



A Journey into HEALING *Dr. Tamara M. Green*

Zachrenu l'chayim: "Remember us for life." **N**o other time in the liturgical year makes us so aware of the fragility of life as does the season of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur when the words of this prayer are repeated over and over. For all Jews, these holy days are the moment when they come face to face not only with the flaws in their spiritual lives, but with the finite nature of human existence; everywhere, we are constantly reminded that we are *basar v'dam*, flesh and blood. We come from dust and return to dust. But for those who are ill, and perhaps facing the imminent possibility of death, these words can seem especially poignant and even difficult to utter. The time from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur is called *Yamim Noraim*, Days of Awe; but it may be impossible to feel awe at Adonai's creation if it is crowded out by suffering and fear about the future.

How painful it can be, when illness threatens, to recite the words of the *Unetaneh Tokef*, "on Rosh Hashanah it is written and on Yom Kippur it is sealed... who shall live and who shall die, who shall live out the limit of his days and who shall not." It is hard to accept these words as only imagery, when death seems near. Can it be true that repentance, prayer and good deeds can avert the severity of the decree, or even "the stern decree"? How easy it is to think: was my illness caused by the fact that I did not ask sincerely enough for Adonai's forgiveness, that I did not pray hard enough, that I did not do enough good deeds?

Feelings of fear about the future may be intensified by the Yom Kippur Yizkor service, the remembrance for those who have died. "Who will remember me when I am no longer here?" And as a further reminder of the limit of our days, in many synagogues on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur worshippers traditionally wear a *kittel*, the same white robe that will someday serve as a burial shroud. Wearing the *kittel* is, as Rabbi Jack Riemer has written, an annual encounter with, or rehearsal for death. Despite the fact that the rabbinic commentaries insist that these holy days must not be seen as a time of sadness, how can someone who is ill not help but feel a sense of loss and despair? How can this time become one of celebration and joy, in the midst of pain and suffering? Is there some path by which the *Yamim Noraim*, the Days of Awe, can become a journey into healing?

One strand of the answer can be found in the rabbis' explanation of the original purpose of Rosh Hashanah. The festival, they said, originally signalled not the beginning of the new year, but its closing, the time after the harvest, the time when, after the heat of summer, the earth begins to retreat into itself, to prepare itself for winter. Thus we are meant to feel hope that, just as the earth can and will be renewed by Adonai, despite the end of the growing season, we, too, are given that opportunity. Just as the earth retreats into itself, finding during that respite the strength for the coming year, so, too, are we given that opportunity to retreat into ourselves in order to find our sources of strength for whatever might lie ahead.

THE MAKER, THE MEDIUM, THE HEALING RELATIONSHIP



*As clay in the hand of the potter:
At his will, he expands or contracts it.
So are we in Your hands, Loving Creator.
Your covenant recall, and
ignore our weakness.*

*As stone in the hand of the mason:
At his will, he preserves or shatters it.
So are we in Your hands,
Source of Life and Death.
Your covenant recall, and
ignore our weakness.*

*As iron in the hand of the welder:
At his will, he forges or breaks it.
So are we in Your hands,
Sustainer of the Poor and Cast Down.
Your covenant recall, and
ignore our weakness.*

*As glass in the hand of the glass blower:
At his will, he inflates or dissolves it.
So are we in Your hands,
Forgiver of all Transgressors.
Your covenant recall, and
ignore our weakness.*

*As fabric in the hand of the embroiderer:
At his will, he stretches or folds it.
So are we in Your hands,
Stern and Exacting God.
Your covenant recall, and
ignore our weakness.*

*As silver in the hand of the smith:
At his will, he mixes or makes it pure.
So are we in Your hands,
Healer of the Ailing.
Your covenant recall, and
ignore our weakness.*

excerpted from

Clay in the Hands of the Potter:

The liturgy of the High Holidays is replete with moving and evocative prayers and poems whose aim is to provide tools for *t'shuvah* - "return" or "repentance" - in its various dimensions: individual insight, interpersonal change, communal and spiritual healing. Certainly one of the most compelling is Ki Hineh KaHomer, "For We Are As Clay," an anonymous *piyyut* (liturgical poem) probably dating to the 12th century CE, which uses the Prophet Jeremiah's parable of "God the Potter, Israel Clay" (18:1-11) as the image for exploring our

The OUTSTRETCHED ARM

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This issue is dedicated to Ellen Hermanson

THE COMMUNITY OF
THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH HEALING
MOURNS THE DEATH OF

ELLEN HERMANSON

FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER &
EDITOR OF *THE OUTSTRETCHED ARM*

