in that subject the prior year. Understand the high school's system.

## 4. Help your child choose classes

Grades are the most crucial application element for admission decisions. Colleges consider the rigor of student courseloads, and want to see students taking increasingly difficult courses each year. Colleges expect students to take:

- Math: every year, and the more rigorous the better, as long as you receive a "B" or better.
- English: all four years
- History: all four years
- Science: every year, and at least two years of a lab science

• Foreign language: Many colleges require at least two years of a language for admission, and many require a foreign language for college graduation.

Your child will need to satisfy more than these basic high school graduation requirements in order to succeed in college.

## 5. Get savvy about college costs

College financial aid is based on the prior, prior year (e.g., for a high school senior, aid is based on the family's tax returns from the child's sophomore year), so developing a strategy now and managing your income and assets early can pay off.

Look up the "Cost of Attendance" (tuition, fees, room, and board) for your state schools, and any private schools your child would consider. Use the "net price calculator" on college websites to obtain an estimate of what you will have to pay. If your family is not considered need-based, there are other sources of money. Type "scholarship" in the search box on each college website to explore merit money offered.

## 6. Encourage your student to read, read, and read some more

The best preparation for the SAT and ACT is reading.

## 7. Define your passion and make summers count

Help your child find his/her passions. Explore ways to get involved doing something they love. Don't let them waste their limited time. Summer experiences should be fun and meaningful, but serve a purpose: avoid "teen tours" or "mission trips" to other countries where students are more tourists than active participants.

Many summer programs have deadlines in late fall or early in the spring semester, so get a head start on summer plans. Community service can also enhance one's skill set or help develop new skills.

## 8. Develop good study habits and don't wait to get help

Nearly every child needs help with time management, as well as organizational and study skills. Addressing these issues now is easier than when the work becomes more challenging. Set up a quiet place for your child to do homework and help him/her get into a routine. If you or your child think they may need help in a class, find another high school student, a local college student, or a tutor to help. If you suspect your child has learning differences, have testing done now so that your child enters high school with a well-structured learning program that works.

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*Teens at CTeen Newton, a project of Beth Menachem Chabad, baked chocolate chip cookies and delivered them to the Newton Police Department. Lieutenant Bruce Apotheker, together with other officers, met the teens at the station and gave them an extensive tour. CTeen is an international club where Jewish teens learn about themselves and their heritage while giving back to the community. CTeen is open to all local Jewish teens regardless of affiliation. For more info on CTeen or to get involved, visit: [www.CTeenNewton.com](http://www.CTeenNewton.com)*

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# Back to School Time, and Question Two on the Massachusetts Ballot

By Sheila Decter

Executive Director, the Jewish Alliance for Law & Social Action

It's September, and parents and children think not only of our fall High Holidays, but the beginning of school and the prospects for a good educational year. "The more schooling, the more wisdom," states Avot 2:7, and indeed, education is among our greatest of Jewish values.

JALSA (The Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action) is actively opposing Question Two on the ballot on November 8, which that would lift the charter school cap in Massachusetts, allowing up to 12 new charter schools every year.

Under the terms of the ballot initiative, the schools could open in any community, without local school committee control, with no meaningful restrictions on the number of such schools in any one community, and no restrictions on how much money they could drain from the local school district responsible for all children.

To give some idea of what that means in dollars, districts are already losing \$450 million this year alone with the current cap. Amounts range by community. For example, Boston loses over \$35 million, Cambridge almost \$12 million, Medford, Brockton and Framingham over \$4 million, Plymouth over \$6.5 million, Worcester \$22 million. Our children can not afford to lose even more.

Public education is a cornerstone of American democracy, and of Judaism.

Corporate charter school proponents love to talk about the social justice implications of charter schools. "Charter Schools," they say, "allow poor people the option of great schools, no matter where they live." If that were dispositive, JALSA might agree. We are an organization with social justice concerns at our very core. We strive for public policies that will make our communities more just. We know that there is much work to be done in helping educators meet their goals.

Unfortunately, charter schools deplete the funds available for the children most in need. In August, the NAACP expressed concerns

about punitive disciplinary policies, fiscal mismanagement, and conflicts of interest at charter schools, and called for a moratorium on their expansion.

Our regional NAACP has raised concerns about the lack of local control of charters, the excessively high rate of discipline - including suspension and expulsion of minority students - and the various impediments to the number of special need/s, low income, and English

language learners typically admitted. In some years, out-of-school suspensions at charters reached more than 60 percent.

JALSA is often asked, "aren't charter schools public schools?" According to the August 30 Washington Post, charter schools need to be understood as private corporations, notwithstanding that the money comes from taxpayer dollars. The schools are privately run, often without public transparency on policies, and not accountable to the communities whose taxes fund them. Over 60 percent of charter

schools in Massachusetts have no parent representative on their boards.

