

WELLSPRING

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR HEALTHY LIVING

Special Theme Section

The Road Not Taken

Conversations with David Zulberg
Dr. Miriam Knoll, MD
Jacqueline Kimmel, PT
Esther Marilus

Health Coach Sarah Wolhendler's **secret to a good life**

I'm not a superwoman. This is how I take care of myself.

Why am I always tired after a meal?

The one nutrient your body needs to prevent constipation

Make your own blanched almond flour

Matza is not the only kosher-for-Pesach carb

At 12 years old he took a deep breath—and his first step

What One Deep Breath Could Do To Your Body

Dr. Mary Massery's groundbreaking work on the breathing-musculoskeletal relationship

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Why is it that when you think of
milk, you think of Golden Flow?
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חג כשר ושמח

**WHEN YOU THINK OF MILK,
YOU THINK OF GOLDEN FLOW ***

***IT'S A STATEMENT, NOT A QUESTION.**



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א כשר'ן פרייליכן



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without J&J.



Every Breath A Gift

In late winter, my husband and I joined an organized tour to the *kiorei tzaddikim* in Eastern Europe.

Among the many holy sites we visited, we spent one day in the old-time town of Mezibuz, where the seeds of *Chassidus* were planted. From our place on the wooden benches in the Baal Shem Tov's *shul*, which was identically replicated

to the one that stood on that spot and was destroyed during the war, our tour guide regaled us with tales of yesteryear. An exemplary *oved Hashem* who observed his first Shabbos at age 35 fifteen years ago, this tour guide emitted an enviable awe for the *tzaddik*. One by one, the stories he shared conveyed his sincere and genuine belief in the *tzaddik's* greatness, most notably in his ability to facilitate *mofsim*, miracles.

"If you understand that the *tzaddikim* of that generation, such as the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Gaon of Vilna, are not just on the caliber of your neighborhood Rav, just a bit holier, you've grasped what a *tzaddik* is," he said simply. To that end, he shared a story of a *talmid* of Rebbe Baruch of Mezibuz who was skeptical of the miracles being attributed to the Baal Shem Tov. He certainly believed he was righteous, but not to the extent that he was a miracle worker. On one of his travels with his Rebbe, he confided that he found the stories hard to believe.

Later, when they stopped their wagon for a break, the *talmid* stepped outside, and Reb Baruch left him there, riding off into the distance. The *talmid* found himself all alone on a cold, wet evening. As the rain intensified, he went searching for cover, trudging off toward a shack

in the nearby village. Luckily, the old man who greeted his knock was warm and welcoming, ushering him inside. Very soon, the two were engrossed in conversation—about none other than the Ba'al Shem Tov, with the guest describing the events that had just transpired.

Incredibly, the old man shared that he too had harbored doubts about the *tzaddik's* ability to work miracles—until he was in desperate need of a salvation. At that point, he recalled, he was ready to do whatever it took to merit a *yeshuab*, and thus, despite his skepticism, he found himself standing in the long queue, like all the others, awaiting his turn to speak to the *tzaddik*.

When the old man realized that the line was barely inching forward and he would soon miss the last *minyan* for *Minchab*, he ran over to the nearby *shul*. There, before his eyes, he saw the Ba'al Shem Tov, surrounded by his disciples, deeply entrenched in learning. Incredulous, the man dashed back to the Ba'al Shem Tov's chamber, only to see him sitting there too. "I got my answer," concluded the old man to his guest. "I would never doubt the *tzaddik's* otherworldly *kochos* again."

One of the great miracles we commemorate on Pesach is *krias Yam Suf*, the splitting of the sea. Commentators note that one reason this event was so momentous in the history of our nation was, as we say in *Az Yashir*, "*Vayaminu baHashem ubeMoshe avdo*—They believed in Hashem and in Moshe, His servant." Until then, the Yidden had exhibited their belief in Hashem, but this was the first time they expressed their *emunas tzaddikim*, their belief in the abilities Hashem grants to His servants. Only after attaining this level of belief, as well, were they ready for the next momentous event: receiving the Torah.

In this expanded issue's special theme section, "The Road Not Taken," we bring you fascinating interviews with courageous individuals who chose to explore uncharted terrain in the field of health and medicine. One of them, David Zulberg, found the teachings of the Rambam concerning health so fascinating that he's made it his life's mission to spread them further. When we read of the Rambam's wisdom in regards to health, how he established principles that have withstood the test of time—principles that have been challenged by "experts" over the centuries, only to be proven correct later on—we come away with a feeling of awe for this great scholar. However, the Rambam wasn't just a healer. His wisdom did not emanate only from his brilliant mind. He was, first and foremost, a *tzaddik*, blessed with incredible *siyata di'Shmaya* that gave him the ability to foresee that which the rest of the world did not.

Believing in a *tzaddik*, and recognizing that he has *kochos* that are not within our grasp, is actually part and parcel of our faith, as the Rambam himself conveys in

The Thirteen Principles of Faith.

While the *tzaddik* has the ability to work breathtaking miracles, each of us, in our own way, is a recipient of Hashem's covert miracles every moment. We're a nation that's been surviving on miracles, after all. Especially on Pesach, the Yom Tov of *emunah*, we could open our eyes to see this. When was the last time I stopped to notice that I have the incredible ability to breathe on my own, that air is freely available to me, that I don't even have to concentrate on the constant in and out of my breathing? It appears automatic, natural, but it's a miracle nevertheless. And the miracle extends much further than that. As you will explore in this issue's cover feature, breathing affects us in ways we can't imagine. When we breathe properly, we impact all of our other systems, enabling better functioning, and even facilitating healing.

This Pesach, we have many miracles to thank for, and good health is high on the list. If all I can do is take a deep breath, I'm already blessed.

May you experience a *kasheren, freilichen* Pesach in every way,

Sincerely,
Shiffy Friedman

Well-Put!

"Everything you're feeding your body is a code for your brain."


Sarah Wolbender, page 96

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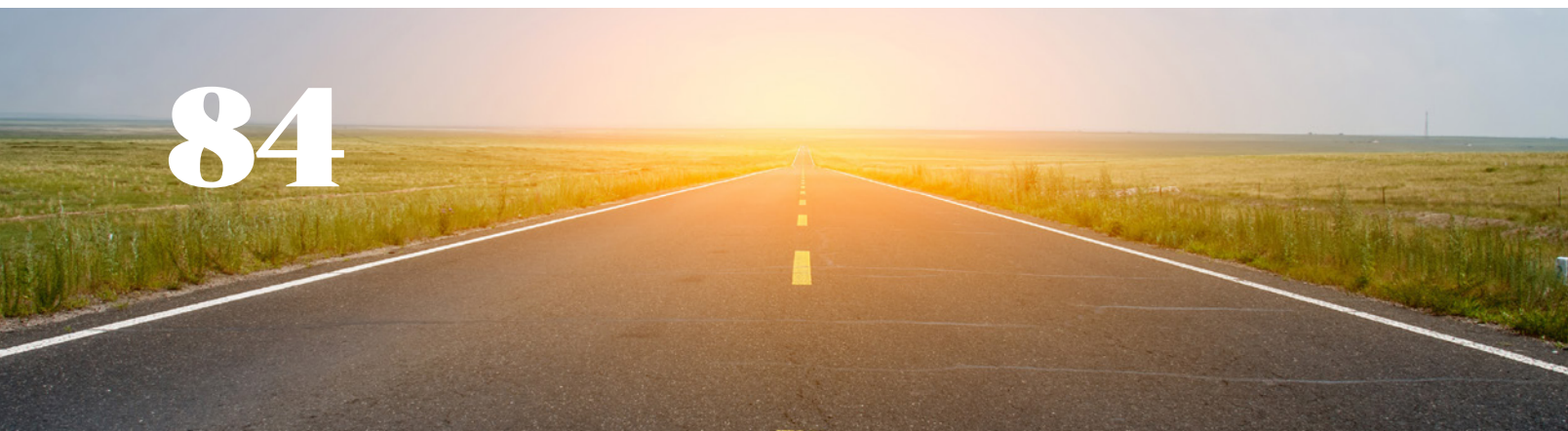


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 TAKE OUT





Organic
CIRCLE

Why We Are So Resistant to the Word Organic



When it comes to health, as a community, we take it seriously. We go for check-ups, we meticulously follow doctor's orders, we do our own research. We care - for good reason - about keeping our bodies healthy. And we care about our families' health more than anything, perhaps.

We're skeptical, at this point, about diet fads and new perspectives. Rightfully so. We question. We don't accept everything we're 'fed'.

I'd like to express how dangerous, however, this approach can be. Ultimately, we need to stay educated and in the loop. I'm not here to preach any diet. But I'd like to talk about the Organic Revolution and why it is so important to understand what it is about. Behind the Organic Revolution lurks the thing it sprang out from: Genetic Modification of our food.

In the Torah, we are forbidden outright from "Kilayim". We are forbidden to crossbreed seeds or animals. As our tradition is, each topic such as this has loads of literature surrounding it.

I'm only reminding us that we were forewarned in our ingenious Torah.

Once upon a time, not too long ago, a company called Monsanto began to modify foods to grow faster, bigger, sweeter. They did this by forcing genes from species such as bacteria and viruses into seeds. These are known as "GMO", for Genetically Modified Organisms, or as "GE" for Genetically Engineered.