SEPTEMBER 22, 1952 - APRIL 11, 1995

From the moment her cancer was diagnosed, Ellen became, as *The New York Times* referred to her, "a crusader in the battle" against cancer. A quick hand at support group organizing and community education, Ellen soon began to seek the integration of her spiritual life with her medical needs. That synthesis led her to The Jewish Healing Center where she ardently advocated within the Jewish community for a broader understanding of the emotional needs of the ill and their families. Her penned voice was crystalline. Her guidance was inspiring and visionary. And her commitment touched the lives of thousands who shared her desire to see Judaism become an essential source for healing within our communities and our families and our own lives. We miss her presence, her voice, her smile and we dedicate this newsletter to her memory and ourselves to her goals.

An Old House, A New Home

The
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CENTER
for
JEWISH
HEALING

MOVES TO 9 EAST 69TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY, the Offices of
National Council of Jewish Women
New York Section

The National Council of Jewish Women, New York Section, has warmly greeted The National Center for Jewish Healing as their newest tenant. On a street of lovely brownstones, half-a-block from Central Park and two blocks from the Hunter College subway station, our offices are tucked away in a beautiful townhouse. Full of warmth and the 100-year tradition of the non-denominational Council, the building offers The National Center for Jewish Healing a handsome suite of offices and full use of three living-room style, paneled rooms for study, prayer and training.

As we bid farewell to the nurturing of Jeffrey Dekro and the Shefa Fund and the sustaining encouragement and support of Debby Hirshman and the Board and staff of The JCC of the Upper West Side, we count our blessings and look toward a very bright future at the National Council.

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The story of the birth of Isaac, part of which is read on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, provides another strand of the answer. Although the reading begins, "And Adonai remembered Sarah as He had promised," when she had first heard that she would bear a child at the age of 90, she had laughed at what seemed to her to be impossible. The response of Adonai was merely, "Is anything too wondrous for Adonai?" It is true that nothing may be too wondrous for Adonai, but it can be sometimes for us when we are in pain and suffering. And yet, the story seems to tell us, that even as we acknowledge the times of sorrow and despair and uncertainty that we may feel about the future, we can still experience hope and even joy. Hearing the sounds of the *shofar* is yet another part of the answer. It is, the rabbis said, a prayer without words. It is a still, small voice. It is the trumpet of heaven. We can hear the sounds of the *shofar* echoing within ourselves, calling upon Adonai to hear our prayers with compassion. It is a call to put our lives in order, not only with Adonai, but with each other, and for ourselves.

Each note has so many meanings: *teruah*, which warns us to make ready, to leap up and fight, but described by the rabbis as a shrill wailing sound; *tekiah*, a long, deep, unbroken sound to awaken us to the dangers that threaten human life and make it so precarious, while at the same time reminding us of Adonai's presence; *shevarim-teruah*, whose broken notes resemble sobbing, and are meant to remind us that human life is often filled with sorrow

"By three things is the world sustained: by Torah, by divine service, and by deeds of loving-kindness."

and frustration. But there is also *tekiah gedolah*, the prolonged concluding blast, which contains the hope of redemption.

In the Yizkor service, there is another kind of hope. We are not meant to be paralyzed by the recognition of the limit of our days. Rather, Yizkor is meant to serve as a reminder to live our lives, no matter how long or short, with meaning, for such a life, the rabbis wrote, is a way in which we can weave ourselves into the fabric of Adonai's creation. It is a disclosure of the eternal.

Dr. Tamara M. Green is a member of the Board of the National Center for Jewish Healing



Porcelain Honey Dish, handpainted by S. Kagan & I. Puski, in the Spirit/Studio Gallery

relationship to Divinity. In the course of seven stanzas, the poet expands on the theme by imagining God as six other artisans: the mason, the iron welder, the mariner, the glass blower, the embroiderer, and the silversmith. My free translation appears below.