Ballot initiatives are a very difficult way to set public policy. Voters are not being asked if they like the general concept of charters, or a particular charter. Voters are asked here to determine this major public policy; shall we allow 12 schools to be opened each year without local control, using public funds, to educate a selected portion of the community, irrespective of the fiscal consequences for the rest of the students? Mayor Walsh of Boston, who has supported charter schools, believes this proposal goes way too far. The Boston City Council has voted to oppose it, and almost 100 school committees in Massachusetts have passed resolutions against it.

JALSA believes that the quality of public education is a core social justice matter deserving our attention. It is the beginning of the school year, and we are about to celebrate Rosh Hashanah. It is a good time for resolutions to do more work on social justice. We welcome Shalom Magazine readers to help us educate voters on the serious implications of this ballot issue. Write us at [jalsaoffice@gmail.com](mailto:jalsaoffice@gmail.com) and let us know how you might help.



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# THE AMAZING BOTTLE DANCERS

By Brian Jeffries

Michael Pasternak, the owner of Pasternak Productions, a company that plans programs for special events, needed something different for his own wedding. He wanted to add an unexpected spark - a touch of fun, but also a touch of Jewish tradition. The Amazing Bottle Dancers were born.

Little did he dream that the presentation he created for his own reception would become so successful, that he now has separate troupes based in cities across the country that have performed at countless weddings, bar mitzvahs, and other simchas over the past the past six years. Perhaps a trend was started, because old-fashioned Jewish weddings are making a comeback. Why not? They're not only filled with beautiful symbolism, but they can be even more romantic than anything you've ever imagined. The good news is, it doesn't have to be either or. You can have a very contemporary wedding, with the hottest band or DJ playing incredible Motown, Swing and Pop, with just a few touches of tradition as well.

Enter...The amazing bottle dancers. Everyone truly marvels at this incredible dance, as open bottles of wine are balanced atop the "rabbis" hats! Capping it all off is a wonderful hora, featuring authentic Klezmer music, which is sure to transport everyone back to the old country.

"We've definitely struck a chord," Pasternak said, "and on a variety of levels. At b'nai mitzvahs, for example, people are realizing that after spending so much time coming up with a 'theme', they've lost sight as to what it is that everyone is really there to celebrate." He summed it up nicely: "Too much 'bar' and not enough 'mitzvah' isn't good for your simcha."

Fans of The Amazing Bottle Dancers seem to say something in common: "Of all the things we had at our event, you were what people were talking about!" They're also a big hit in the Orthodox community.



"We are very proud," Pasternak said, "that we have become the highlight of the events at which we've appeared. Think about it: You can have a magnificent wedding at a five-star hotel, for example, complete with white glove service, gorgeous chandeliers and incredible food, but if the guests aren't having fun...what's the point?"

Jokingly, he added, "I don't think people will be calling you the day after your event to say they had the best time because the 'chair covers' were the nicest they'd ever seen!"



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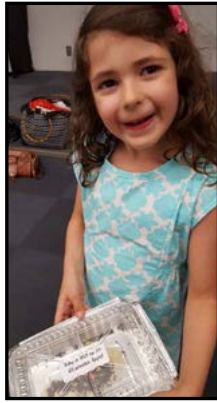









# CHALLAH Bake



*The Challah Bake and Storytime (organized by The Brookline Chai Center) took place on September 2 at the Coolidge Corner Library, and was enjoyed by close to 100 children and adults. With music, stories and challah baking, fun was had by all!*

# Repentance, Prayer and Charity Are Not Jewish!

*By Rabbi Joel E. Hoffman*

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are ten days that are often called the “Ten Days of Repentance.” According to both the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur liturgy, the activities one should engage in during these days are called teshuvah, tephillah and tzedakah, which are often translated as repentance, prayer and charity - even the Orthodox prayer book by Artscroll translates these terms as such. However, in actuality, repentance, prayer and charity are very different from the Jewish terms teshuvah, tephillah and tzedakah.

According to Webster’s dictionary, “Repentance” means regret and contrition for sins or failure to do good, and it includes the intent to begin anew. There is also the connotation in this word that through sinning one becomes bad, but through repentance one becomes good again.

Teshuvah, however, means something totally different. In order to explain Teshuvah, one must first understand that the word “sin” is also a non-Jewish concept. In Judaism one does not sin; rather, an improper action is a “chait,” which means his/her action was not congruent with G-d’s will and, thus, s/he is “off the mark.” Therefore, teshuvah, which literally means return, is the returning to the proper way. By doing a chait, the person never became bad, s/he just went off the path by doing not right. It is a fine distinction, but an important one. Thus, the concept of teshuvah teaches that no matter how far off the proper path a Jew goes, s/he is always able to do teshuvah and return.

“Prayer” connotes the idea of supplication and petition, in which one prays to a god to grant requests. But according to Judaic tradition, this is a very, very limited portrayal of prayer. Tephillah, on the other hand, means connection and being united with G-d. Thus, whereas the purpose of prayer is to make requests from G-d, the purpose of tephillah is to connect with G-d. That is not to say we do not make requests from G-d, but praising, requesting and thanking are just lower-level modes of tephillah, of which the true purpose is to connect with G-d.