Monsanto also developed Pesticides and Herbicides to kill bugs and weeds in the gardens, and their GMO seeds were designed to be able to survive those chemicals.

Now, a chemical which kills bugs and weeds is not something you necessarily want to be eating. There are many issues with Pesticides & Herbicides as well as with GMOs, which I'll just briefly introduce. Plants and Insects are more ancient and structurally sound than chemicals. Therefore, over time the bugs and weeds became resistant to the pesticides and herbicides, and became even stronger. Monsanto then created stronger poisons. So our food then became more pumped with anti-superbug & anti-superweed properties.

Today, studies have shown the grave effects of

GMOs on animals to be: organ damage, gastrointestinal and immune system disorders, accelerated aging and infertility.

I'll pause to present a list of GMO crops: Corn, Soy, Cotton (for oil), Canola, Potatoes, Alfalfa, Squash, Sugar (from Sugar Beets) & Papaya.

So what does this have to do with "Organic"?

We've been sold mass-produced food that is either GMO or sprayed with these Herbicides & Pesticides for a long time. It was commonplace. As natural as anything else to us. But today there is a lot of information out. Awareness is rising. We are realizing:

"We've got to get ourselves back to the garden."

Once upon a time, family gardens were as common as family kitchens.

Growing vegetables and herbs is actually simpler than we may think, most of the time.

All the washing and scrubbing will not remove pesticides or herbicides from food. It was sprayed on throughout the growing process and was absorbed into the food just like the rain and the sunlight. It is an inherent part of non-Organic foods.

Organic implies that a plant is both from non-GMO seed and that it was not sprayed with herbicides or pesticides. For dairy and meats it means there were no hormones or antibiotics given to the animals and that they were fed an organic diet. And since they are not sprayed with harmful chemicals, organic food contains higher supplies of vitamins and minerals without any of the toxins that conventional produce comes with.

This is very big news. This is very important news. We need to accept the Organic Revolution as redemptory for our community. The potential for healing and growth through organic food is incredible. It is much better, as we well know, to eat a less of something healthy than to eat a lot of something unhealthy. Better to eat clean, nutritious food than larger amounts of conventional.

It is so difficult to accept this information. We have become resistant to this information. We have gotten used to the abundance and accessibility of conventional produce.

But we, as a nation, have also become less healthy. And we need to see that, too.

So let's support each other in making the switch to amazing, healthy food.



**Healthy food
must be
organic.**

**We can make the
switch. It is not
impossible. It is right
under our noses.**

**We only need to
embrace it!**

**Wishing us all vibrant
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On Enamel Abrasion, Downsides of Dark Chocolate, Mold Removal, and more

“Without Added Sugar” Doesn’t Mean It’s Healthy

Issue #38: Tidbits

I found the article on supposed “health foods” very eye-opening. I recently bought a breakfast cereal that had the words “without added sugar” plastered across the wrapper. I couldn’t understand how that was possible because it tasted so sweet. Being more clued-in since reading the article, I took a look at the ingredient list. While sugar was indeed not listed as one of the ingredients, there was certainly isomalt, maltitol, and sucralose. You could be eating something and thinking it’s healthy, because it’s whole grain, whereas it could be quite the opposite.

*Thanks for the awareness,
Gila D.*

The Musty Smell Is Gone

Issue #37: DIY

Thanks for the fabulous new column titled DIY. I’ve already had success with one of the recipes listed there. One room in our basement has always felt damp and smelled moldy. Even after I cleaned it weekly, the musty smell persevered. I’m wary of trying recipes from magazines because of past fail-

ures, but this one succeeded tremendously. The instructions were so simple, it couldn’t go wrong. Best of all, the smell is finally gone, just in time for Pesach.

*Thanks so much,
Ruchy B.
Brooklyn, New York*

A Little Note to Let You Know...

Fan Mail

I’ve never written to a magazine before, but after reading your magnificent Purim issue from cover to cover, I’ve decided to do so, simply to express my appreciation. For the past few months, once we realized that *The Wellspring* was the perfect fit for our family, we’ve stopped buying any other magazine. You provide us with so much food for thought with true *hashkafic* clarity, no politics or underlying agendas, and so much *emes*. The articles not only encourage us to lead a healthier lifestyle, which is important in its own right, but also to be more present in our lives.

I have benefitted tremendously from the various columns on emotional and spiritual health, all of which have opened my mind and heart to concepts I’ve always wondered

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Quick Question

Q

I'm a 14-year-old girl who is considered short for her age. Do you have any advice on how I could grow taller?

A

Growth spurts can occur at various stages throughout childhood and adolescence. While some individuals reach their full height at 12-14, others continue to grow until 18, and some hardy ones continue inching upward until 20. Don't despair. If short stature is in your genes, don't expect to be a 6-footer. Having realistic expectations helps us deal with all challenges in life.

If your diet is fairly substantial, which means that you're eating balanced meals that include protein, carbs, and vegetables, and you would like to grow taller, consider discussing this with a nutritionist, who may recommend some D vitamins and calcium to strengthen your bones.

There have also been some reported cases of children who followed a gluten-free regimen for several months and reported substantial growth and healthy weight gain. Apparently, their body was rejecting gluten (or possibly other foods). Once their digestive system was no longer overworking to digest foods their bodies couldn't process, they gained weight and grew, as well. Before following any new diet, discuss your plans with a pediatrician, dietician, and your parents. Happy growing!

To your health,
Miriam Schweid, health consultant

about, but never had a source of information for. I've clipped many of these articles, along with many of the fabulous recipes that are doable, delicious, and good for us. When I stop to think about it, I realize that *The Wellspring* is impacting my day-to-day life in ways I never imagined a health magazine could.

Mazel Tov upon becoming an independent publication that will surely become the magazine of choice in many *frum* homes. A tremendous *yasher koach*, and may Hashem bless you with continued *siyata d'Shmaya* and lots of well-deserved success. I can't wait for the next issue!

Hadassah J.
Lakewood, New Jersey

Can a Teeth Whitening Kit Cause Enamel Abrasion?

Issue #38: Dental Health

Thank you for providing us with such a fantastic magazine on health. I look forward to reading each issue and enjoy your insightful articles immensely. Your article on dental health was very informative. Dr. Doueck mentioned that toothpaste abuse can cause an enamel abrasion and can

subsequently cause teeth darkening. I would like to know if using a teeth whitening kit can also cause enamel abrasion and if it causes more harm than good.

Thank you again for your quality magazine.

Sincerely,
Faigy M.

Dr. Jacques Doueck, DDS, responds:

The outer layer of the tooth is enamel, which covers the inner darker dentin layer. Enamel is about 1.5mm at the thickest part of the front teeth and thins out as you get closer to the gumline. By wearing away the precious whiter enam-

el, the underlying yellower dentin shines through. Peroxide "bleach" does not remove or wear away your enamel. If you have gum recession, or if your enamel is very thin near the gumline, peroxide "bleaching" can make your teeth very sensitive, but it will not cause the enamel to get thinner.

Hats Off to Our Favorite Dentist

Issue #37: Cover Feature

Thanks so much for featuring our favorite dentist, Dr. Moshe Ziegler. We travel all the way from New Jersey to his office in Brooklyn because we trust him to do a fantastic job. We rely

Are You Concerned About the High Costs of Healthcare?

1 in 8 Americans Borrowed a Staggering Total of \$88 Billion Last Year to Pay for Healthcare

— As reported in the *New York Times* on Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Fear and Healthcare: Gallup Survey Finds 1 in 4 Americans Skipped Treatment Last Year Due to High Costs

— As reported by *USA Today* on Tuesday, April 2, 2019

45% of Americans Fear Bankruptcy in the Event of a Health Emergency

— As reported by *US News and World Report* on Tuesday, April 2, 2019

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on his experience, professionalism, and dedication and have never been disappointed. Your informative article only reiterated the importance of being treated by a dentist who knows his stuff. Dr. Ziegler exemplifies quality dentistry and makes visits to the dentist an absolute pleasure!

Chanie Z.

Lakewood, New Jersey

Don't Keep It a Secret

Issue #38: Cover Feature

Thank you for a beautifully updated, informative magazine that has truly changed my life in many ways. I'm amazed at how you keep bringing so much relevant, important content to your readers despite being limited to the domain of health. I especially enjoyed the cover feature in the Purim issue regarding pediatric illness and how those children and adolescents managed to maintain their youthful spirit throughout. Chaya Henchy Friedman's sidebar on not keeping illness a secret is a must-read. I found myself nodding my way through it, especially because I've experienced this in my own life.

Although I was diagnosed with my medical condition as a married young adult, not as a child or teen, my first concern was that other people would

find out. For the first few months, we went to great lengths so that "the world" wouldn't know. I had lots of doctor's appointments and I wasn't feeling my best, but only a handful of people were aware of what I was going through. The toll of keeping the condition a secret was profound. It literally consumed me day and night. I remember waking up from nightmares that "people" found out. When I realized what it was doing to me, I sat down to think why it was so important for me to keep it a secret. I then recognized how greatly I needed to maintain a certain image. I didn't want people to start pitying me; to see me as the patient. While these feelings were all valid, the price I was paying not to face them was just too high. Instead, I decided that I would allow people to see me as I really was, and to react in whichever way they would. And I determined to deal with the resulting emotions.

