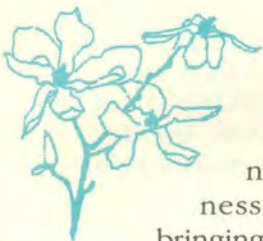


The Outstretched Arm

Vol. IV No. 2

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A Passover Journal



Torah tells us that the night before the departure from the land of Egypt: "It was a night of watchfulness for Adonai for bringing the children of Israel out from the land of Egypt; this same night is a night of watchfulness for Adonai for the children of Israel throughout the generations." (*Exodus 12:42*). The eve of *Pesach* is a night of waiting, a time of anticipation. What are we supposed to be watching for? The dangers that lie ahead? Who of us knows where or how the journey into the desert will end? For those who are ill, the question takes on an urgent meaning.

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The Search for *Hametz*

Hametz comes in many forms. The preparation of the house for Passover may tax my limited physical strength, but the search for bread crumbs is easy compared to cleaning out my head of all that is not spiritually *kosher l'pesach*. The rabbi said that leaven symbolizes the *yetzer ha-ra*, the evil inclination, and getting rid of *hametz* is a way of spiritually purging ourselves. It's not easy. Into what locked cabinet do I put all the pain and struggle that have made the last year so difficult?

Lighting the Candles

On *Pesach*, we not only recite the customary blessing as we light the candles, thanking Adonai for sanctifying our lives, but we also say the *she-hecheyanu*, praising Adonai for sustaining us and for enabling us to reach this day. As I recite the blessing, I realize that too seldom do I acknowledge the ways in which I feel the Divine Presence in my life, even when I am ill.

Karpas

At seders past, I have felt that the salt water in which I dipped the sprigs of parsley was made from my tears. The bondage of illness has seemed at times so overwhelming that tears were the only possible

response. But salt is also a thing of value; because it is a preservative, it is a symbol of permanence, like the covenant that Adonai has made with all of us and each of us. The salt water has a marvelous taste.



Ha Lachma Anya: This is the Bread of Affliction

Did the wise rabbis, who established the form of the seder, know how deeply those words can touch those who are ill? The matzah is not only a reminder of the slavery endured by the Israelites in Egypt, but it symbolizes our own slavery as well. It is an acknowledgement of the suffering we have endured in our lives.



Everyone sitting at the Passover seder is commanded to see themselves as slaves in Egypt, to live and relive the experience, to feel both the terror and the joy as we start out on a journey into the uncharted wilderness. My experience of illness has made it easy for me to summon up the terror of the

continued on the next page

unknown, but what if I haven't the energy to remember the joy?

Yet I know that matzah is also the bread of redemption, for it holds out the promise that, like our ancestors, we can anticipate the exhilaration of spiritual freedom even in the midst of physical bondage. "In every generation, every person should feel as though she or he had actually been redeemed from Egypt."

**Ma Nishtana Halayla
Hazeh Mikol Haleilot?**

Why is this night different from all other nights? At the core of the Passover seder is a question, and it has often seemed to me that although the whole of the Haggadah is devoted to answering that question we each have to provide our own answers, and sometimes even our own questions.

At the same time, the daily struggle of living with illness may make it hard even to ask the *ma nishtanah*, for the pain and struggle can impose a deadening sameness on both the days and the nights that often seems impossible to escape. And what do I do when I realize that the kinds of questions that I want to ask don't seem to have any answers?

I find it a source of great comfort that the Talmud says that any question fulfills the purpose and makes the *ma nishtanah* unnecessary.

**Arba Banim:
The Four Children**

I am the wise child and the wicked child; I am the simple child and the child who does not know how to ask. Is there any wisdom that illness has brought me? I don't know. Does my rage in the face of pain isolate me from the community and thus make me wicked? I hope not. I am the simple child who wants to know if there is any reason why this has happened to me. There is no answer to that

question. And sometimes I am so despairing that even asking any question seems beyond my capability.