As a former clay sculptor, I was initially drawn to the poem by its opening reference but this year I realized that it culminates in an address to God as *mamtzi i'mazor teref*, roughly, "the Healer of the ailing." I knew that there was more to this *piyyut* than meets the eye, and I was determined to explore its healing potential. In order to gain greater insight to the poem, I interviewed seven artisans:

From a dialogue between these practitioners and the text of this *piyyut*, I derived the following healing lessons:

- The various metaphors and images point to multiple realities in our relationships to God. These relationships not only differ from individual to individual, but shift in the course of a day, let alone a lifetime. I may have certain strengths at one point that become liabilities the next ... I may face obstacles today that evolve into stepping stones tomorrow. Furthermore since Judaism enjoins us to focus on community, I may draw upon the variety of resources represented by family, friends and fellow travelers, and not feel restrained by my own "material," my own limitations.
- The relationship between artisan and medium is one of intimacy, passion, interdependence, and often idiosyncrasy; the matter desperately wants to become something and the maker has a fundamental need to create with it. Through a relationship that is both caring and demanding, predictable and unfolding, complementary and dynamic, both maker and material are brought together to self actualization and emergence. As both the Hassidim and the contemporary theologian-activist Abraham Joshua Heschel have stressed, God is in need of and in search of humankind.
- Critical to the poem's structure is the refrain, loosely translated, "Recall the *b'rit* (covenant), and ignore the *yetser* (matter, referring especially to the weaker aspects of our moral constitutions)." Here we ask God not to focus on our natural, material beings (our "flesh," if you will, which can be so problematic), but on our agreement with God, our potential. As in any intimate relationship, at certain points there must not only be a serious evaluation, but a renewal, a renegotiation. We urge God to "remember our agreement," but we also

suggest, "let's reexamine our arrangements."

- Even the expert makes errors, rejects certain elements, undoes or redoes work in progress. The particularity of the material and the personality of the artisan are intersecting factors in the creative process. Neither partner is totally in control; neither the artisan nor the medium can call all the shots. How special to be in the hands of the Master Craftsperson - but how intimidating, too! For some of us, it can be initially upsetting, and then pointedly reassuring, to learn that s/he does not always get it right the first time.
- Each stanza and each interview expressed an artistic, life-affirming, individualistic purpose, in some ways more reassuring and more inspiring than a linear blueprint or a rational, scientific plan. I certainly do not want illness and suffering to be utterly random and meaningless, but neither could I stand them to be part of a punitive score sheet. To locate myself in a permanent covenantal relationship, characterized by creativity, continuity, and courage, is, in itself a source of comfort, solace and reassurance.
- Implicit in this poem is a fundamental democracy, for no one medium or artistic calling is preferred over another. Relatively fragile glass is no less valuable than powerful iron, expensively embroidered cloth no more significant than humble clay. Each stands in an equal relationship to its respective artisan, who is answerable to it ... and the world is in need of each and every creation.
- The sub text of this poem is mortality. In much lovelier words, it reminds us that, when all is said and done, we are but "dust and ashes." But through the *b'rit*, the covenantal relationship, we stand eternal.

To me, there is something intrinsically healing about my process of inquiry. To join with poets who turned to the arts around them to explore and define their relationship to God was deeply moving; to dig into the reality of artisans doing their craft was similarly inspiring. Those coping with illness - their own or that of a loved one - may want to take a clue from the poet of the *piyyut* and create a poem of parallel structure with personally meaningful images:

For we are:
As movement of the limbs of the dancer...
As dough in the palms of the baker...
As words in the mouth of the poet...

Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, CSW





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S E R V I C E S o f R E C O V E R Y

STEP 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with the God of our understanding...¹

Ask any individual recovering from chemical dependency, or the loved one of any individual who is struggling with chemical dependency and s/he will tell you that recovery is predicated on a deeply transformative spiritual process. The kind of physical restraint that abstinence and sobriety demand would be impossible, the early architects of Alcoholics Anonymous learned, without the ongoing development of a strong spiritual center.

As those in recovery go about the agonizingly difficult work of reconstructing their lives, they draw enormous courage and serenity from the increasing realization that there is a Power...a Force...a Being greater than themselves, holding them, guiding them, sustaining them through times of darkness and confusion.

Still, Jewish chemically dependent persons have been rendered virtually invisible by mainstream institutions. There are very few places where they can go to be nurtured and strengthened by the exquisite spiritual richness of Judaism. Many of them stand on the outside of the structures that the Jewish community has created, not looking in but looking elsewhere — in self-help groups that meet in church basements, and in Eastern religions. They feel a shame which they cannot bring "home", a sense that their voices will be met with shock, disapproval and judgment were they to narrate their personal story. Even the spiritual language of recovery — "Higher Power", "a searching and fearless moral inventory", "conscious contact with God" — are, at least on the surface of things, foreign to the way we modern Jews speak. And so, some of the most deeply sensitive and spiritual of our people feel impenetrable gates where there should be open doors.

Through the marriage of the deep resonances of Jewish prayer, poetry, song and silence with a 12-step perspective, we will create an environment, a place for homecoming and healing.