I would like to let your readers know what a relief this was for me. In the beginning, facing the world was arduous, but over time, I've realized that strengthening my self-esteem and my *emunah*, in believing that this is exactly what Hashem had in mind for me, was what I really needed to do in order to emerge victorious. When someone asked my parents if they aren't concerned about my siblings' *shidduchim* (since my condition has a genetic component) they couldn't

help but laugh. Are we the ones who run this world? The people who are meant to marry my siblings will do so no matter what happens. In fact, as one of the interviewees pointed out, she later saw the *hashgachah* that specifically due to her condition she ended up marrying her husband, with whom she's living a beautiful life.

J. S.

Toronto, Ontario

The Downsides of Dark Chocolate

Issue #35: Tidbits

In the January issue, the "Tidbits" article listed a number of foods that boost the immune system in various ways. Dark chocolate was recommended for suppressing cough symptoms in people with bronchitis, due to its heavy concentration of theobromine.

I would like to point out that many studies show that theobromine-containing foods, such as chocolate, may relax the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). Chocolate is therefore indicated as one of the main causes of acid reflux, which, in turn, can cause Silent Laryngopharyngeal Reflux (LPR), triggering a host of often difficult-to-diagnose symptoms, such as postnasal drip, globus (lump in the

Quick Question

Q

During or immediately after Pesach every year, my allergies start acting up. My eyes get watery, and I sneeze all day long. It's hard for me to concentrate and be at work all day, especially since I get headaches and the sound of my nasally voice irritates me. Over-the-counter medication makes me drowsy, and when I take something to decrease the drowsiness, I can't sleep at night. Can you help me through this difficult season?

A

Since we had two Adars, allergy season will start earlier this year. As you probably know, consistent sneezing, watery eyes, and the heavy and achy feeling in the head are due to an excess buildup of mucus and fluid. Here is what you can do to decrease this:

1. Eliminate all citrus fruits and dairy until the allergy season is over.
2. Peel all fruits and vegetables with gloves on and then wash them before eating.
3. Nutritional supplements for allergies from reputable brands will help you throughout the day. They work like allergy medications, without the side effect of drowsiness.
4. Drink lots of water, which cleanses the body.
5. Remember to get 6-8 hours of needed sleep every night.

Take care,

Chaya Tilla (Tina) Brachfeld, RN, Health Kinesiologist

throat), and chronic cough.

Some excellent books on this topic are: *Dropping Acid: The Reflux Diet Cookbook & Cure* by Dr. Jamie Koufman and *The Acid Watcher Diet: A 28-Day Reflux Prevention and Healing Program* by Dr. Jonathan Aviv.

H.M.

Public Service Announcement

Issue #37: Cover Feature

Thank you for your informative articles and healthful recipes. I feel it important to pass on the kashrus alert on quinoa, which has been found to be infested with booklice, an insect so tiny that foods infested with it cannot be properly inspected. Please find out from your *halachic* authority whether (if at all) or how quinoa should be cleaned. Thank you for informing the public, since it has become widely used in healthful recipes.

Thank you,

M. Weiss

Editor's Note:

Several kosher brands with reputable hechsherim sell vacuum-packed quinoa and other grains and legumes, which have been declared to be largely insect-free. Please consult with your *halachic* authority regarding all questionable kashrus matters.

My Mother's Surprise

Issue #38

I just wanted to share some feedback. My family is not very interested in health information. As long as nothing hurts them, they're okay. I'm pretty much the only one who tries to stick to a healthy diet.

As a post-seminary girl living at home, I subscribed to *The Wellspring* as soon as your subscription option

became available. The magazine arrived at our door this afternoon and I was surprised to see my mother reading it. A while later, she said to me, "You know, I've read many secular health magazines and I always get angry at all the healthy know-it-all's. But somehow, *The Wellspring* is so well done and the content is really no-nonsense—I actually like it."

So, from me and my mom, I just want to say job well done!

K.L.

LESS IS MORE;

LESS MELATONIN RESULTS
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Melatonin is a natural hormone produced in the brain that tells your body when it's bedtime and when it is time to wake up.

But, during times when normal sleep cycles gets disrupted, or for some that their bodies unfortunately don't produce enough Melatonin, using a melatonin supplement can be helpful. However, it is important to be taken in the right amount.

Dr. Richard Wurtman and his research team from MIT conducted a study on both children and adults that determined that in regard to Melatonin lower doses are more effective than higher doses.

Dr. Wurtman and his team observed that 300 mcg (0.3 mg) was the most effective dose to start with. The team noted that higher doses cause blood



levels of Melatonin to remain elevated into daylight hours which in addition to waking up sleepy can lead to grogginess and a general 'hung over' feeling, which is actually one of the symptoms people are trying to alleviate by taking melatonin.

Based on the above study, we at "Landau Vitamins" always on the lookout how to better your quality of life - introduce "Landau Melty Melatonin" which is a "Low Dose Melatonin" it is recommended for everyone especially when taking Melatonin for the first time.



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Does Hashem Really Need My Mitzvah?

The *geulah* you could experience this Pesach

On Pesach, we celebrate the many incredible miracles Hashem performed on our behalf,

each of which is a manifestation of His great love for us. The *Mishnah* says that every individual is obligated to feel as if he himself was redeemed from Mitzrayim. Commentators explain that this is not allegorical, but actual. Every Yid is es-

entially stuck in his own Mitzrayim, but on Pesach he is *zocheh* to experience redemption from this exile.

What does this mean? Technically speaking, we're not in Mitzrayim; we're neither forced to exhibit subservience to a Pharaoh nor to engage in backbreaking labor. In what way are we still in Mitzrayim?

Every thinking person knows that the most painful part of *galus* is not the *galus* of the *guf*, the body, but of the *nefesh*, the spirit. This is the *galus* Hashem redeems us from every Pesach.

Let's understand what *galus* of the *nefesh* means. As we've mentioned previously, everyone is created with a profound need to feel respected, valuable, needed, and worthy, and that he's making a difference in this world. The more a person feels self-worth, the stronger

Every thinking person knows that the most painful part of *galus* is not the *galus* of the *guf*, the body, but of the *nefesh*, the spirit.

his drive to live, to accomplish, and to grow becomes and the less he feels that his *nefesh* is in *galus*. Conversely, the less a person feels needed, the deeper he drowns in *galus banefesh*. The *Mesillas Yeshtarim* explains that Hashem implanted this need for *kavod* in every individual in order for us to fulfill our purpose in this world—to become closer to Him and to keep the *mitzvos*. Through this need, he will be driven to do what brings him true *kavod*.

Thus, if an individual doesn't feel self-worth—that he's beloved by Hashem and that Hashem rejoices over every *mitzvah* he does and every time he vanquishes the *yetzer hara*, his *nefesh* is in *galus*. He might feel this way for various reason, such as a result of being subjected to criticism at a young age, causing him to believe he isn't worthy enough; or because he wasn't raised with the understanding that Yiddishkeit is the only source for feeling true inner value. Whatever the reason, he will seek to fulfill this deep need for respect in other ways, constantly seeking more. However, as the *Mesillas Yeshtarim* explains, because the need comes from the *nefesh*, not the *guf*, earthly pleasures will never satisfy it. The *nefesh* is crying out within, "No! This is not what I'm looking for!" For this reason, "*obeiv kesef lo yisba kesef*—one who desires money is never satisfied with money." Since the need is not really for *gashmius*, stuffing ourselves with more



**They
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understand
what benefit
Hashem
would have
of taking
them out of
Mitzrayim.**

gashmius won't cut it.

But let's say I'm a Yid who is focused on my *avodas Hashem*. I understand that material pleasure is not what I really want, and so I devote myself to Torah and *mitzvos* as much as possible. Still, I don't feel that Hashem rejoices over each *mitzvah* I do. I do it because I have to, because I don't want to get punished, because this is the thing to do, not because I believe that Hashem yearns for my every good deed. Despite being a *shomer Torah umitzvos*, I, too, am in *galus*; the *galus hanefesh*. I don't feel that Hashem needs my *avodah*.

Pesach, as we know, is the Yom Tov that is focused on *emunah*. Incredibly, the *sefarim* tell us that just as it's a *mitzvah* to believe in Hashem, it's a *mitzvah* for a Yid to believe in himself. How can these two *mitzvos* be compared? The *sefarim* explain that it's not enough to believe that Hashem is the Creator Who commanded us to keep His Torah, but we must also instill in ourselves the belief that our *mitzvos* are meaningful and beloved to Hashem because we are valuable beings. The more we believe in our own value, the more authentic and profound our service of Hashem becomes.

Although we're used to thinking of *galus Mitzrayim* as a physical exile, according to the above, we can now recognize this particular spiritual aspect of it. Numerous

times throughout their travels in the *Midbar*, the Yidden expressed how greatly they missed the physical comforts they had in Mitzrayim. Rather, the essence of the *galus* was what the Mitzrim caused their *nefesh*: to lower their self-value and make them feel worthless. This was a most profound and painful impact of the *galus*. We could have all the physical comforts in the world, but if we don't feel good about ourselves, we're in *galus*.