**Dayenu: It Would Have
Been Enough**

We sing this song loudly and with exuberant delight, recalling all the miracles that Adonai performed for the children of Israel as they wandered through the desert. But all it takes is a shift in tone, and *dayenu* can become a cry of despair, of pain, of rage. Please let me remember the joy.

**Maror and Haroset: The
Bitter and the Sweet**

At every seder, the experience is different. Sometimes the sharp, almost painful, sting of the *maror* blocks out completely the pleasurable taste of the *haroset*, and my eyes fill with tears. But more often, the sweetness of the *haroset* somehow rises up to overcome the sharpness, and I know that there is also much sweetness in my life, even in the midst of affliction.



**L'Shanah Haba'ah
B'Yerushalayim:
Next Year in Jerusalem!**

Next year can seem so long to wait, and Jerusalem seems so far away. Will I make it there? Sometimes I feel like the ancient Israelites who complained so bitterly at every turn to Moses: "Where are you taking us? When will we get there? But I am willing to set out, learning to focus my attention on the journey.

Tamara M. Green
JHC Board Member

**"Treasure Each Day:
Jewish Teachings
on Living & Dying"
A Week-long Workshop
Scheduled August 7-13**

The Psalmist asks that we may be taught to treasure each day, that we may deepen the heart of wisdom that beats within us. This week-long workshop, co-sponsored by The JHC at Elat Chayyim in upstate New York, offers an opportunity to explore Jewish teachings, traditional liturgical texts associated with death and loss, gratitude and blessings as well as lesser known Jewish prayers that nourish daily awareness of mortality and the precariousness of life. Primary attention will be given to the deepening of daily spiritual practice, offering models for rich Jewish work on issues of finiteness and loss, gratitude and blessing. For more information call (800) 398-2630.

**Rabbinic Roundtable
Meets in New York City**

In the effort to plan an organized approach to developing training initiatives in pastoral care and Jewish healing, a dozen rabbis and other Jewish professionals from around the country met over two days in January to study and review many of the "state-of-the-art" programs designed at the Bay Area Jewish Healing Center over the past four years. Led by Rabbis Amy Eilberg, Nancy Flam and Simkha Weintraub, along with Jewish Healing Center Board and staff members, the group shared and discussed a variety of the educational, pastoral, and spiritual programs developed for individuals and families dealing with illness. From this roundtable a number of models for services, training, publishing, and educational programs were developed.

Introducing David Hirsch



David Hirsch, newly named Director of the National Jewish Healing Center, brings to his work an understanding of the goals of the JHC that comes out of personal experience. During her prolonged illness, his mother turned to other religious traditions to explore what they could offer in responds to her spiritual needs. Now in the years since her death, David has gone back to explore what the traditions of Judaism had to offer, making “leaps of faith;” and now, he says, he comes to find himself reciting the *mi-sheberach* prayer “with intent” for his sister who is ill.

David has wide experience in Jewish communal life and service to the larger community, which he combined for several years with a

career on Wall Street. Former Director of Government Affairs for the Jewish Board of Family and Children’s Services, he acted as Assistant to the Chairman of the New York State Hospital Review and Planning Council and as Executive of the New York State Residential Treatment Facilities (RTF) Coalition. For the past six years he has served as the President of New York Cares, a volunteer clearinghouse in New York City. Currently he is a member of the UJA/Federation Public Policy and Planning and Allocations Committees, and sits on the boards of many Jewish communal organizations.

His vision is to put the work of the JHC on the national Jewish map by building on the models of healing created by Rabbis Nancy Flam and Amy Eilberg at the JHC in San Francisco. He hopes that the national organization will serve not only as “think tank” and laboratory for developing resources for rabbis and health care providers, but will be a way of building *c’lal yisrael*. He finds the goals of the JHC “life-affirming,” and adds that he sees them as a way of finding what he needs in the traditions of Judaism.



What A Difference A Kimono Makes

Recently, I consulted a physician-acupuncturist for help with the lingering side effects of cancer treatment. Instead of a hospital-style gown, I was offered a beautiful, full-length, flowered kimono to wear during the treatment. I felt dignified, dressed, attractive.