It is for this reason that the National Center for Jewish Healing will run a monthly "Service of Recovery," beginning Wednesday, October 25 at 7:00 PM at 9 East 69th Street.

FUTURE DATES for SERVICES of RECOVERY
All services will begin at 7:00 PM
October 25 • November 9 • December 13 • January 17

¹ from the Twelve Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous

A Recent Review of the new book from the National Center for Jewish Healing

HEALING OF SOUL,
Spiritual Leaders Unfold the

This book, a project of The National Center for Jewish Healing, is published through Jewish Lights of Woodstock, Vermont, a company that seems to always be a step or two ahead of the others in determining what the spiritual needs of the Jewish community are.

The book is special in at least two ways. One is that it restores to Jews an awareness of the spiritual power that is contained within the Book of Psalms. Dr. Heschel used to tell the story of the woman who came up to him after a lecture and said that she was nourished by the beauty and the depth of piety in the Book of Psalms. And then she said: "Isn't it too bad that we Jews don't have a book like the Psalms in our Bible?" How embarrassed our rabbis have to be by that anecdote! Modern Jews who come to the synagogue know about the prophets. We have temples that are named for Isaiah and for Jeremiah and we hear sermons about the importance of social action, buttressed with the quotations from the Prophets all the time. But the Psalms have been neglected. This book rectifies some of that neglect. It takes ten of the Psalms and listens to them, really listens to them, and makes them accessible to the reader, in many cases, I am sure, for the first time.

Scholars read Psalms one way. They worry about the precise manuscript reading, about the grammar and the literary structure, about the parallels to the text in the literature of the rest of the ancient world and things like that. The person in pain reads the Psalms in a different way. He or she reads them in search of a traveling companion, in search of one who has walked the same lonely path that he or she now walks, in search of one who can give courage and comfort and strength. The ten rabbis who respond to the Psalms in this book all know the critical method. They have all been trained in how to read a text historically, analytically, objectively. But in this book their concern is different from that of the grammarian or the literary critic. They want to know not so much what did the Book of Psalms originally mean, as what does it mean to us here and now.

The second thing that is special about this book is that the contributors to it cross all denominational and generational lines. There are rabbis here who are Orthodox,

HEALING OF BODY

Strength and Solace in Psalms

Conservative, Reconstructionist and Reform, rabbis who are young and old, rabbis who are males and females. And it is not always easy to guess which carries which label from reading their reflections in this book.

This kind of inter-denominational communication is not so common in Jewish life these days. Rabbis come together on behalf of Israel or Soviet Jewry, or on 'non-sectarian' issues like charity or social action. It is not so common for rabbis to come together to share their responses to a page of Torah or to talk in personal and spiritual terms about how a page of the *Tanach* can lesson a human being's pain or give a human being a sense of worth or direction or comfort or hope.

There was once a term in the Jewish vocabulary that has almost disappeared. There was a time when some Jews were known, affectionately and respectfully, as *Tehillim Yidden*, as Psalm Jews. A Psalm Jew was a person who lived his life in the company of the Book of Psalms, who traveled with it, who recited it faithfully, who lived by it. Other Jews might devote their lives to the Talmud, which is a more cerebral occupation, or to the Kabbalah, which is a more complex and esoteric traveling companion; these Jews lived by and with the Book of Psalms. It may be too presumptuous to say this but I have a prediction, or at least a hope, about the future of this book. I know this is not the kind of book one skims through once and then puts onto the shelf; it is the kind of book one reads and rereads many many times, that one strives to absorb and to be absorbed by, and that one keeps close at hand, so that one can be nourished by it in times of fear and stress and loneliness. And I have the sense that ... it may very well be the book that will lead to the creation of a couple of *Hevra Tehillim* societies in different parts of the country, and it may even lead to the creation of a couple of *Tehillim Yidden*, a couple of Psalm Jews, in our land.

And if it can achieve that, how worthy a book it will be!

Rabbi Jack Riemer of congregation *Beth David* in Miami, is the editor of *WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL*, a book of Jewish insights into love and loss. He is the founder of the *National Rabbinic Network*.

To purchase a copy or send one to a friend, see order form on page 11.

The 18th century Hasidic master Reb Nachman of Breslov, the great-grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, taught that prayer is a powerful means of bringing about Tikkun Olam, Repair of the World: as a way of effecting union between human beings and God, between human beings with human beings, and between human beings with the universe. He identified ten psalms as having special power to bring true and complete healing: R'fuat HaGuf (healing of the body) and R'fuat HaNefesh (healing of the spirit). Rabbi Nachman designated these ten psalms the Tikkun HaKlali, the Complete Remedy; but he declared that each of us must find our own way into each psalm.