“Charity” means gratuitous benefactions for the poor, while tzedakah means justice. How charity and tzedakah differ in application is that charity is optional, while tzedakah is obligatory. Additionally, the theology behind charity is that all of one’s money is one’s own, whereas the theology behind tzedakah is that everything a person has is because of G-d’s will. An implication of this is G-d has given everyone more money than s/he really needs. This is so we can have the opportunity to do a mitzvah by giving the excess (i.e., 10 percent) to needy causes, where the giving is an obligatory and just behavior.

During what is so-called the “Ten Days of Repentance” in English, let’s not engage in the non-Jewish activities of repentance, prayer and charity, but in the Jewish practices of teshuvah, which is returning to the right path, tephillah, which is connecting to G-d through prayer, and zedakah, which is acting justly with the money we have.

L’Shanah Tovah!

(This d’var torah was based on a talk by Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, z”l)

*Rabbi Joel E. Hoffman teaches Middle School Science and 6th grade Hebrew School, and writes on Jewish themes.*



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# Perspective

**By Dr. Rebecca Housel**



I write a blog with over one-million readers. According to Google Analytics, those readers come from 70 different countries around the world. Including remote regions like Easter Island and Tuvalu. How? I'm an author and editor in a pop culture book series sold in more than nine languages. As a result, I get requests for quotes and interviews from newspapers and magazines all over the world. And, while it's

true writers always write what we know, we still sometimes forget who's watching....

The first rule of any creative pursuit, including writing, is to know your audience. My audience is an intelligent American lay audience with high school educations up to grade 11 or higher. At least, that's how the publisher puts it.

But what happens when the initial audience for a book, TV show or movie suddenly expands? American ideas of humor, beauty, even right and wrong, are not always shared by the rest of the world. Nor, can it be.

Academics consider the Western World to share a general postmodern social attitude. What that basically means is that, most of the civilized world values the individual above all else. It's part of the philosophy I profess on my blog and in forthcoming books:

"People matter more than problems."

But, that's not exactly true in every country, is it??? I just read an article today about concentration camps for witches in Ghana. Yes, you read that right...witches. Of course, the supposed "witches" are all women. About 800 of them. Many with children. As much as we all wish magic existed in our world, there are no witches. These women are simply being marginalized and bullied by men in their communities. Greed is the usual reason. But that surely does not comfort the woman who escaped her abusive husband, remarried and was five months pregnant when her ex found her and beat her until she lost the child because he claimed to have had a dream that she was a witch. That's how she ended up living in a mud hut with no clean water, no husband, and no baby.

Now, I ask you, how do you suppose people who believe in witches might feel about an episode of South Park? Or a video game like Grand Theft Auto? How about a movie like Mel Gibson's Passion of the Christ???

Can you see the problem? Or, is your perspective too limited as well? As American Jews, we forget who's watching. We forget that our relatively cushy, safe lives are not equivalent to Jews living in other countries, including Israel. We forget that, when we don't support Israel, or Jews in general, other people outside of our community will see it as an agreement with anti-Semitic rhetoric, particularly prevalent in news media, especially from European countries like Britain.

In fact, the article about Ghana was published in Express, a U.K. publication. Interestingly, Ghana was once under British rule. They were known as the "Gold Coast" until 1957. Much of the current problems in Ghana can be traced back to its British invasion. And, if you think that Jews have nothing in common with the people of Ghana, you're dead wrong.

It was Britain, after all, that stamped "J's" in Jewish passports and sent thousands upon thousands of Jews fleeing from the Nazis to their deaths. It was the British who came up with the word "appeasement." And, it was the British who had invaded the Middle East, just as they did in India, in Ghana, and many, many other countries all over the world. They were not happy about "giving" Israel back to the Jews either. Because, since 1150 A.D., Britain has been going out of their way to persecute and polarize Jews. If you aren't familiar with your history, that was when the "blood libel" began. It's continued on today through popular culture. And not just in film's like Mel Gibson's

fictional Passion.

As technology brings our world closer and closer together, it's good to remember that not everyone sees things in the same way--yet everyone now has the ability to see the same things. Even amongst our own population here in the States, there is a great divide in perspective, as the upcoming Presidential election proves. It's important then, as Rosh Hashanah approaches, that American Jews show solidarity with Israel by not participating in ANY negative rhetoric surrounding Jews or our homeland. Part of why anti-Semitism is on the rise globally is because within our own community, Jews are divided. If we do not strive to repair that divide, Hitler will have succeeded. And, we will have helped him.

The year 5777 is upon us. In Kabbalah, those numbers add up to good things. But, good things can only happen when good people make it happen. That's your job for the year ahead:

Be good. Speak good. Do good.

L'shana tova....