For nearly two years I had spent quite a lot of time hanging out in those little blue and white striped gowns they hand you at the medical center. Made of flimsy fabric, these ugly gowns are about as unflattering as possible. Neither here nor there, they leave you wondering if you are wearing a long shirt or a short dress or a funny pajama. After two years of surgery, cancer treatment, and endless MRI and CT scans, just putting on the little blue and white striped robe was sufficient to make me start feeling ill.

I looked up the word “kimono” in the dictionary. It literally means a “thing for wearing.” A kimono then is a “thing for wearing” that does not signify illness, patient status, or dehumanization. Offering kimonos to patients undergoing treatment just might be a powerful low-cost intervention with great benefit for a patient’s sense of well-being.

Roxane Dinkin, PhD
Participant in
JHC Healing Services



Matching Grant From The Nathan Cummings Foundation

We are delighted to announce that The Nathan Cummings Foundation has awarded The Jewish Healing Center a matching grant of \$150,000 a year for three years. Renewal of the second year of the grant is contingent upon our raising a matching amount. Now we have to get busy and call upon our friends and supporters for help in raising matching funds so that the healing work of the JHC can continue to grow as a spiritual force in our Jewish lives. We hope we can count on you for your support.

If you have any questions about our fundraising efforts and how you can help, please contact David Hirsch at the national office in New York, at (212) 969-0030.

Hesed Hevrah: The Lovingkindness Gang

"Eilu devarim she'adam ochel perioteihem ha-olam hazeh vehakeren kayemet lo la'olam haba." "The following are practices which, if one engages in them, will yield immediate interest in this life, and the principle will remain intact in the next life." As the Talmud sees it (*Shabbat 127a*), those *mitzvot* include *kibbud av ve'eim* — honoring one's parents, *gemilut hasadim* — acts of lovingkindness, *bikkur holim* — visiting the sick, and *livayat hameit* — attending the dead.

One of the real joys of hospice work is the privilege of being part of a community of people engaged together in the practice of deeds of lovingkindness. In a society in which comfort is primary, in which instant release from pain is expected if not considered an entitlement, I have had the privilege of spending time with a group of people who choose to offer many hours of their spare time, in the midst of demanding and busy lives, serving the spiritual needs of Jews facing death.

In the fall of 1993, *Kol Hane-shama*, the Jewish Hospice Program of *Ruach Ami*, the Bay Area Jewish Healing Center, launched its volunteer program, the *Hesed Hevrah* -- fondly translated, "The Lovingkindness Gang." We advertised for volunteers in the local Jewish newspaper; and, astoundingly, 29 people -- many more than we could absorb -- arrived for an orientation meeting. With great difficulty, we chose nine extraordinary people.

Things have changed in many of our lives since we began; we have shared births and deaths, moments of deep satisfaction and times of intense frustration, anger and grief. Yet still, we are a community of Jews doing what Jews are supposed to do: not turn the other way

in the face of the suffering of others, but offer ourselves in service to those in need, knowing that someday we, too, will need an outstretched hand. Someday we will need someone to accompany us in our passage through the end of this life. It is fundamental to our Jewishness and our human essence that we choose to walk directly into the territory of suffering, knowing that this is what we are called upon to do.

Listen to how some of the *Hesed Hevrah* volunteers describe their own experiences:

"Driving home from J's, I ponder her predicament. Here is a woman with ovarian cancer that had metastasized to her brain. At the moment there is no discernible cancer in her pelvic region and the tumors in her brain are not growing. She has recovered in a way no one believed she could.

"I first began visiting J. about 9 months ago. The match was an instant success for both of us. We are different from each other. And yet, we are so well matched in this strange world of hospice. I visit, I listen, I talk, I love. J. talks. J. listens. J. loves.