*The following essay is excerpted from the book, **Healing of Soul, Healing of Body.***

PRAISE How can one praise God in the midst of serious illness? Praise God for one's situation not being worse? What if it is nearly as bad as one can imagine? Praise God for the memory of health? What if one was born with a congenital disease? Praise God for the depth of experience and insight which can come through suffering? Who wouldn't trade a little insight for a modicum of relief?

The psalm says, "Praise God's mighty deeds; praise God according to God's abundant greatness." What are these mighty deeds, this abundant greatness? The poem is vague; I do not know the author's intention. But I do know that what one considers God's "greatness" will depend upon one's understanding of God's nature and ways. The mighty deeds might refer to God intervening in history: performing miracles such as splitting the Red Sea. Personally, I cannot conceive of God this way: a power who willfully changes the laws of nature to help a particular people. But I do affirm and praise God as the One who makes miracles everyday, according to the laws of the physical universe and the human spirit: the awesome power we sense as we witness fall turn to winter, and winter to spring; the One we feel when we experience true love and compassion; who has willed the natural cycle of growth and decay; in whose presence we find company in prayer. Such greatness pertains whether I am ill or well. Praise of God is not about me or my condition; it is about the reality of God.

JOY It may require a psycho-spiritual tour de force to praise God with joy and gladness in the midst of illness, but Rabbi Nachman challenges us to do so. Psalm 150 is nothing short of ecstatic, a glorious symphony which rises to a dazzling crescendo: shofar blasts, harp and lyre, timbrel, dance, lute and pipe, cymbals crashing loudly, furiously. Perhaps the music one makes is loud and furious to drown out one's own complaint. Perhaps the wildness expresses something crazed. Or perhaps, in a rare moment of grace, one might play the music without fury, in touch with happiness, miraculously connected to God with praise in one's heart, *lamrot hakol*: despite everything.

BREATH HallaluYah: Praise God! The most breathy name of God is used here: Yah. Praise the Creator who breathed the breath of life into Adam and Eve and each one of us.

"The rabbis of blessed memory said, 'Let every soul (neshama) praise God.' This means: Praise God with each and every breath (neshima), so you can say at every moment and continually, 'Blessed is the Merciful One, Ruler of the Universe, Master of this moment.'"

The last line in the final psalm of Rabbi Nachman's Tikkun brings us to an awareness of the breath, rooting our being in the present moment, its reality and blessing. Fully present and mindful, we recognize that at all times, sick or well, we "have only moments to live."

(JON KABAT-ZINN, FULL CATASTROPHE LIVING, P.17).

Psalm 150

Halleluyah/Praise God!
Praise God in God's sanctuary;
Praise God
in the vast expanse of Heaven!
Praise God for mighty deeds;
Praise God
according to God abundant greatness!
Praise God
with the blowing of the shofar;
Praise God
with the lyre and the harp!
Praise God
with drum and dance;
Praise God
with string instruments and flute!
Praise God
with resounding cymbals!
Praise God
with clanging cymbals!

Let every breath of life praise God,
Halleluyah/Praise God!

The Dew Of Life

INTRODUCTION

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin

In Judaism, dew is a restorative elixir graciously dispensed by the hand of God. When the Jews in the desert were desperate for food, God gave them manna, described in Torah as the blossom of dew:

"In the morning there was a layer of dew throughout the camp. And when the layer of dew rose up, behold, a fine delicate substance was on the ground." (EXODUS 17:13-14)

Dew was the symbol chosen by Isaiah, the prophet who spoke words of comfort to the Jewish people. Spinning visions of times of wholeness, Isaiah said:

For your dew is the dew of light, and with it the land shall bring healing.

The rabbis employ the richness of this symbol in their prayers, creating out of *tal shel ha'aretz*, dew of the earth, the images of *tal shel hayim*, the dew of life, and *tal shel berakhah*, the dew of blessing.

Medicines which drip into our bodies offer the gift of healing. Often, either in the midst of a procedure or in response to our body's reaction afterward, our focus gets diverted from the healing nature of these droplets.

Here we offer a prayer of hope, transforming the stuff of our treatments into *tal shel berakhah*, the dew of blessing.

A prayer to be recited upon receiving chemotherapy (and other intravenous procedures). Adapted from the annual prayer for dew, recited on the first day of Passover, the holiday of our release from bondage.

KAVANNAH

God, guide my speech and let me give voice to your mysteries.