*Dr. Rebecca Housel is an award-winning professor of writing, and taught pop culture, philosophy and film for more than 20 years. Today, she is trademarked as the #PopCultureProfessor and is a nationally-recognized speaker. Housel's books are sold in nine languages and 70 countries. You can find her blog at [RebeccaHousel.com](http://RebeccaHousel.com)*

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## I have felt anti-Semitism up close

By *Jeremy Tibbetts, [jjtippet@umass.edu](mailto:jjtippet@umass.edu)*

Yom Kippur is a time of Divine Immanence: we are in such proximity to G-d, who descends from the angelic realm to be closer to us, that we are able to viewed directly. Not only is this why we are encouraged to acknowledge and repent our transgressions from the past year, but it is also why the word teshuva literally means “return.”

Sometimes when we upset or harm the people closest to us, it is us asking in a misguided way for space. We can be vulnerable when we are close to those we care about and know care about us. When we are still processing and unable to share, we can tend to push away those who we might really seek the most. The High Holidays give us a chance to return to a place of comfort, and recenter our relationship to G-d and to our communities.

I have felt anti-Semitism up close. I have had change thrown at me as students advised each other to “watch how fast he’ll get it.” I have led meetings where pictures of me were taken and distributed, and captioned with “Jews trying to take over the world again.” I have been excluded from projects because I am a Zionist. UMass students have asked me where my horns are.

Over my first two and a half years on campus, quiet incidents like these have become a part of my life. It was not until last winter that the first swastikas appeared on our campus. When I first published pictures from Snapchat of people playing beer pong with a swastika against a Jewish star, many students shared the pictures, but nothing happened. People came forward to me and explained how they had heard the kosher dining area called “Kikes’ corner,” and how they had stopped wearing Hebrew jewelry around campus.

Hearing these shared stories showed me that my experiences were part of a larger such campus dynamic. Seeing that the university had no involvement nor posed any solutions made me for the first time realize that our community was virtually alone on campus.

Swastikas began to appear weekly the following semester. They were carved so deeply into bathroom stalls and doors that some of them had to be removed. I saw how greatly this affected our community when on a Friday night, a woman none of us had met pretended that she lived at Hillel and wanted to be let into the living area. I held a freshman as she cried and screamed that she wasn’t safe here, and that she wanted to go home.

While we have since partnered with the University on solidarity events and bias trainings, none of us feel settled, or know when the next incident will occur.

It is important for me to share two points regarding the impact of these incidents on my own identity. The first is that we as Jews are both alone, and not alone. We are alone in that our integration into American society is in many ways unprecedented, and it is surely an absolute gift that I was born into this generation of American Jews. As for the second point, the cushiness of American Jewry can allow us to forget about global anti-Semitism (which is not only real, but in some places prevalent and violent). To be a Jew can often be reduced to kashrut, tefillah, and Shabbat.

If we ignore the brilliant and fundamental ethical calls of Judaism, that our G-d is the G-d “who guards the orphan and widow, who loves the stranger, providing food and clothing,” or that Abraham had the audacity to scrutinize that G-d, “the Judge of all the world, won’t do justice?”, we are losing crucial aspects of our identity. It is Judaism’s belief in humanity and humane action that defines us as a global movement. Our faith, rituals, and culture beg us to stand for those who are oppressed today.

The swastika is a symbol of white supremacy, not purely anti-Semitism, and Jews remember all too well that we have been white supremacy’s greatest target. This leads to my second point: Jews must own our identity. While many of us are white, and as white Americans are complicit in how whiteness affects minorities, we need to leverage that identity to change modern society.

My Judaism is, among many other things, a channel for me to critique the function of whiteness in American society, and to dismantle oppression. If we cannot take this responsibility seriously, we are not living up to our Jewish heritage.

These are auspicious times. G-d is reaching down toward us, desperate to connect. May we strive to connect to G-d unabashedly, living up to our understanding of Judaism’s ritual and ethical obligations, and usher in a Messianic age where the Divine spark in all people can be loved and honored.

*Jeremy Tibbetts is a senior at UMass Amherst studying Public Health. He is a member of Hillel International’s inaugural student cabinet.*



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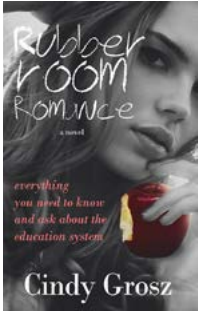
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# Why the questions of “Who shall and who shall not” are important this November



**By Cindy Grosz**

During the month of October, we can be included in over 25 festive meals, even more visits to shuls, and in quite a bit of discussion about what to do on Election Day.

The choices seem clear. We must vote. Sitting out is not an option. We must know everyone on each ballot, regardless of their positions on a local, state or federal level. Jewish votes, Jewish money and Jewish activism cannot be taken for granted as a

one-party option.

Just because someone is Jewish does not mean they support Jewish concerns. And, we must not forget, Israel is not our only issue. We as Americans are concerned about the economy, national security, education, Obamacare (Healthcare) and all the other items listed in surveys shared in the media and when pollsters randomly question citizens. Will Jews vote for Donald Trump?

If Jews “vote their conscience,” I believe that the answer is yes. Why? I feel it is simple....