"My experience with this hospice is that of being a friend. Honest, present, dependable -- these are the things I have been called upon to be. To J., I am the Jewish community that she left behind years ago and is overjoyed to reconnect with now. I am the extended family she has not had. The situation that brought us together, her cancer, has brought an honesty and a depth to the relationship that would have taken years in a "normal" friendship. I treasure this. It helps keep me honest. Every week I leave J.'s more peaceful and happy than when I arrived." (N.B.)

Or listen to the words of J. S.,

who was assigned to visit a woman whose brain cancer had spread to the point where she could not speak, and could rarely respond meaningfully to those around her. Imagine meeting such a person for the first time, and coming back week after week, for many months. This client's husband told me many times that he thought J. S. was an angel. "Imagine her coming, week after week, to visit B., and B. couldn't even talk back. She must be an angel."

This is what J. S. says. *"Sitting with a client who could hardly speak, I reflected on what I might hope someone would say to me if I were in such a situation. I tried to imagine what my client might be thinking. Once I said to her, 'It must be hard for you, not being able to express how you feel.' She nodded in agreement. I began exploring a new technique for communicating with someone whose verbal abilities were limited.*

"As I've done with those I have visited who were able to speak, I sought to find a unique connection. While my client had limited abilities, I reminded myself that she could hear and see. Often I pointed out the sunlight as it was shining through the window. I would ask her if she could hear the birds singing. It's likely that the sunlight and the birds would have gone unnoticed by me if I hadn't been in a place of quiet awareness to which my client had brought me.

"It was raining on the day of my client's funeral, and I was more aware than ever of the divine source of the rain. The presence of God was among us. God was providing the earth with nourishment as we shared the end of this lovely woman's life on earth.

"The hospice volunteer experience has touched me more deeply than I could have imagined. Being

more aware of the fragility of life, I am also more aware of how precious each moment is. I truly feel the spirit of God is in every breath we take.

"We can reach out to those from whom so many distance themselves. We can give our clients a safe place to share their intimate and often painful thoughts. Maybe their grief won't weigh as heavily on their shoulders if they realize that someone is sharing their lonely place. By opening up our hearts to those we visit, we can share their pain and perhaps comfort them. It might be possible for us to help them see beauty and comfort in death, to sense the gentle embrace of God."

And finally, a tribute from a volunteer to her first client.

"We began our weekly meetings under the clouded veil of a physician's prophecy. 'Give or take,' he said, 'nine weeks' life expect-

ancy.' One year and nine days later, I stood at her graveside and said goodbye to the dancing eyes and fiery red hair that always greeted me with a welcome so wide and so full that it felt like family at its best. Imagine: all this for just showing up every Wednesday at five o'clock.

"Our garden grew . . . time passed and we became friends for sure. Often I watched her suffer and struggle and I came to learn many things that I had thought that I knew already. I was wrong. She made me grow and change and I am a better human being as a result of her life touching mine. This is the power of death as a teacher. I miss her and bless her at the same time." (M.S.)

Dear folks of the *Hesed Hevrah*, The Lovingkindness Gang, you embody the best of what it means to be Jewish, of what it means to be hu-

man. You are compassion, you are openness, you are gratitude. You are God's hands on earth. I hope that when my time comes, I will be attended by people like you. May God bless the work of your hands.

Rabbi Amy Eilberg



**"Sustaining Our Spirits:
A Weekend Retreat
on Healing and
Judaism" Slated -
October 20-22**

The Jewish Healing Center is co-sponsoring a Shabbat retreat with the UAHC-CCAR Commission on Religious Living at the beautiful Brandeis-Bardin Institute in Simi Valley, California. This will be an opportunity for spiritual refreshment, Jewish education and networking. The core staff will include Rabbis Nancy Flam, Amy Eilberg, Jonathan Omer-Man, Peter Knobel and Nancy Wechsler. For more information please call Rabbi Sanford Seltzer at (617) 449-0404.

**Path Breaking
Academic Conference
Planned
November 6 & 7**

The JHC is co-sponsoring an academic conference on Jewish healing with the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. Uniquely situated with a day at each New York campus, the Conference will bring together some of the best contemporary thinkers on healing and Jewish theology, liturgy and traditions. Rabbi Nancy Wiener at HUC is chairing the Conference planning.