One of the topics many *sefarim* discuss regarding Pesach is the importance of abstaining from anger. As the popular saying goes, "Dust isn't *chametz*, and the children aren't the *korban* Pesach." Why should Pesach preparation be accompanied by such a destructive emotion? When the *mitzvah* of cleaning the house of *chametz* is fueled by fear, by "I have to do this right, or else!" we feel choked. We experience anger when we feel forced to do something. Conversely, when we fulfill this *mitzvah* with excitement and love, there's no room for anger. When I feel that every crumb of *chametz* I clean, every meal I serve, every good deed I do brings joy to Hashem, the good feeling will keep me going. Thus, perhaps the *avodah* of working on anger is to work on realizing the true value of ourselves, and thus of our every deed. The point is not to hold our anger in, but rather to build up our belief in ourselves, which automatically di-

minishes this feeling.

Especially when our deeds look petty, which is how many women erroneously feel about the work they do in the home, it's important for us to keep this perspective in mind. The *sefarim* say that when a woman warms up food to feed her family, she's like the *kobain* who's placing the *korban* on the fire. The more we believe that what we're doing is deeply valuable, the more joy we feel in doing so.



An individual who realizes the profound impact of his every deed experiences a *geulas hanefesh*. When Hashem sent Moshe Rabbeinu to speak to Pharaoh about the Yidden's upcoming redemption, He instructed him to refer to us as "*beni bechori Yisrael*—My firstborn son, Yisrael." No matter what you want the Yidden to believe about themselves, was Hashem's message to Pharaoh, they are My beloved, cherished children. Furthermore, I am their Father. They are *beni*, My son. As much as the Egyptians tried to eradicate every vestige of our self-worth, Hashem sought to implant this feeling in our hearts. You, My dear children, He said to us, You will be my *mamleches kohanim vegoy kadosh*—kingdom of priests and holy nation. You're not "just another nation." You're special.



**Appreciating
how beloved
we are to
Hashem and
how each
action is so
greatly val-
ued by Him
is the *geulah*
we could feel
on Pesach.**

One way to understand the words *vachamushim alu* is that one fifth of the nation left Mitzrayim. What happened to the majority that stayed behind? It wasn't that these Yidden didn't believe in Hashem, as we're accustomed to think. Rather, commentators note that the problem we discuss above was exactly their issue. Of course they believed in Hashem. You couldn't fail to believe after witnessing the great miracles! But they didn't believe in *themselves*. They couldn't understand what benefit Hashem would have of taking them out of Mitzrayim. Thus, they concluded that Hashem wouldn't redeem them, which was why this ended up happening. If you don't believe in yourself, you stay stuck in your *galus*.

As we know, the Yidden who were redeemed from Mitzrayim were in the 49th level of *tumah* and if they would have been in one level lower, they would not have been redeemed. The *sefarim* explain that the less a Yid believes in the love Hashem has for him and that Hashem cherishes his every deed, which thus builds up his belief in himself, the deeper entrenched he is in *tumah*. Perhaps we could say that those who stayed behind were the ones who fell into the 50th level of *tumah*—of not believing in their value at all—from which they could not be rescued. The *geulah* the Yidden experienced was that Hashem extricated them from their *galus*, their belief that they

were not worthy enough to be redeemed.

In the Hagaddah, we read about the four sons and the questions they ask regarding the *avodah* of the seder. One of the sons is the *rasha*. Isn't it interesting that a *rasha* is present at the seder, and even more so that he's asking a question? Does it make sense that he's showing interest in what's going on? The *Yismach Yisrael* explains this is not a *rasha* in the conventional sense, the one that comes to mind when we hear this term. Rather, this *rasha* is a Yid who performs all the *mitzvos* Hashem commands us, but what he renders him a *rasha* is exactly what we discussed above: He doesn't believe that Hashem wants his *avodah*.

According to this understanding, when the *rasha* asks, "*Mah ha'avodah hazos lachem?*" he's not mocking the *avodah*. Rather, while he sees the depth and wisdom in the work, he doesn't understand something else: What makes you think Hashem wants this from you? Do you really believe that the G-d of the Universe needs the service of us simple human beings? For this reason, we answer him, "Because of what Hashem did for me." Yes, Hashem did it for me, He wants me.

The reason we call Pesach by its name is because "*shepasach Hakadosh Baruch Hu al batei avoseinu b'Mitzrayim*—Hakadosh Baruch Hu jumped over the houses of our forefathers in Mitzrayim." One year, when

Rebbe Moshe Leib Sassover was at the seder of Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk, he explained the verse to mean that every time Hashem came across a home that belonged to a Yid, He jumped for joy, so to speak. "Wow! Here lives another Yid!" What joy Hashem feels simply from being with *klal Yisrael*.

This was not only the case thousands of years ago when the Yidden left Mitzrayim. Hashem actually comes down to participate in our seder every single year, to the extent that certain *shittos* in Shulchan Aruch forbid against leaning back when reciting the Hagaddah because "it isn't respectful for a *talmid* to do so when his Rebbe is present in the room." What *chizuk* we derive when we realize how much Hashem wants to be with us, how much He values us and our *mitzvos*.

We might sometimes wonder, "What does Hashem really need my *mitzvah* for? Will my small deed, my little exertion of self-control make such an impact? I'm just another Yid in this world." Appreciating how beloved we are to Hashem and how each action is so greatly valued by Him is the *geulah* we could feel on Pesach. The *koach* of this Yom Tov's essence—*geulas hanefesh*—enables us to feel beloved and valued. When we live our life with this approach, we experience so much joy. May each of us merit our personal *geulah*, and ultimately, the *Geulah Sheleimah*, Amen. ♥

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This verse is teaching us that by providing the quail and *mann* in response to their fear of hunger in the desert, *Klal Yisrael* would know that Hashem is the One solely responsible for their salvation. But why is food used as the vehicle to deliver this essential lesson that serves as a fundamental cornerstone of Torah doctrine? And what is the connection to their previous eating habits in Egypt?

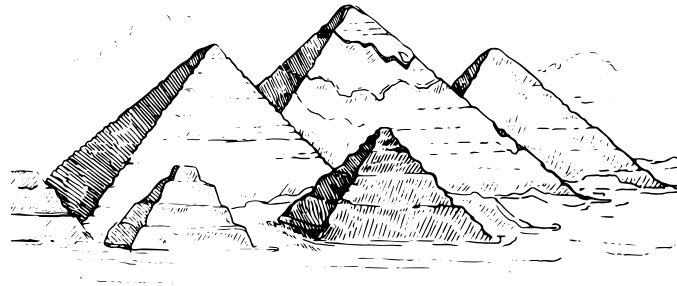
Surely the desolate wilderness prompted other concerns causing anxiety for the Jewish People, such as wild animals and lack of shelter. Why were they focused on the food, and what's the lesson Hashem is trying to teach us through this episode?

The *Seforno* offers a powerful and penetrating perspective. He explains that Moshe *davened* that when Hashem would respond to the nation's request for food, He should provide their sustenance on a nightly basis, exactly enough for the next day, no more and no less. Through this manner of provision, *Klal Yisrael* would know that Hashem "brought them out of Egypt"—He was not just taking them physically out of the land of Egypt, but taking Egyptian attitudes and behaviors completely out of the Jewish People.

The Real Exodus: Taking Egypt Out of the Jews

And the Children of Israel said (to Moshe and Aharon), "Would that we had died by the hand of Hashem in the land of Egypt when we sat by the pot of meat, when we ate food to fullness" (Shemos, 16:3).

And Moshe and Aharon said to the Children of Israel, "Even then you will know that Hashem brought you out from the land of Egypt" (Ibid. 6).



For they yearned to return to the gluttonous ways of *Mitzrayim*; always having a pot of meat at their side, continually grazing like an animal, with no proper boundaries and guidelines in their relationship with food. They were likened to chickens constantly pecking at garbage, demeaning and debasing themselves just for another morsel of this, or bite of that.

This continued until Moshe used the *mann* to instill the concept

of boundaries around eating—teaching them to behave like *mentchen* when it came to food—having proper portions and designated times for eating.

How can we ignore this clear and graphic lesson? When we hop from *shul* to *shul* hoping to *chap* another slice of cake here or piece of kugel there, are we not enslaving ourselves once more in Egyptian culture, ascribing importance to their sets of mores and values? Is this the Torah way to have a holy and healthy relationship with food? Are we really being *kadosh* at a *kiddush*?

Is this the example to set for our children—to eat whenever we feel like it and whatever we want, like a cow grazing in a field or a chicken pecking at garbage?

Pesach is *zman cheiruseinu*, the time of our freedom. The real independence achieved by *Klal Yisrael* 3,300 years ago was not merely the removal of physical subjugation; it was the liberty to rid themselves of foreign values and priorities that had taken such deep root in their souls that it caused them to sink to the 49th level of spiritual impurity.

Is having 49 different varieties of dessert or a 24-hour lavish tea-room really the road to *ruchniyus*?

A principal focus of our freedom today is combatting such false ideologies. One of the greatest slave masters to conquer is our misplaced principle of pursuing the next physical pleasure under the guise of *Torah* observance. It's okay to pass over the *Pesach* cookies. ♥

Rabbi Eli Glaser is the founder and Director of Soveya. He is certified as a Nutrition/Wellness Consultant and Weight Management Specialist, with 25 years of coaching and counseling experience, and is maintaining a 130-pound weight loss for more than 16 years.