Compare the platforms of both the Democratic and Republican parties, and how each convention handled anti-Semitism, the Boycott, Divest and Sanctions movement, the Iran nuclear deal discussion, and consider how Israeli flags were burned in Philadelphia. Hillary Clinton’s actions against Israel have been clearly documented, including in the emails that were published in which she expressed her anti-Semitic views.

Democratic vice presidential candidate Tim Kaine did not attend the congressional visit of Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu last year, even when many in his party did. He supports the Iran nuclear deal, the BDS movement, the Common Core Curriculum, which distorts Israel maps, and he tries to bias statements by some who claim the Holocaust never existed, which affect opinions that incite anti-Semitism worldwide.

There are more Jewish Republican candidates for nationwide offices than ever before, and all have pro-Israel platforms and histories of positive actions.

For example, New York is making history this year. Congressman Lee Zeldin, and candidates David Gurfein and Phil Rosenthal are all running for the House of Representatives, the first time three Jewish Republicans are running from one state. Rosenthal is the first Orthodox Jew running as a Republican, trying to win the seat currently held by another Jew, Jerry Nadler, who voted for the Iran deal and has said nothing about the Democratic platform or the flag burning in Philly. I was fortunate to spend a week in Cleveland during the Republican National Convention in July. My experience was that Jews from all backgrounds were made to feel comfortable, both in and around the convention center and surrounding areas.

The Democrats are no longer the only party for the Jews. Yarmulkes are worn everywhere, in meetings, at the arena. I saw several men wearing yarmulkes on staff in the center, and networking in the local restaurants and at private parties and fundraisers.

Rabbi Yossi Friedman and his wife run the Chabad Center of Downtown Cleveland. They have a full shul, and have set up davening and meals by “Chef Dave” for the entire week.

I had the pleasure of meeting with reporters from multiple Jewish news outlets, and was featured on a live broadcast with Micah Halperin from JBS-TV, Cleveland’s own Jewish radio network, and with reporters for the Cleveland Jewish Journal.

Jews have serious options. The Republican Jewish Coalition, based out

of Washington with offices nationwide, is one of the fastest growing organizations in the world. In Cleveland, their private party was one of the hottest invitations to receive. They had so many elected officials attend, including House Speaker Paul Ryan, Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, senators Orrin Hatch, Nikki Haley, Governors Susana Martinez, Jan Brewer, Scott Walker and many congressman, organization and business leaders, including Sheldon and Mimi Adelson.

**Never Trump?**

When Ted Cruz said, “Vote Your Conscience,” most understood what he meant. Do you support the continuous disasters that our country

has experienced over the past 8 years? Do you support the continuation of the rise of Islamic radical terrorism while watching the Israeli-American relationship slowly disintegrate? Do you ignore the rise of groups like the New Panther Party, Black Lives Matter and Occupy Wall Street, that have members and rallies that call out Jews? Do you support a failing educational system, that your tax dollars pay for, that do not support school

choice for quality education, evaluate educators fairly, always offer the best special education services in private Jewish day schools, and as previously mentioned, distort Jewish facts in classrooms from Pre-K through graduate universities?

Who is the candidate for you? Research where they get money from, their previous employment, influences, and if they held office, their previous voting records. Let’s make a positive difference this November.

**Cindy Grosz is the host of Cindy’s Corner Radio Show on Madi-sonsCPC, author of Everything You Need to Know and Ask About the Education System and a Pro-Israel and Education Activist. Her new book Rubber Room Romance is available on Amazon, Kindle and Barnes and Noble.**



**David Gurfein, Congressman Lee Zeldin, Cindy Grosz and Dr. Philip Rosenthal**





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## The Deep Roots of Cannabis in Torah

“...if one’s field is sown with cannabis...”  
Talmud: Masechet Menachot 15:2



By Rabbi Yosef P. Glassman, MD

Cannabis has been a hot topic in the medical field, as well as in the general public, for at least the past 5 years. But the ancient drug is having a tough time losing its stigma.

Legal throughout the world in the 1920s, it fell into disfavor in the 1930s, perceived by the US government as a Mexican-introduced threat, and was thus re-named in accordance with its Mexican name, marijuana. The recent renewal of this natural medicine, however, has sparked a new debate on its safety and general use. Though legal in California since 1996, Israel has been the leader in propelling the medicinal leaf to the fore around the world since 1999 - essentially making the advancement of cannabis a Jewish cause.

Indeed, President Nixon made a sarcastic note of the inordinate amount of Jewish proponents of its legality in the US of the 1960s, when simultaneously, Israeli chemists in Jerusalem discovered THC as its active ingredient. Since 1970, however, the US has closeted the drug by classifying it as a Schedule 1 substance (“addictive and having no legitimate medical use”), making it difficult to research its effects in its natural state. Thus, even hemp, the industrial fiber derived from the stem of cannabis, was also banned in the US, despite the fact that George Washington grew the plant, and the Constitution was written upon its scrolled parchment.

Perhaps to no surprise, the green Sinai native herb has been used throughout the ages by physicians to treat respiratory and other ailments, as the Rambam describes in his medical writings (“qanab” in Arabic, as confirmed by medieval French commentator Rashi); indeed, recent studies have shown cannabinoids to be potent bronchodilators.