Introducing Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin

At different moments in our lives, and for a variety of reasons, we discover the need to focus on the gently insistent demands of our spiritual selves. Illness, our own or that of a loved one, often creates such a moment. What do the traditions of Judaism have to say to us at that moment of need? What questions can they answer? What solace can they provide?

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin, Program Consultant for the Jewish Healing Center, sees healing as a way to explore the larger issue of the role spirituality plays in Jewish life. She describes the function of the JHC as clearing a path to the spiritual self, hidden both within the community and within the individual. The ac-

tivities of The JHC will be a way of building bridges to other arenas of Jewish communal life.

Rabbi Cardin, who is a visiting lecturer at the Jewish Theological Seminary and editor of the biweekly journal *Sh'ma* published by CLAL, believes that one of the ways in which Judaism creates spiritual strength is through the performance of *mitzvot*. She envisions the creation of materials, resources and networks open to all those who are engaged in that exploration: rabbis and those working in the health care professions, those who are ill and those who care for them.



Afraid But Not Alone: Meditation of Psalm 32

1. *A Song of David, of instruction:
Happy is one whose sins are forgiven,
whose transgressions are wiped away.*
2. *Happy is one whose wrongdoing Adonai passes
over,
whose Spirit is without deceit.*
3. *When I kept silent, my bones wore out;
I groaned all day in fear.*
4. *Day and night Your Hand weighed heavily upon
me;
My marrow turned dry, parched as by the heat of
summer,*
Selah.
5. *So now, I will acknowledge transgression,
I will no longer obscure wrongdoing;
Even as I began to say, "I admit my sins before
Adonai,"
You forgave my errors and misdeeds, Selah.*
6. *Let one devoted to You offer this prayer
at those moments when You may be found:
When trials and troubles come,
may they not flood in a deluge of destruction!*
7. *You are my shelter,
You protect me from distress, from enemies,
You surround me with the joy of deliverance,
Selah.*
8. *(You have said:)
"I will teach you Wisdom,
I will illumine the path you must take,
My eye will advise you and guide you."*
9. *Do not be like a horse or a mule who cannot
understand,
who, with a bit and a bridle,
must be restrained during grooming,
so that they do not come too close and attack.*
10. *Many are the troubles of the wicked,
but one who trusts in Adonai
will be enveloped by hessed/lovingkindness.*
11. *Rejoice in Adonai!
Exult, righteous ones!
Shout for joy, all who are upright in heart!*

This is a psalm of thanksgiving for recovery from sickness.

At the start, the patient is in total isolation, trapped in illness, sunk in him/herself, wasting away. Alone, oppressed by sin, but not daring to speak its name, the psalmist watches helplessly as the unforgiving guilt implacably consumes the inner reserves of vigor -- body and soul. Then, in a desperate bid to break out of the

strangling grip of death, the patient determines to confess the sin.

It is also possible that when bad things happen to good people, good people are all too quick to blame themselves. They assume that God wants to punish them. If this is our case, it does not change the facts. It only means that this innocent person threw him/herself on the mercy of Adonai. (v. 5)

The confession was the turning point. Once the patient put the sin -- and the possibility of dying -- out in the open, then the deepest truth was revealed. No sin is so great as to exhaust God's infinite love and forgiveness. Now, facing God directly -- focused on the Loving Presence and not only on the finite, presumed guilt -- the person discovers a healing release. Reminded that God is always on the side of life because God is the One who desires life, the sick person feels a flood of emotions: hope, trust, anticipation, joy. The words tumble out: "You are my shelter, You protect me from distress, from enemies; You surround me with the joy of deliverance." (v. 7)

In this case, the cure soon followed. Now the patient is able to look beyond the wall of anxiety and fear which has surrounded the sickbed. Silence turns into dialogue. God speaks: "I will teach you Wisdom, I will illumine the path you must take, My eye will advise you and guide you." (v. 8)

Joyfully carried away by the surge of wholeness and restoration, the patient calls out to all who would listen. "Many are the troubles of the wicked, but one who trusts in Adonai will be enveloped by *hessed*/lovingkindness (v. 10). Jubilantly, the restored person cries out: "Rejoice in Adonai! Exult, righteous ones! Shout for joy, all who are upright in heart!" (v. 11)

Is this, then, a psalm only for those who are cured? Perhaps unrestrained joy can only come from one who has been healed. But the deepest truth of the experience may yet be available to totally innocent persons who are sick due to no fault of their own. It may even be available to one who is not yet cured; even to one who will not be cured.