Soveya has offices in Lakewood and Brooklyn, and works with clients via phone and Skype around the world. For more information or to make an appointment, contact Soveya at 732-578-8800, info@soveya.com, or www.soveya.com.

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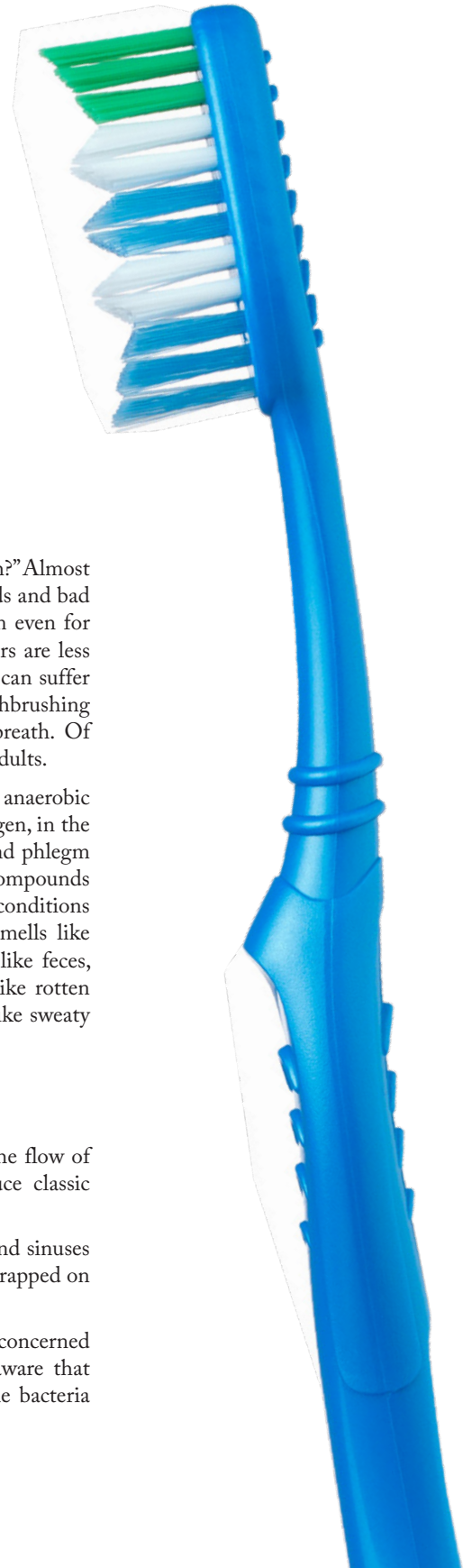
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LITTLE KIDS... WITH HORRIBLE BREATH?



“What can I do about my 8-year-old son’s bad breath?” Almost every day we dentists get a question about little kids and bad breath. Bad breath can be a serious social problem even for little children. Especially since classmates and peers are less socially appropriate at this stage, their self-esteem can suffer profoundly. These children may have excellent toothbrushing habits and still be unable to control their bad breath. Of course, bad breath can be an even bigger issue for adults.

Bad breath is generally a result of a buildup of anaerobic bacteria, which thrive in areas with little or no oxygen, in the oral area. These bacteria break down the mucus and phlegm produced by the body and produce volatile sulfur compounds (VSC), which emit a smell that is found in other conditions of breakdown. For example, hydrogen sulphide smells like rotten eggs, methyl mercaptan and skatole smell like feces, cadaverine smells like corpses, putrescine smells like rotten meat and, believe it or not, isovaleric acid smells like sweaty feet.

Causes of Bad Breath

Mouth breathing. When we sleep, for example, the flow of saliva slows and sulfur-producing bacteria produce classic “morning breath.”

Sinuses, post nasal drip, stuffed nose. The nose and sinuses are loaded with sulfur-producing bacteria that get trapped on the villi of the tongue.

Too much talking. This is why salesmen are so concerned with bad breath. If your child likes to talk, be aware that constant talking dries out the mouth, allowing the bacteria to thrive.

Stress. Part of the “fight or flight” mechanism is a reduction in salivary flow. Saliva is rich in oxygen and antibodies that normally control mouth odor.

Certain foods. Too much protein and highly processed foods are exactly the foods that the VSC-producing bacteria love. Coffee, for example, is very acidic, even if it’s caffeine-free. Besides low oxygen, the VSC producing bacteria multiply and increase in acidic environments. Garlic, onions, and alcohol travel through the blood into the lungs to be exhaled.

Certain diseases. Hiatus hernia causes digestive juices to regurgitate into the esophagus. Certain enzyme deficiencies are accompanied by bad breath.

Medications. Antihistamines, decongestants, diuretics, high blood pressure medication, and other medications reduce the saliva, allowing bacteria to multiply.

Combatting Bad Breath

Avoid mouthwash that contains alcohol.

Although breath mints and mouthwash can help, it’s important to avoid mouthwash that contains alcohol. Since alcohol dries out the mouth, it increases the bacteria that cause bad breath.

Brush or scrape your tongue.

Post nasal drip is a major cause of bad breath. The tongue is like a thick carpet, and bacteria buildup on the back of the tongue. Nasal irrigation with an old-fashioned neti pot or the more modern battery-powered irrigator can also be helpful.

Take oral probiotics.

These probiotics, which target the mouth, are not the same as the ones you take to replace the bacteria in your gut. ProDermix™ is the only one I know of that is specific for treating bad breath. A study in the journal *Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology and Endodontology* showed that the healthy bacteria *Lactobacillus salivarius* may combat bad breath coming from the mouth.

In the past few decades, we’ve been seeing a drop in the naturally occurring “healthy” *Lactobacillus*. In a 1960s’ study, 30 to 40 percent of subjects had sufficient *Lactobacillus*. A current study found that this number has sharply decreased to a mere 10 to 20 percent of the population. Researchers speculate that this may be due to our increasingly high carbohydrate diet. The concept is simple: Beneficial bacteria found in probiotics may replace existing harmful ones. ♥

Dr. Jacques Doueck has been practicing family dentistry in Brooklyn, New York since 1977, and is a Diplomate of the Academy of Clinical Sleep Disorders Disciplines. He speaks nationally and trains other dentists in oral appliance therapy and state-of-the-art dentistry. Dr. Doueck is a member of the American Dental Association and serves on the District Claims Committee for the state society.

ECZEMA OR PSORIASIS?

You tried everything?
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Raizy a young mother with not too much experience finds herself struggling with a baby that suffers from eczema. She tries so many different creams and is all lost. Her babysitter advises her to contact Mimmy another young mother whos baby just cleared up beautifully. Mimmy lets her on where to buy Naturalife Eczema & Psoriasis Formula. In a short time Raizy does not recognize her baby.

Faigy a busy mother suffers from psoriasis, Her hands are bleeding and peeling. The many cortisone creams she has tried cleared her up for a while, only to have it come back worse. While at the health food store shopping she comes across Naturalife Eczema & Psoriasis Formula, and has since then BH" clear hands.

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OUR CHILDREN NEED SERVICES.

CAN THEY GET THEM IN TIME?


In today's world, parents no longer face a stigma in requesting specialized services for their children. However, they are now faced with a different challenge: accessing those services. The eligibility criteria for receiving government-funded or insurance-approved aid are set in a way that only children with severe and serious issues qualify for it. In turn, low-income families are left without the choice of receiving professional intervention for their children's developmental problems. Instead, they are forced to ignore the issues. These issues tend to exacerbate over time, and only once the child's behavior has significantly deteriorated can they be approved for help. This process is unfortunate, unfair, and preventable.

Thanks to the "Child Development" column by Freidy Singer and Roizy Guttman, OTR/L in *The Wellspring*, our community has become more aware of various aspects of child development and how to address several issues that may arise. The authors provide helpful ways of identifying and responding to symptomatic as opposed to typical behaviors. A key point mentioned in the column is that if a parent suspects that their child has an issue requiring intervention, they should seek professional assistance immediately. Turning a blind eye to a problem can and most likely will cause the issue to worsen over time. However, aid will only be granted if the situation is dire, and many children do not get the help they need until the problem has

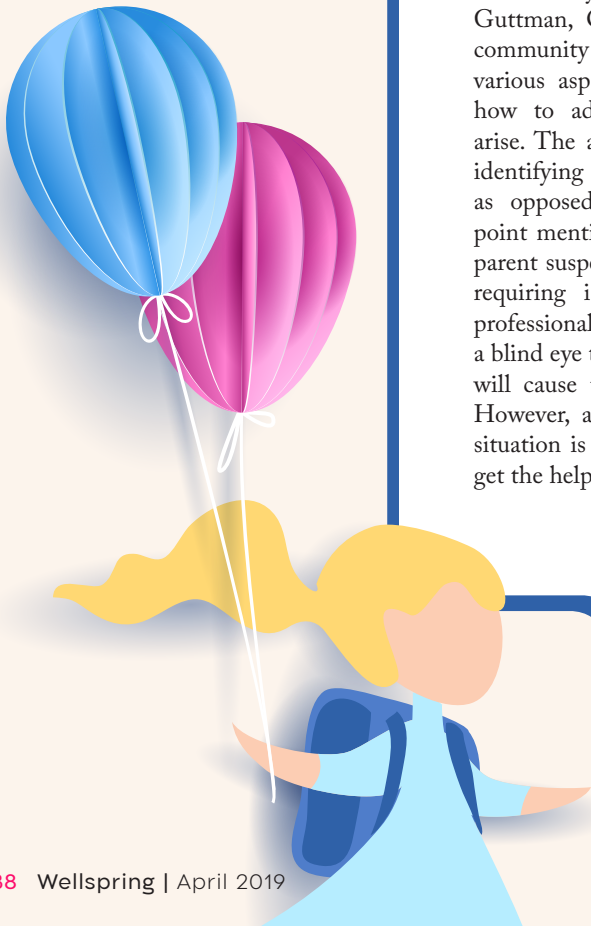
completely spiraled out of control.