PRAYER (to be recited when needle is inserted)

Harahaman, merciful one, open the gates of your wondrous storehouse
releasing your sparkling dew.

Droplets of life, flow gently, mending the hurt in this body of mine,
watering the vines of this broken garden.

Droplets of blessing, come gently, fetching a year of goodness,
filling with peace the reservoir of my soul.

Droplets of dew, heal gently, softening this hard place of blessing,
giving praise to the work of our Creator.

Droplets of dew,
come for a blessing and not a curse,
come for life and not for death,
come bringing plenty and not emptiness.

Services of Healing

If you would like a copy of our
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A GUIDE TO SERVICES OF JEWISH HEALING

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Wednesday, October 11
Wednesday, November 1
Wednesday, December 6
Wednesday, January 3, 1996

**A Healing Resource for the
JEWISH HIGH HOLIDAY SEASON**

Psalm 27

From the first day of the Hebrew month of Elul, one month before Rosh HaShanah – to the last day of Sukkot, traditional Jews add Psalm 27 to their daily prayers. One would think that, since it is singled out for this season of repentance, the Psalm would focus on human shortcomings and our resolve to do better in the coming year. But, the focus of Psalm 27 is confidence and security in the shelter of the Almighty (however one may understand these notions), an intimate relationship of care and protection, and a very concrete persistent request of God to rally against besieging foes.

Psalm 27 has much to offer those of us struggling with illness – whether as patient, family member or friend, or health care provider. Our difficult “balancing act” of acceptance and activism, of living in the moment but fighting for the future, finds expression in these ancient words attributed to King David. As you read it, see what phrases or ideas resonate for you; consider revisiting the Psalm, alone or with close ones, during this season of Return and Response. Perhaps it will trigger your own creative writing effort to articulate your deepest prayers. It may link you to a community and a tradition of support, faith, affirmation and hope.

A PSALM OF DAVID

*Adonai is my Light and my Help;
whom shall I fear?*

*Adonai is the Strength of my life;
who can make me afraid?*

*When evil people draw near
to devour my flesh –
it is these foes and enemies
who stumble and fall.*

*Even if an army rises up against me,
my heart will have no fear!
Even if a whole war besets me,
I will still feel secure.*

*One thing I ask from Adonai,
one thing I seek:
to dwell in Adonai's house
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of Adonai,
to explore Adonai's sanctuary.*

*Adonai will shelter me in a
Sukkah on an evil day;
Adonai will conceal me in the
secret shelter of a tent,
raise me up safely upon a rock.*

*My head is high above my
enemies around me;
I sacrifice in Adonai's tent,
to the blasts of trumpets,
singing and chanting a hymn to Adonai!*

*Adonai – sh'ma/ hear my voice when I call!
Have mercy on me and respond!*

*You seek my heart,
my heart seeks You –
I seek Your Presence.*

*Do not hide Your face from me;
Do not turn Your servant away in anger!
You have always been my Help
so do not abandon me, do not forsake me,
my God, my Saving One.*

*Even if my father and mother
abandoned me,
Adonai would gather me in.*

*Teach me Your ways, Adonai,
Guide me on a straight and level path,
because of my watchful enemies.*

*Do not hand me over to my foes;
ignore the false witnesses and
unjust accusers
who rise up against me,
breathing violence.*

*I believe I will yet see Adonai's goodness
in the Land of Life.*

*Hope in Adonai!
Be strong inside, and let your heart be brave!
Yes, yes, hope in Adonai!*

FYI For Your Information


Beth Israel Karpas Health Information
Center presents
“Spirituality in Health and Healing”
- a talk with **Dr. Larry Dossey and
Barbara Dossey, RN, MA**

September 18, 9-10 am
at the Podell Auditorium Dazian Pavilion
for information call 212-420-4247

**POLISH MILLINER FROM
LOWER EAST SIDE BEGETS
TWO GENERATIONS
OF PHYSICIANS**

When Abraham Wenger came to America in 1920 he could not have guessed the success that would come to his children and grandchildren. His son, Julius, became a well-known physician in Atlanta. His daughter-in-law, Nanette became a famous cardiologist. They begat Debbie, a physician practicing in Birmingham and Judy, in practice in New York City. (Third daughter Beth is a rebel. She's a Ph.D.)

When Abraham died in 1995 the family, led by Dr. Judy Wenger, sought to honor his memory. As a medical family, on the front lines of illness and its impact on patients and families, Judy wanted to support programs that would bring support and comfort to other Jews living with illness. So the Wengers selected The National Center for Jewish Healing, among other institutions, to honor the memory of a wonderful milliner from Poland.