The truth is: When you are sinking, when you are totally wrapped up in your own fear and pain, it is still possible to break out. God's loving presence surrounds you at all times; God shares your pain as only an infinite consciousness can. *Hashem* feels your hurt, kisses your wound compassionately. The divine steadfast love enfolds you even when the longed-for miracle does not come.

Pain can obscure but it cannot degrade your preciousness to *Hashem*; fear can erode but it cannot cancel the truth of your being loved. You are an image of God, of infinite worth, unique, irreplaceable. God's face is toward you, God's eye is on you at all times. If you can bring yourself to look, to sense the divine tears of love and sympathy, you will know that you are one but you are not alone. You will be healed; even if not, you will be loved.

With this truth fixed firmly in your soul, you may yet sing out joyfully the song of existence embraced. But even if not rescued, the one who trusts in a Loving God is surrounded by steadfast love. Listen. The voice speaks. "Fear not, for I am with you."

From Healing of Soul, Healing of Body, edited by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, and published by the Jewish Healing Center.

Rabbi Irving Greenberg



**June 11 Retreat Planned
by Ramah Institute**
"Jewish Approaches to
Healing . . ."

The beautiful Palmer, Massachusetts Ramah site will be the setting for a full day of both adult learning and children's activities. Led by a nationally recruited faculty of over twenty-five experts and with keynote by Jewish Healing Center co-founder Rabbi Amy Eilberg, this will be a virtual cavalcade of "state-of-the-art" presentations on healing and health. The program has been developed during a year of planning. Registration information available at (617) 449-7090.

Reflections on Healing Services

For the past four years I have been leading a twice-monthly healing service in San Francisco. About twenty five of us gather to pray, meditate, sing and study with the hope of finding spiritual nourishment and inspiration. The service is designed for Jews living with illness and for those who care for the ones who are ill. Some come to mourn the death of loved ones, others to mourn the inability to conceive new life. Some come for years on end, others during a particularly difficult period of weeks or months. Some are receiving treatment for cancer or AIDS, others have completed treatment and are struggling toward integrating a new sense of self after treatment has ended. Some are chronically ill, some terminally ill. Parents of ill children sit next to children with ailing parents. We are a diverse group, a loving group, a group whose purpose is to pray in community, each of us in our own unique way seeking to place ourselves in connection with the divine.

I am always transformed by the act of praying with this community. I cannot tell what element is the most crucial in effecting this transformation. The pace is remarkably, restfully slow. Words are fewer than in most traditional Jewish prayer services. We focus on our breathing before many of the worded prayers, and sometimes afterwards as well. We invite awareness of our bodies, consciously remembering to relax so that our prayers can be felt throughout our being. There is room for spontaneity of prayer among the fixed prayers. We seek the articulation of blessing and gratitude as well as an acknowledgment of darkness and suffering. We include one another

in our prayers. We know we are each in the room for a different reason. The group culture is one of respect, care, love and honesty. After each service I am reminded of the power of prayer and the power of true community.

Our service is not unique. Over the years, dozens and dozens of communities have contacted the Jewish Healing Center for help in setting up healing services in locations all across the continent. From Little Rock, Arkansas, to Vancouver, Washington; from Vail, Colorado, to Roanoke, Virginia; from Portland, Oregon, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; from Tucson, Arizona, to Minneapolis, Minnesota. And the list goes on. More than fifty Jewish communities that we know about have started healing services; we are proud to have shared of our experiences and resources in helping these communities create their own unique liturgies and prayer environments.