I join *The Wellspring* and its columnists in seeking to improve the quality of our children's development. As ordinary community members, we can push for a change in eligibility standards by making a call to an insurance company, raising awareness in our community, or perhaps writing a letter to a legislator. If you are a specialized service provider and feel a child is not receiving the help they need, don't hesitate to reach out to the conferring department directly on behalf of your future client. We may be saving lives.

Of course, we will encounter those who argue that often these symptoms will fade over time. Others may argue that funding has limits and must be reserved for more serious cases. Both of these arguments can be answered by understanding that while some issues may fade, the large majority of issues in children's development worsen if left untreated. Several months or years down the line, these children will require intense intervention that will drain funding, preventing aid from reaching children with milder issues. So the hazardous cycle continues to spin.

As a concerned member of the community, I suggest that we be fully informed about the challenges and opportunities of providing healthy development to the future generation. I urge you all, whether or not this issue applies to you, to get involved. 

Esti Kahan, BSW, is a Graduate Student of Social Work (Yeshiva University/Sara Schenirer).





MEDIAOTG



||| SECRETS OF A KOSHER DIETITIAN |||

SECRET

#13

MATZA IS NOT THE ONLY KOSHER-FOR-PESACH CARB



Currently, there is a multitude of amazing whole-food products on the market that can act as a source of quality carbohydrates in our Pesach meals. Yet, we are stuck on over-consuming matza. Of course, I'm not talking about the required amounts that halachah dictates. But during the other meals, broaden your horizon for what is both kosher for Pesach and kosher for your health and weight goals, too.

The amount of fiber you should be consuming daily:

- Men aged 50 or younger: 38g
- Women aged 50 or younger: 25g
- Men over 50: 30g (we need fewer calories as we get older)
- Women over 50: 21g

How to Use Carbs to Help Your Weight

Today's fad diets have made the debate over good versus bad carbs a confusing one. Still, you cannot deny the research that some carbs are healthful nutrients, associated with lower risk of chronic disease and helping you feel fuller and longer. Here's what you need to keep in mind when choosing a carbohydrate source:

1

Always look for a high source of fiber, an indigestible form of carbohydrate. High-fiber carbs get absorbed slowly into our systems, avoiding spikes in blood sugar levels. Examples: whole grains, starchy vegetables, and fruits.

2

Eat fewer refined and processed carbohydrates, which are minus the beneficial fiber. Example: white matza.

3

Fruits and vegetables are quality carbohydrates, loaded with fiber. Studies show that low-fiber diets lead to an increased risk for heart disease. There is also some evidence to suggest that fiber may help prevent colon cancer and promote weight control. These foods should be your main source of carbohydrates in meals, aside from matza.

To schedule a nutrition appointment with Beth in the Brooklyn, NYC, NJ locations or virtually, or book an appearance, email beth@bethwarrennutrition.com or call 347-292-1725. Most insurances accepted. You can also follow her Instagram for healthy eating motivation and recipes @beth_warren

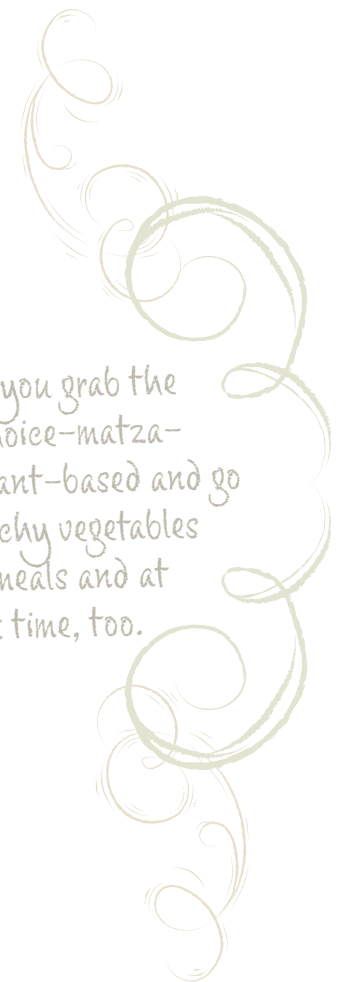
How to Use Alternative Sources of Carbs

I understand it feels odd to have berries, for example, as a carbohydrate source at dinner. Personally, I use the variety of starchy vegetables inherently kosher all year round and get creative! From spiralized, wedges like fries, mashed to riced, these options are a great addition to meals when you want to leave the matza behind while ensuring you feel full.

Here is a list of the serving sizes for cooked starchy vegetables (on Pesach, pick those in accordance with your tradition). Each serving size contains approximately 15 grams of carbohydrate, 3 grams of protein, and about 80 calories. If you are eyeballing servings, ½ cup is equal to about the size of your cupped palm. One cup is about the size of your fist.

- Beets: 1 cup
- Carrots: 1 cup
- Green peas: ½ cup
- Parsnips: ½ cup
- Plantain: ½ cup
- Pumpkin: 1 cup
- Sweet potatoes: ½ cup
- White potatoes: 1 small, or ½ cup mashed, ½ cup roasted, or 10 to 15 French fries
- Winter squash, such as acorn or butternut squash: ¾ cup
- Yams: ½ cup

The most popular starchy vegetable in the American diet is the potato, and it is usually consumed in the form of French fries or potato chips. These food choices are not the healthiest versions of the potato, as they are rich in calories, saturated fat, and sodium. In order to make them a more healthful choice, bake, steam, or roast all starchy veggies. When portioned and cooked appropriately, starchy vegetables can be a healthy food choice, as they're rich in antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and filling fiber. Before you grab the easy choice—matza—think plant-based and go for starchy vegetables during meals and at snack time, too. ♥



Before you grab the easy choice—matza—think plant-based and go for starchy vegetables during meals and at snack time, too.

WEIGHTED BLANKETS

Do they really help insomnia?

The Seder went much later than last year's, yet you still can't sleep.

If you have a hard time falling asleep and you loathe being the only one up in the house, you might take comfort in the fact that insomnia is on the rise in America, to the extent that March 12 has been named Insomnia Awareness Day. Here are some of the statistics to prove it:

30 to 35% of Americans have brief symptoms of insomnia.

15 to 20% have a short-term insomnia disorder, lasting less than three months.

10% have a chronic insomnia disorder, occurring at least three times per week for at least three months.

Insomnia can cause fatigue, inability to focus or concentrate, poor memory, mood disturbance, daytime sleepiness, low motivation or energy, and increased errors or accidents. If insomnia is your pesky nighttime companion, you've probably tried various options to finally go dark. Can a weighted blanket be the solution you've been yearning for?

The best evidence to date comes from a study published in *Journal of Sleep Medicine and Disorders*. This study included 31 adults with chronic insomnia whose sleep was tracked for one week with their usual bedding, then two weeks with a weighted blanket, and then one more week with their usual bedding again.

Four out of five study participants said they liked the weighted blanket. Members of this group slept longer and spent less time awake in the middle of the night, sleep testing showed. Study participants also said they found it easier to settle down to sleep with the weighted blanket. Plus, they reported getting better

sleep and feeling more refreshed the next morning.

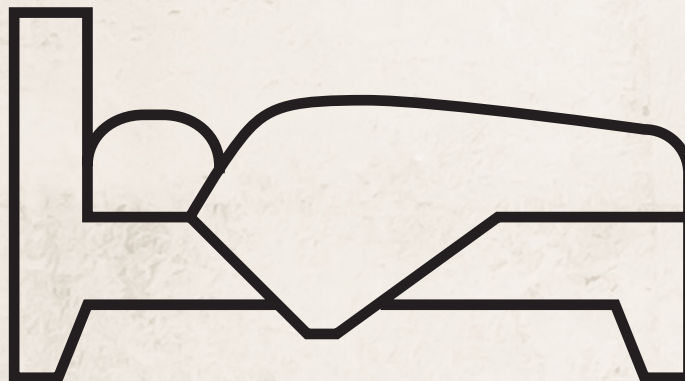
The idea behind weighted blankets is that they may work by providing firm, deep pressure stimulation. "The pressure provides a reassuring and cocooning feeling," says study coauthor Gaby Badre, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor at the University of Gothenburg and medical director of the Sleep Disorders Clinic (SDS Kliniken) in Gothenburg, Sweden.

If you're thinking about buying a weighted blanket, Badre says it should typically be more than ten percent of one's body weight. However, he notes that people vary in exactly how heavy they like the blanket to be. If possible, try one out before purchasing, to feel out what's comfortable for you.