Additionally, archeological remains found recently near Beit She-mesh show that cannabis resin was used as anesthesia during childbirth; its potent anti-pain and anti-inflammatory effects are well established in the medical literature.

The Israeli government, realizing cannabis’ relative safety and

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# The Deep Roots of Cannabis in Torah

potential, allows for robust research. The seeded drug with Talmudic roots is being quickly mainstreamed by Israeli researchers and the current Minister of Health, Rabbi Ya'akov Litzman of United Torah Judaism. Oddly, the expanded use of cannabis is one of the few political issues in the Israeli government that unifies both the right and the left of the political spectrum.

As mentioned earlier, the potent intoxicant and most active ingredient in cannabis, THC, was discovered in Jerusalem, in 1964 by Dr. Rafael Mechoulam and his colleagues. His team later discovered the natural cannabinoid that the brain produces, termed anandamide. Scientists have, in parallel, discovered that indeed, the body possesses an entire endo-cannabinoid system that actively works at multiple levels, including bone structure, eye pressure, bronchodilation, mother-fetus communication and immune function, to name a few.

Researchers in Tel Aviv have recently demonstrated that cannabinoids, THC in particular, may actually have *neuro-protective* effects in the setting of trauma. Far from damaging the brain, THC may even protect it, according to current Israeli research. In fact, there is growing evidence that cannabinoids work counterintuitively to preserve the brain's memory over the long term. Fascinatingly, studies documenting mental status tests of cannabis users over time show no difference when they are compared with non-users.

Unshackled by the DEA, the Rambam surely felt quite comfortable with the use and discussion of cannabis, as has been mentioned with ease and frequency in Talmud. At several points, Moshe Rabeinu, as instructed by the Infinite, once provided the Jewish people with clear instructions on cannabis planting and its subsequent use, around the laws of *kilyaim* and *shatnez*. One must wait three years after a cannabis field is harvested before planting a grape vineyard, because of cannabis' deep roots. The specified plants, amongst others, cannot be mixed according Jewish law.

*Daas HaZakenim*, a collection of Talmud commentary from 12th and 13th century France and Germany, proclaims that cannabis, not the typical flax, were the very stalks behind which the spies traveling into Jericho were hidden by Rachav.

Indeed, the use of cannabis in fabrics, Shabbos wicks, and sukkah building has been a debated and discussed topic in writings in Tose-

fos, the Shulchan Aruch, Sefer HaChinuch, Ben Ish Chai, and Magen Avraham, amongst others, given that its growing properties are similar to that of flax. The Shulchan Aruch even praises cannabis as a finer choice for wicks of the Shabbos candle.

The Tur carefully exhorts Jews against reciting the Shema within *dalet amos* (four arm breadths) of a bowl where cannabis is soaking in water, due to its pungent odor. Rabbis even once excluded cannabis as food on Pesach, not due to the THC, but rather due to the *kitniyot* prohibition, as the possibility of making a bread flour may have existed. Most recently, however, HaRav Chaim Kanievisky, a prominent orthodox rabbi in Israel, made a *caveat* for this prohibition in medical cases, due to the plant's healing scent.

Not surprisingly, there is little evidence that cannabis was being consumed by Jews recreationally - since recreational intoxication is far from a Torah value, save Purim - yet, the former Chief Rabbi of Egypt, the Radbaz, does mention its intoxicating effects. He surely does not attest to personal experience, but he describes the leaves as eliciting "simchah.") Modern research confirms that the nucleus accumbens and the limbic system, responsible for pleasure, is particularly stimulated in the brain upon consumption. The OU recently certified its certain medical products for oral consumption and, as mentioned above, Israel-based Tikkun Olam, a Torah-minded cannabis grower, is producing chewing gum for children with intractable seizures.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that children can take the drug in atypical medical situations, since, medically speaking, cannabis is safer than aspirin, acetaminophen and, surely, oxycodone, which can stop one's breathing. While one can easily overdose when passing the 4g mark of Tylenol, it requires 65 kilograms of cannabis to overdose - yes, kilograms. (Please do not try this at home.)

While the potential for abuse surely exists, as it does with any drug from nasal spray to naproxen, cannabis, being an important part of the Oral Tradition, surely merits a second and even a third look from a Jewish lens.

**Dr. Yosef P. Glassman, IDF Reserve Lieutenant, mohel, and Harvard trained geriatrician, is the CEO of Hadarta.org, which integrates Torah concepts to applied geriatric medicine.**



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# **AGENDA**

## **Events at Vilna Shul** 18 Phillips Street, Beacon Hill

**Thursday, October 20, 6-7:30 p.m.** *Scotch and Schmooze* in the Sukkah, a networking happy hour event. Come. Drink. Nosh. Network. \$36/person, \$18/young adult.

**Wednesday, November 1, 7 p.m.** Book Premiere: Alice Hoffman. Author Alice Hoffman reads excerpts from her newest book, Faithful, out on November 1. Admission to this event includes a signed copy of the book. \$30/person.