**We would be pleased to send a friend, colleague, doctor, patient or family member a copy of our newsletter and other mailings. Just send us their name and address – via mail or fax – and we will do the rest.**

NAME _____

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REJOICING:
SIMHA -



WHERE SPONTANEITY
MEETS RESPONSIBILITY

The Hebrew cognate that is singularly associated with Sukkot is S-M-H, the root of *simha*, happiness. We are actually commanded to rejoice - see especially Deuteronomy 16:14, 15 - and the holiday is nicknamed "Z'man Simhateinu," the Season of (our) Rejoicing.

In *Pirke Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) 4:1, our rabbis teach; "Who is wealthy? One that is happy with his/her lot." We simultaneously rejoice in our humble, flimsy huts and in the vast, eternal home of the universe. Sukkot helps us to put our lot in context - appreciate our portion of eternity, to savor our piece of the whole, our link in the chain.

The message of Sukkot, then, is that to be human is to be vulnerable. No one lives without illness and death.

Our Sukkah, the place of shared vulnerability, is where we accept, explore and even celebrate both our earthly existence and our aspirations of holiness, our infinite worth.

What enables us to transcend the limitations of our physical beings is our "corporate consciousness," our place in both the endless cosmos, and, closer to home, an eternal people. Sukkot lets us share the immediate, tangible harvest while partaking in a taste of freedom, redemption, and the Messianic Age.

In one of the first joint Conferences ever held on the campuses of both Hebrew Union College and The Jewish Theological Seminary,

The National Center for Jewish Healing invites you to

AN ACADEMIC CONFERENCE ON
The Sources and Traditions
of Jewish Healing

A unique opportunity for clergy, scholars, health care professionals and other caregivers to study and explore Jewish text and tradition.

NOVEMBER 6-7, NEW YORK CITY

co-sponsored by

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR)
The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS)
National Center for Jewish Healing (NCJH)
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC)

Keynote Addresses:

"Framing the Question," Dr. Eugene B. Borowitz
"Medicine & Religious Metaphor," Dr. David Eisenberg &
Dr. Lawrence Hoffman
"Images of God as Healer," Dr. David Wolpe
"Constructive Theology," Dr. Tikva Frymer Kensky
"Jewish Folkways: Old Forms in a New Age,"
Dr. Peter Knobel
"The Synagogue as a Healing Place," Dr. Ron Wolfson
Healing in Practice: Jewish Healing Rituals & Services

Faculty:

Dr. Rebecca Alpert, Temple University	Dr. Leonard Kravitz, HUC-JIR
Dr. Tsvi Blanchard, CLAL	Dr. Anne Lerner, JTS
Rabbi Rachel Cowan, NCJH	Dr. Carol Ochs, HUC-JIR
Dr. Eliezer Diamond, JTS	Dr. Steven Sager, Duke University
Rabbi Amy Eilberg, NCJH	Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller, HUC-JIR
Dr. Ari Elon, RRC	Rabbi Danny Siegel, Ziv Tzedakah Fund
Dr. Sue Levi Elwell, Ma'yan	Rabbi Simkha Weintraub, NCJH
Rabbi Nancy Flam, NCJH	Dr. Chava Weissler, Princeton University
Dr. Elliot Ginsburg, University of Michigan	Dr. Nancy H. Wiener, HUC-JIR

For further information, please contact
Eve Maslin Goldberg (212)-674-5300 X206

You are cordially invited to

SUSTAINING OUR SPIRITS

A Weekend Retreat on Healing & Judaism

in cooperation with
UAHC/CCAR COMMISSION ON
RELIGIOUS LIVING

Friday, October 20th - Sunday, October 22

at the Brandeis Bardin Institute
in Simi Valley, California

“Sustaining Our Spirits” will be:

- an opportunity for spiritual refreshment and renewal
- an opportunity to learn about Judaism and healing
- an opportunity to acquire practical tools for organizing programs and addressing the spiritual needs of ill congregants, their families, friends and caregivers
- an opportunity to join us to study with leading rabbis including: Rabbi Amy Eilberg, Rabbi Nancy Flam, Rabbi Peter Knobel, Rabbi Jonathan Omer-Man, Rabbi Nancy Wechsler, Rabbi Richard Address

TO REQUEST A RESERVATION FORM PLEASE DROP US A LINE AT
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DONORS

We would like to thank all those who have recently contributed to the National Center for Jewish Healing. Your support makes our work possible.