Here in the Bay Area, healing services are becoming part of many congregational program offerings. Recently a woman predicted that soon no one will join a congregation that does not sponsor a healing service; with a delightful twinkle in her eyes, she prophesied that the "market" would demand that congregations make healing services *de rigueur*. From her mouth to God's ears!

If you would like information to help start a healing service in your community, or if you would like to let us know of services already taking place, please contact our National Office: 212-969-0030.

Rabbi Nancy Flam



From the Golden Gate Bridge to the George Washington Bridge

For four years, what has now evolved into *Ruach Ami*: Bay Area Jewish Healing Center has worked to renew traditional approaches and pioneer new avenues to serve the spiritual needs of Jews in times of illness and pain. Now, in an effort to help share the exciting work that has developed in San Francisco, The Nathan Cummings Foundation has offered a challenge grant to start The National Jewish Healing Center, a catalyst for Jewish healing programs and services across all North America.

A "Laboratory" For Us All...

How truly remarkable it is when a funder underwrites a model "laboratory" program and then actually takes steps to replicate it when it achieves success. How often this is the original goal. How seldom it actually occurs.

Ruach Ami: Bay Area Jewish Healing Center has succeeded beyond the expectations of many of its earliest supporters. Today, it is an independent arm of the Mount Zion Health Systems and is supported by numerous local groups.

Now our attentions have turned to replication. Our challenge is to help local communities start their own Jewish Healing Centers. Our hope is to share the hard learned lessons of the work done in San Francisco and to minimize the need to re-learn what has already been explored.

Recognizing the enormous amount of Jewish healing work throughout our community, including in synagogues, Jewish Family Service agencies and Jewish Community Centers, as well as schools, hospitals, Bikkur Cholim Committees and hospices, our efforts will turn to helping those already engaged in this work and encouraging those institutions who seek to organize their efforts into integrated organizations.

Training, education and support will be central to our task. National and regional conferences are being designed to share local initiatives in healing from synagogue (and non-synagogue) based Services of Healing to Spiritual Support Groups, from Bikkur Cholim training to work with children and families. On the drawing board is a partnering effort designed to bring Rabbis and physicians together to share and reveal the issues at the intersection of their work. A variety of publications is underway, from a straightforward compendium of Services of Healing, collected from around the country, to a collection of inspirational, first-person accounts of those living with illness and their daily practices of spiritual life, to a series on healing and the Jewish calendar. With new technologies, our hope is that ancient traditions and modern applications can spark sharing along an e.mail "bulletin board" on the Internet. A broad community resource library is being assembled. All of this is being done with the humble hope that we can work together to help bring Jewish Healing to a broader audience, east of the Golden Gate Bridge. We look forward to sharing this challenge with you in the months and years to come.

David Hirsch

The Outstretched Arm

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Jewish Healing Center Resources

Healing of Soul, Healing of Body, Spiritual Leaders Unfold the Strength and Solace in Psalms. Edited by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, CSW, for the Jewish Healing Center. A source of solace for people who are facing illness, as well as those who care for them. To those who are living with the pain and uncertainty of physical illness, these psalms and the inspiring commentaries that accompany them offer an anchor of spiritual support.

Joining Heaven and Earth, Maimonides and the Laws of Bikkur Cholim. Commissioned by the Jewish Healing Center, Rabbi Tsvi Blanchard explores the traditions of *bikkur cholim* (visiting the sick), the ways in which the tradition may be applied today and the underlying psychological and spiritual wisdom hidden within these practices.