Of course, the blanket should never be so heavy that it restricts your movement or is difficult for you to manage. To be on the safe side, elderly individuals and those with health concerns should talk with their health care provider before trying a weighted blanket. This type of blanket may not be appropriate for people with breathing difficulties, circulatory problems, or temperature regulation issues.

Another point to consider is that the weight should be evenly distributed throughout the blanket. Badre adds, "It's important that the blanket doesn't increase the temperature of the bedding. The fabric should dissipate heat easily."

If you're the do-it-yourself type, you can make your own weighted blanket, since they can run on the expensive side. Due to the lack of research, it's impossible to predict who will see positive results with one. Yet insomniacs seem to be deciding that the possibility of a good night's sleep is worth the investment.





REDEFINING THE PESACH SET

MEDIAOTG



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Contact Lenses



Eyeglasses All Brands



Eye Exams Lens Fittings



Eye Care Accessories



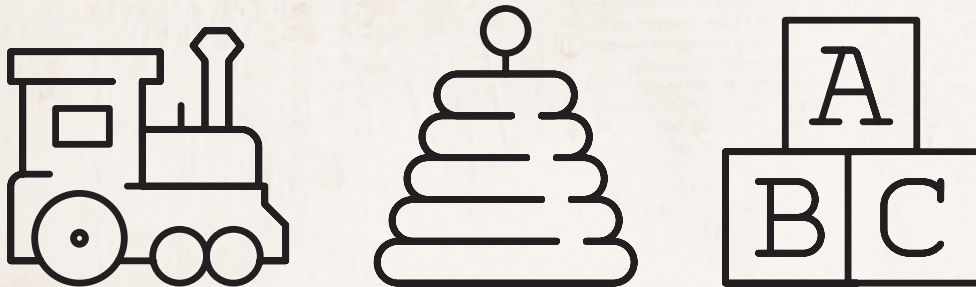
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THE LATEST ISN'T NECESSARILY THE GREATEST

Are the toys you're buying beneficial for your child's development?



With *afikomen* season upon us, we parents may be tempted to buy the latest, most popular gadgets for our children—especially when they're familiar enough with the toy scene to know what's hot. But these may not be the best gifts for the child's development.

In January 2019, a research report in *Pediatrics* provided the details of this not-surprising update. Titled "Ignore the Flashing Screens: The Best Toys Go Back to the Basics," the report implores parents to think about the type of toys they give their children. According to the research, simple, traditional toys are better than the flashy, electronic toys many kids have on their wish lists.

Pediatrician Dr. Aleeya Healey, one of the lead authors on the report, says this report is intended to promote physical, mental, and social wellbeing for infants, children, and youth. Because of its importance, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) used this report as the basis for their recommendations on toys.

In the same vein, a 2018 study published in *Infant Behavior & Development* found that providing kids with fewer toys produced higher quality play, concluding that fewer toys might result in more focus and creativity.

A February 2016 study in *JAMA Pediatrics* found that traditional toys like puzzles, shape sorters, and blocks helped promote language development for children better than

electronic toys.

So which toys should we be buying for our kids? First, it's important not to be enticed by the latest and greatest technology.

"Traditional toys tend to have less of an electronic/digital or media-based background that can detract from promoting the use of a child's own creativity and imagination," says Healey.

Additionally, she explains that the lack of so-called "bells and whistles" associated with more traditional toys seems to better encourage interaction with a caregiver, whether a playmate or instructor.

So what kind of traditional toys are we talking about? Healey says the best choices are simple toys, such as blocks, paper with crayons or paint, dolls, action figures, balls, and books.

Parents should be looking for "toys that will foster interaction with the caregiver," she explains. "Simple board games and card games are great tools to work on development of turn-taking and self-regulation in a fun way."

Nevertheless, she also acknowledges it's important to keep the individual child's likes and interests in mind. An occasional electronic toy won't do much harm, but encourage your child to play primarily with toys that stimulate thinking, creativity, and interaction. How to get kids to love them? Get down on the floor and you're off to a great, fun start.



AUTHENTICALLY ITALIAN



ARTHRITIS FLARING UP ON PESACH?

This food might be the culprit

If you've been wondering what connection Pesach has to your arthritis flare-up, this may be your answer. Research published in *Frontiers in Nutrition* reveals a correlation between the chemical solanine, which is present in nightshade vegetables, and aggravation of arthritis pain and inflammation. Potatoes, the celebrated Pesach food, are a member of the nightshade family, as are tomatoes, eggplant, bell peppers, and paprika. While these vegetables are staple foods for many people, for others they may cause an inflammatory response.

Although the above study did find a correlation between dietary intervention and arthritis management, the Arthritis Foundation opposes the claim. If you have arthritis, you're best off testing this yourself. Swap potato starch for almond flour, stay away from nightshade vegetables over the course of the Yom Tov, and see what happens. If your symptoms improve or don't flare up, you've got your answer.


According to The Arthritis Foundation, there is no specific diet that a person with rheumatoid arthritis should follow, but there are some foods that can help control inflammation. Anti-inflammatory foods recommended by The Arthritis Foundation include:

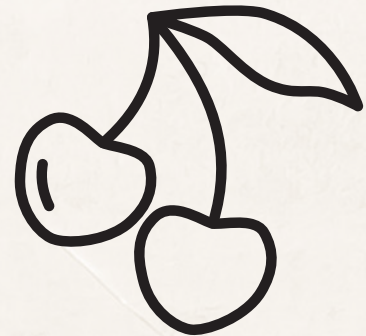
Oily fish: These have a high omega-3 content that may reduce inflammation. Good sources include salmon and tuna.

Colorful fruits and vegetables: Examples include blueberries, cherries, kale, and broccoli, which are full of antioxidants to support the immune system.

Nuts and seeds: These include walnuts, pine nuts, and almonds, which may help with inflammation, due to monounsaturated fats. Olive oil can have a similar effect.

Beans: Examples are black beans, pinto beans, and kidney beans, which contain anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds.

Incorporating these foods into your diet all year long may help control inflammation. Here's to an inflammation-free Pesach! 





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BREATH IS LIFE

HOW LONG CAN YOU HOLD YOUR BREATH FOR?

A deep inhale should take approximately **5 SECONDS**

A deep exhale should take approximately **20 SECONDS**

and could take longer with practice

The average person in good health can hold their breath for approximately **2 MINUTES**

In 1997, American saxophonist Kenny Gorelick used circular breathing to set a Guinness World Record for holding one continuous note for

45 MINUTES AND 47 SECONDS



In 2012, Danish diver Stig Severinsson held his breath underwater for

22 MINUTES AND 22 SECONDS

In 2017, Nigerian saxophonist Femi Kuti broke the record by playing one note for

51 MINUTES AND 38 SECONDS

THE BREATHING-HEALTH CORRELATION

TWO 30-YEAR CLINICAL STUDIES RESEARCHED THE CORRELATION BETWEEN BREATHING AND ILLNESS. HERE ARE SOME OF THEIR FINDINGS.

EXHALE COUNT

33.65% of subjects who exhaled for **2-39 seconds** reported having allergies

4.17% of subjects who exhaled for **100-114 seconds** reported having allergies

1.33% of subjects who exhaled for above **130 seconds** reported having allergies

BREATH RATE

47.36%

of subjects who took **12-24 breaths** per minute reported having trouble falling asleep

25.57%

of subjects who took **9-11 breaths** per minute reported having trouble falling asleep

10.21%

of subjects who took **5-6 breaths** per minute reported having trouble falling asleep

39.91% of subjects who exhaled for **2-39 seconds** reported having heart disease

3.68% of subjects who exhaled for **100-114 seconds** reported having heart disease

0.67% of subjects who exhaled for above **130 seconds** reported having heart disease

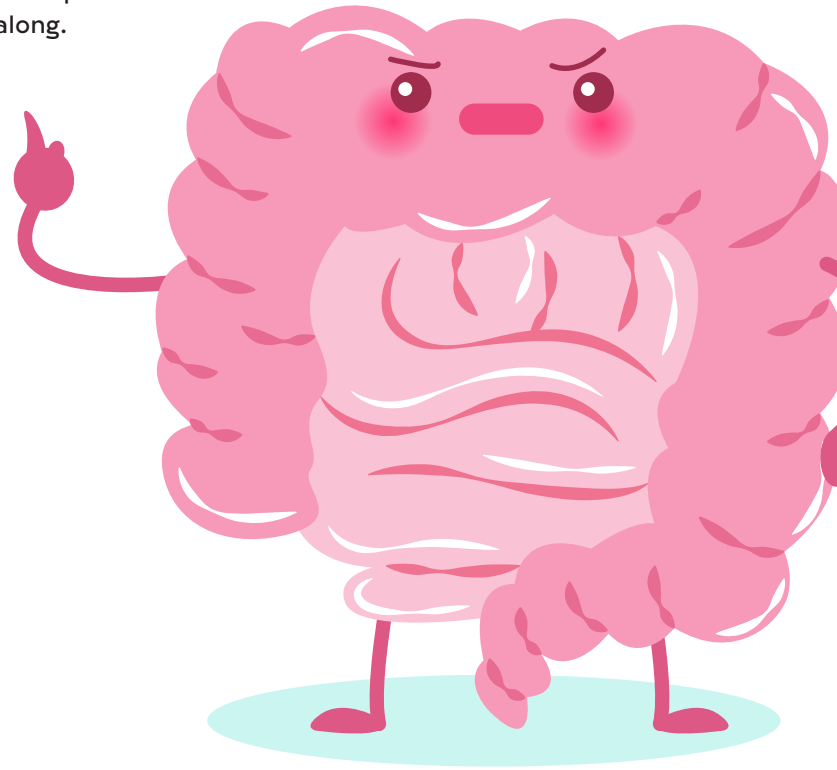
35.63% of subjects who exhaled for **2-39 seconds** were overweight or obese

3.33% of subjects who exhaled for **100-114 seconds** were overweight or obese

0.91% of subjects who exhaled for above **130 seconds** were overweight or obese

Constipation Prevention

Contrary to what you may have thought, Pesach does not have to be synonymous with stomach pain. While many people suffer from constipation throughout this Yom Tov, getting a basic education on the nuts and bolts of digestion can do wonders in changing the stakes. Take this quiz to find out how much you know about one of your body's most important systems and how you can help ease the process along.