Rose Auerbach
in memory of Alvin Engelhardt
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in memory of Esther Charnes
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*in memory of Natalie Gottstein
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*in memory of his aunt,
Florence Karp*
Denis Sicchitano
Joseph Smiga
*in honor of Belle Feinberg
and in memory of Helen Smiga*
Margaret Snyder
Society of Jewish Science
in thanks to Tamara Green
Rabbi Myra Soifer
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Ruth Stone
Barbara Sussman
Sandy Sussman
in honor of Deborah Spitalnik
Temple Beth Zion
Temple Emanu-El Morning Minyan
Vulvar Pain Foundation
Arlene Wanetick

Ellen Weaver
*in memory of her grandfather,
Barney Stein*
Simkha Weintraub
in honor of his aunt, Marsha Slivka
Dr. Judy Wenger,
*in memory of her grandfather,
Abraham Wenger*
Dr. Judy Wenger,
*in honor of the marriage
of Mr. and Mrs. David Messer*
Lisa J. Wise
Roslyn and Milton Wolf
in memory of Ellen Hermanson
Rabbi Julie Wolkoff
*refiah shileyma to
Rabbi Martin Silverman*

We apologize if your name was omitted.
Please call so we can include it in our
next newsletter.

*Background: Sabbath Candleabra,
Gershon Podlish. In the Spirit Gallery*



announces the development of

A NATIONAL LIBRARY ON JEWISH HEALING

A Resource Center for Rabbis, health professionals, caregivers, scholars and students.

opening March 1996

A CALL FOR HEALING RESOURCES

The National Center for Jewish Healing invites you to share your work, and requests:
sermons, papers and tapes • services of healing
training materials • other healing resources on Jewish Healing

Please send any materials to:

National Center for Jewish Healing, 9 East 69th Street, New York, NY 10021

In appreciation for your submission, we will send you a copy of our book
"Healing of Soul, Healing of Body", Spiritual Leaders Unfold the Strength & Solace in Psalms
published by Jewish Lights Publishing

or

"Joining Heaven and Earth", Maimonides and the Laws of Bikkur Cholim
by Rabbi Tsvi Blanchard

PRE-ANNOUNCEMENT:

1996 PROGRAMS

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH HEALING

will be hosting two series of regional trainings in 1996

Spring/Summer Trainings

LEADING SERVICES OF HEALING

and

Fall/Winter Trainings

SPIRITUAL COUNSELING FOR CONGREGANTS IN PAIN

(Tentative) Sites for these one day events: Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, New York City

If you are interested in receiving formal announcements for these training events please drop us a note at the
National Center for Jewish Healing, 9 East 69th Street, New York, NY 10021



You are cordially invited
to a major public address on

Medicine and Religious Metaphor

by **Dr. David Eisenberg, M.D.**

of Harvard University
and

Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman

of Hebrew Union College-
Jewish Institute of Religion

Monday, November 6

8:00 pm

Jewish Theological Seminary

3080 Broadway, NYC

For more information, please call
Eve Goldberg 212-674-5300 ext. 206

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH HEALING 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 National Center for Jewish Healing. A source of solace for those 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 National Center for Jewish Healing, 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.

Out of the Depths: Personal Stories of Illness & Healing, Refaeinu 1994:

A Practicum on Healing and The Rabbinate. Transcribed copies of the discussion from this plenary are now available. A few strong individuals are joined by a facilitator as they share their personal stories of illness and healing.

	Quantity	Cost
Healing of Soul, Healing of Body		\$13.95 each
Joining Heaven and Earth		\$5.00 each
When the Body Hurts		\$4.00 ea. *10+ \$3.25 ea. * 50+ \$2.75 ea.
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POSTSCRIPT

It is late on a Wednesday evening and I am working against a deadline - to complete this very newsletter you have in your hands. You see, I am the graphic designer for the National Center for Jewish Healing.

Monday, my last grandparent, Rose Lieberman died. We will bury her tomorrow morning. Today I am designing the look and setting type for these words you are reading.

Though on Sunday I thought I understood what The National Center for Jewish Healing was about, today I understand it differently. I have taken hope and comfort from these words that pass through my hands. I have found strength and the possibility of healing through them.

I hope there is meaning in them for you.

-STACEY LIEBERMAN

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The second international gathering of rabbis and chaplains from all denominations, designed to explore the roles of pastoral care-giver, spiritual counselor and teacher.

JANUARY 28-30, 1996

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Through plenary sessions, classical text study, personal skill development and programmatic workshops, Refaeinu will mine the traditional, personal and spiritual resources which support rabbis and chaplains in their work as pastoral care-givers.

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