When the Body Hurts, The Soul Still Longs to Sing. The prayer booklet of heartfelt blessings for times of illness (written by Jewish laywomen). A loving gift for anyone needing spiritual uplift in the midst of illness. "This striking collection of straightforward responses to illness and pain leads us to courage and renewed faith and sustains us with hopefulness. It is also a test which can help anyone find his or her own way in personal prayer." — Rabbi Jules Harlow

With Healing on Its Wings. Masorti Publications, London. "Standard items for weekday and Shabbat liturgy are integrated with bite-size selections from Genesis, Psalms, the Talmud, contemporary authors and medieval poets. In addition, four pages of this treasure are devoted to specific situations, such as Prayer Before an Operation, and Prayer on Recovery from Illness." — Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub

Mi Sherberach/Original Prayer. A prayer card for Jewish healthcare professionals that includes the traditional prayer for healing on one side and a prayer to be recited at a patient's death on the other.

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Orders should be sent either to:

The National Jewish Healing Center, 9 East 69th Street, New York, N.Y. 10021

or

Ruach Ami: The Bay Area Jewish Healing Center, 3330 Geary Blvd. 3rd Floor West, San Francisco, CA 94118

**We would like to thank all those who have generously donated to
The Jewish Healing Center's National and Local efforts.
Your support is what makes our work possible.**

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A Sampling of Jewish Healing Center Events

- ❖ **Services of Healing:** This service combines prayer, study, song and silence as a means to strengthen hope, faith, comfort and community for those with a range of healing needs. The first and third Mondays of every month from 6-7 p.m. at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav (220 Danvers Street at Caselli, San Francisco). For more information call the BAJHC office at (415) 750-4197.
- ❖ **Jewish Views of Life and Endings.** Rabbi Amy Eilberg will speak at Temple Sinai in Oakland on Wednesday, May 3; sponsored by Temple Sisterhood. For more information, call (510) 451-3263.
- ❖ **Service of Healing:** This service will be conducted by Rabbi Amy Eilberg at the Annual Convention of the Rabbinical Assembly, at the Concord, Kiamesha Lake, New York, on Tuesday, May 9. For more information, call (212) 678-8060.
- ❖ **Jewish Approaches to Living with Illness:** a study and discussion group meeting monthly at Temple Anshe Chesed, New York City. For more information, call Tamara Green at (212) 866-3736.
- ❖ **Returning and Repairing: Healing and T'shuva:** lecture by Rabbi Simkha Weintraub on September 10 at Oheb Shalom Congregation, South Orange, New Jersey.
- ❖ **Mincha le'refuah Services:** Beginning in May, the JHC will conduct a weekly service of healing utilizing the traditional prayers of healing and comfort. The service will provide opportunities for the ill, their friends and loved ones to offer personal petitions for recovery and healing. For more information about the time and place, please call (212) 969-0030.
- ❖ **Jewish Ways in Healing:** Week-long workshop at the Aleph Kallah, Fort Collins, Colorado, July 3-10. For more information, call (303) 221-0657.
- ❖ **Treasure Each Day:** Jewish teachings on living and dying at Elat Chayyim, a week-long workshop August 7-13. For more information, call (800) 398-2630.
- ❖ **Sustaining Our Spirits:** A weekend retreat on Healing and Judaism. The UAHC-CCAR Commission on Religious Living and the Jewish Healing Center are sponsoring an opportunity for spiritual refreshment, Jewish education, and networking October 20-22 at the Brandeis Bardin Institute in Simi Valley, CA. Core staff will be Rabbis Nancy Flam, Amy Eilberg, Jonathan Omer-Man, Peter Knobel, and Nancy Wechsler. For more information, call Rabbi Sanford Seltzer at (617) 449-0404.
- ❖ **Information and Referral:** Marsha Guggenheim can refer you to books, articles, audiovisual material, bibliographies and Bay Area agencies to help you learn more about Judaism and healing. Call the BAJHC office at (415) 750-4197.

Jewish Healing Center Refaeinu II Conference Set January 28-30, 1996

Back by popular demand after a widely-praised inaugural conference in 1994, "Refaeinu II, A Practicum on Healing and the Rabbinate" will take place in the New York metropolitan area on January 28-30, 1996. 150 Rabbis, and other Jewish professionals will join together for a three-day training focused on skills development and programmatic approaches for those in the role of pastoral counselor. If you would like more information, please give us a call at 212-969-0030.

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