**Saturday, December 31, 5 p.m.** *Chanukiah on the Hill* Culmination Event. *Join the Vilna* is attempting to break the Guinness Book World Record for most menorahs/chanukiahs lit in one spot! The current record of 1,000 is held by a congregation in New Jersey. Make a chanukiah prior to New Year's Eve and drop it off at one of our drop-off locations! In partnership with FirstNight Boston.

**For information and registration for all the above events, please visit [vlnashul.org](http://vlnashul.org).**

### **Sara Shamir in Boston**

**November 6 at 7:30 p.m., William H. Lincoln School, Brookline** Hakesher and Ten Li Yad are co-producing an Israeli show in Boston. The standup comedy evening will feature Sara Shamir's very funny observations about typical Israeli situations, as well as on the social-political situation in Israel, and relationships in general. Shamir's show has run successfully on international stages through many years. The show is in Hebrew. For tickets and information, call 617-738-5038.

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The mikvah will be open to everyone, not just members of the community, or only Orthodox Jews. It is for all Jewish women to have the beautiful experience of the mikvah. This project is sponsored in part by a grant from Mikva USA.

Also at the Chai Center, an impressive ark was recently erected. Temple Beth Emunah of Brockton lovingly donated the ark to the Chai Center, with the hopes that it would continue to be used in a vibrant and growing Jewish community. The ark heightens the Shabbat and weekday service experience.

The Chai Center offers classes and activities throughout the year. During the High Holidays, engaging services are offered with meaningful explanations, and delicious Kiddush meals follow every service. All are welcome to attend regardless of background or affiliation.

This year, unique family services will be offered for families with young children. Complimentary High Holiday seats and Hebrew School classes are offered for new families and individuals.

For more information or to make your reservation, please contact Chai Jewish Center at 781-821-2227 or email [JewishCanton@gmail.com](mailto:JewishCanton@gmail.com).

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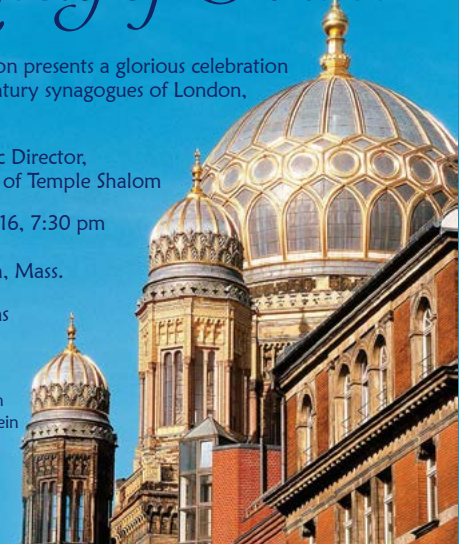
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# New Year, New Life: A (Re-) Conversion Story for Rosh Hashanah

By Alma Gottlieb

What does it mean to celebrate a new year?

For many Jews, the period surrounding Rosh Hashanah offers a culturally sanctioned opportunity to rethink the past year's successes and pleasures, as well as frustrations and regrets.

That calendrical structure offers some helpful emotional boundaries. For example, it allows any pain and guilt we might feel about our actions or reactions of the past to be restricted to a year, and avoids letting negative emotions get out of control.

But sometimes, our lives take a turn for the more ambitious, and circumstances demand a longer-term look at our past and future. Such is the case with Carlos Spinola.

This month, Carlos Spinola, age 52, just completed his formal conversion to conservative Judaism. The path that led him to this life-changing ceremony is a long one. Depending on how far back we want to look, we can say that it dates back to two years ago, when Carlos (along with eight others) enrolled in a weekly course for potential converts to Judaism at Temple Emanu-el in Providence.

But the seed was planted much earlier.

Carlos emigrated from the Cape Verde Islands to the US in 1994. Soon after arriving, he encountered Jews - he thought, for the first time. One thing led to another, and Carlos found his interest in Judaism piqued. He became trained by Rabbi Ethan Adler (spiritual leader of the Congregation Beth David in Narragansett) as a volunteer working with elderly Jews at senior citizens' homes and centers around Rhode Island. That proved a tremendously fulfilling experience, and Carlos delved more deeply into the Jewish community.

But even that twenty-two-year journey pales by comparison with the long arc of history that surely underlay the curiosity and attraction that Carlos felt in first meeting American Jews.

Even for Ashkenazi Jews who know little about the early history of Sephardic Jews, the name "Spinoza" might ring a bell. One of the most important European philosophers of the early modern period, Baruch Spinoza, is widely credited with helping to usher in the

"Enlightenment" period of Western philosophy and culture.

Part of a Jewish family that fled the anti-Semitism that was ravaging Iberia through the Inquisition (first in Spain, then Portugal) beginning in the late 15th century, Spinoza's ancestors fled the peninsula, and he was raised in Amsterdam. In the 17th century, the comparatively tolerant city was one of the urban centers that helped forge global ties across the Atlantic - in good part, from trans-Atlantic networks created by Sephardic Jews expelled from the Iberian peninsula.

The family name, "Spinoza," has several spellings - including "Spinola." Carlos Spinola likely has roots in some branch of this illustrious family, although he has not yet traced the exact connection.

Although Carlos' conversion ceremony had a certain air of finality to it, like any rite de passage, it was actually the culmination of a three-part process.

As the great folklorist, Arnold van Gennep, pointed out a century ago, all life-cycle rituals contain three basic components: separation (from the community and family); "liminality" (a period of strangeness and creativity, when normal routines may be turned

upside-down); and reintegration (back into the community and family, but with a new identity).

For Carlos Spinola, the period of "separation" began in 2014, when he made the decision to begin formal training in Judaism, with the goal of completing a formal conversion. His "liminal" period encompassed the next two years, when he was neither Catholic (his former religion) nor yet formally Jewish. Last week, Carlos experienced the third and final component to his life-cycle ritual: the formal conversion to Conservative Judaism. In his case, that included a surgical circumcision, a ritual immersion in the mikveh at Temple Emanu-el, a special temple service in honor of his new identity, and the signing of documents attesting to all the above.

But Carlos' life journey back to his family's Jewish identity is by no means stopping with his conversion. His next step? He has already begun paperwork to make Aliyah.

*Alma Gottlieb is a Professor Emerita of Anthropology and Gender and Women's Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and visiting scholar in Anthropology, Brown University. Her website is: [almagottlieb.com](http://almagottlieb.com).*



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# AGENDA

## Wellesley-Weston

Wellesley-Weston Chabad will once again be hosting all High Holiday services, open to the public. RSVPs for services are greatly appreciated. No payment is required for a place to pray for the High Holidays. A kippah and a prayerbook will be waiting for you. Services will be interspersed with explanations and page guidance. In short, you will feel at home. For a schedule and to RSVP, please visit [www.wvjewish.org](http://www.wvjewish.org).

### Happy Ending by Anat Gov

A Staged Reading featuring Nancy E. Carroll, Maureen Keiller, and Karen MacDonald.

November 13 at 7 p.m. at 170 Beacon St. in Boston's Back Bay.

Tickets: \$15-\$25 at [IsraeliStage.com](http://IsraeliStage.com)

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# HERE YOU GO!

As we approached the border which would bring us some respite from the daily grind, I started focusing on the road signage. We were leaving behind distance demarcated as miles, and heading to measurements of kilometers. We were leaving behind English signs, heading towards signs in the French language. We were embarking on what was meant to serve as a fun-filled family weekend, with some learning and culture to boot.

Once we were in Montreal, most of the signs were rather confusing, as French 101 can only get you so far. When looking for a parking spot, I was not sure if our car would still be in its place when we returned. I had to decipher the signs and rely heavily on Google Translate.

While signage that is not in one's native or spoken tongue required much needed attention, I also became curious about the driving signs that had no text. These driving signs were comprised of images that differed from those that I was familiar with. When we wanted to drive in a specific direction, such as left, right, or straight ahead, I had to think twice about whether or not this was allowed.

In the United States, you might see the following when you are considering whether or not to make a turn:



In Montreal, you would see the following instead:



While all of these signs advise the driver whether or not they may proceed in a certain direction, how the signs did that was intriguing to me. On our side of the border, it is not what is allowed; rather it is what is not allowed. No U-turn. No left turn. No right turn on red. In each case, red coloring alerts the drivers to the dangers ahead.

But in Quebec, one might infer the "no's," but the directions were communicated in a positive green light: Drive straight ahead or make a right. Make a left turn. The signs indicate a viable path and direction in which to direct the vehicle. The Canadian model presents opportunities, while American signs only direct away from harm's way.

When it comes to women's roles in the Orthodox community, many conversations and rabbinic responses address where women cannot go and what women cannot do. When one enters a conversation with that mindset, the outcomes will more often be negative, and/or the message will be communicated in a negative manner.

What would happen if we reframed the halachic and societal conversations based on the perspective of whoever designed road signs in Canada? What if we spent less time assuming that women cannot do, and instead went into the conversation with the approach that there are many roles that woman can step into? There are many directions and inroads to make in terms of women's leadership and participation, if we are focused in the right direction.

Not too long ago, it was assumed that women cannot say *kaddish*. I use the word "assumed" intentionally, because most rabbinic authorities had never bothered to properly explore the possibility. Lo and behold, JOFA was able to generate a halachic series that provides strong halachic grounding for "Women Saying Kaddish" in our "Ta Shma" series.

While rabbis may have said "no" to a woman saying *kaddish* as recently as 20 years ago, today many places of worship say "yes," as we have provided over 100 pages of halachic literature that would point halachic authorities in the direction of that "yes."

While it is important to be true to Jewish tradition, *mesorah*, and the legacy of our rich legal infrastructure, perhaps we would be better serving ourselves if we did so in the spirit of our Canadian neighbors, operating from a position of "yes."

*Sharon Weiss-Greenberg, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance (www.jofa.org).*



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