1

True or False:

Low fiber intake is the main cause of constipation.

Answer: True.

Since fiber is a carbohydrate that the body cannot digest, it passes through the digestive system, absorbing water and increasing the bulk of the stool, making bowel movements easier. Thus, one of the most important ways to prevent constipation is to increase fiber in your diet. In addition to promoting satiety, fiber helps decrease the risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

2

Which of these foods has the lowest fiber content?

- A. Vegetables
- B. Whole grains
- C. Refined grains
- D. Fruits

Answer: C.

Refined grains, which include matza made with white flour, contain very little fiber. Fiber is found in significant amounts in all plants that we eat. To promote smooth elimination, make sure your meals contain lots of vegetables. Eat at least 10 cups of vegetables that encompass the entire rainbow of color. If tradition allows (certainly during the year), eat the skin of all fruits and vegetables. Try spelt or whole wheat bran matza. Both are higher in fiber than matza made with white flour. The recommended intake of fiber is at least 25-40 grams per day. People who become constipated easily may need higher amounts. Planning your Pesach menus accordingly will help you and your family members reach their daily needs.

3

True or False:

Swapping potato starch with almond flour helps promote smoother elimination.

Answer: True.

While sweet potatoes are high in fiber, white potatoes without their skin are not. Since nuts are a high-fiber food, using almond flour instead of potato starch whenever possible is a great step toward preventing constipation.

4

Which of these should be consumed together with fiber-rich foods in order to achieve optimal evacuation?

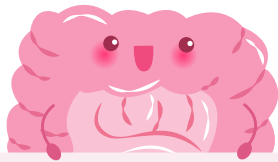
- A. Oil
- B. Coffee
- C. Laxatives
- D. Water

Answer: D.

It's essential to drink water before and after consuming a fiber-rich meal. In fact, eating fiber without providing the body with adequate water can worsen constipation. Aim to drink half your body's weight in ounces daily.

Tips for smoother elimination:

- Snack on fruits and nuts.
- Enjoy herbal tea after meals.
- Exercise, to help promote bowel movement.
- Eat minimally processed foods.
- Get as much sleep as possible.
- Stress less. I know this is easier said than done, but try to spend time each day doing something that brings you joy and peace.
- The probiotic strains of Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium encourage healthy bowels, which translates to easier evacuation. People who regularly consume probiotics enjoy increased frequency, better stool consistency, and a reduced digestive transit time. Yogurt makes for an excellent breakfast with fresh fruit and nuts. But keep in mind that one yogurt a day will not fight constipation on its own; you must consume enough fruits and vegetables as well.
- Eat magnesium-rich foods. Magnesium is important for muscle health and peristalsis (the movement of food along the digestive tract). Low magnesium consumption has been associated with increased constipation. Adequate magnesium intake directs water to the bowels, keeping the stool soft and easier to move. Nuts, fish, and green leafy vegetables, like spinach, are high in magnesium.



Myth: Constipation is age-related.

While it's true that many older people are more likely to experience constipation, this isn't due to aging. Older adults may be eating low-fiber diets, are more sedentary, and may take certain medications that make constipation more likely. Constipation can happen to anyone at any age. Age is not a determining factor.

Coffee for Constipation?

I look forward to my morning cup of Joe every day. Studies indicate that coffee, especially the dark-roast variety, stimulates digestion and contains fiber, oil, and water, all of which help keep the bowels moving. A cup or two will do the trick. Coffee should not be used as a continual solution to constipation, but can be consumed in addition to a healthy, high-fiber diet.

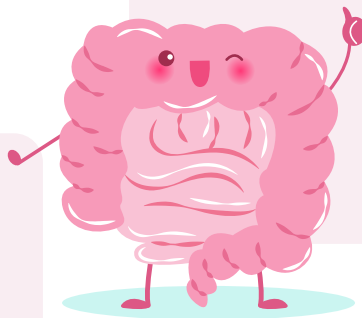


Myth: If you don't have a daily bowel movement, you're constipated.

Each person's body is different. Some people eliminate every day, and some only three times a week. It's okay to go a few days without a bowel movement, if you're feeling fine. If you have less than three bowel movements a week, you are constipated.

Myth: Coffee is dehydrating.

While coffee is a diuretic (promotes urine production), it's an extremely mild one. It also contains a lot of water, so it actually counts toward the daily fluid intake. The amount of coffee that would dehydrate you is more than anyone should be consuming in a day. You won't dehydrate if you have two or even three cups daily, but do keep in mind that drinking too much coffee may lead to constipation. Everything in moderation.



Are Laxatives a Smart Solution?

Natural fiber acts as a bulking agent to help have smooth and easy bowel movements. There are many benefits to a high-fiber diet. Laxatives, on the other hand, increase bowel movements by stimulating the large intestine to move, by drawing extra water into the large intestine, or by acting as a lubricant to help the stool slide through more easily. Some foods, such as prunes, contain fiber, but also stimulate the colon. It is this laxative effect that makes people have a bowel movement after eating prunes or drinking prune juice. Occasional use of small amounts of a laxative is typically not harmful. However, using laxatives often can lead to dependence or to negative, even potentially dangerous, complications. It's crucial to discuss with your doctor all changes in your diet, or medications you plan to take. ♥

Laura Shammah MS, RDN, has been operating a private practice in New York and New Jersey for over 20 years. Her clientele runs the gamut from people with eating disorders to those dealing with hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes and cancer. She also helps clients who run in marathons or are looking to lose or gain weight in a healthy way. Her nutritional guidance is published in MaryAnne Cohen's book *Lasagna for Lunch: Declaring Peace With Emotional Eating*. Laura can be reached at 718-376-0062 or Laurashammah@aol.com.

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חג כשר ושמח



1 What motivated you to launch your organization?

I gave birth to a son with cerebral palsy (CP) 34 years ago, at a time when there were few services and little support in our community. There was no case management, *frum* special needs schools, respite, or early intervention centers. In fact, few of these children even lived at home. Therapy entailed frequent trips to a rehab hospital. Any time we needed any kind of resource to help our child, I had to search for it on my own. I became quite adept at picking up interesting pieces of information and mentally filing them away for later use.

Fast forward a few years, and the stigma attached to having a child with special needs began to wane. Schools and special needs agencies began to blossom. The extra assistance made it easier for families to care for their children at home, but it was still difficult to find the practical information that's so essential to successfully raising a child with different needs.

Since I've always had an affinity for collecting and sharing information that may prove useful, parents would reach out to me to help

them with their particular issues. In one case, for example, a woman contacted me regarding an insurance issue with her eleven-year-old son's upcoming surgery. He had CP, which manifested in one hand being tightly fisted. Three local orthopedists declared he needed muscle-release surgery on all five fingers. However, sports medicine differs vastly from disability medicine. Being experienced with CP, I knew how to test if he had actual muscle contractures—and he didn't. The unnecessary surgery was cancelled. And he was deemed a perfect candidate for new therapies which I had read about.

A few days later, a speeding car missed me by just a few inches. I felt Hashem was telling me, "You take care of my children, and I'll take care of you." At that moment, I decided I would go public with my passion of helping parents of children with special needs. A short while later, when registering for a parent matching program run by Deena Weinberg, a fellow parent of a child with special needs, I found a kindred spirit. Though she lives in Israel, the Jewish world is small and intertwined. We joined forces to create Beineinu, doing what we can to help fellow families with special needs anywhere in the world.

10 Questions for:

Golda Turner, Director of Beineinu

Beineinu in a nutshell:

Started in 2008 by parents of children with special needs, Beineinu helps families of children with special needs and professionals by using “parent power” to provide the information and support they seek. Services include a hotline, an international parent matching program, an equipment exchange list, informational email newsletters, and the Beineinu.org website—a 4,000 page database of information on topics ranging from medical to organizations, resources, funding, accessibility, special needs *shidduchim*, service providers, *chizuk* and inspiration, and more.

What is your current role at Beineinu?

I’m the director of the US branch of Beineinu. I personally answer our hotline and emails and do much of the work on our website. Our work is completely volunteer-based. Any funds raised go directly to assist families in need.

What is one great challenge you face in running the organization?

“Special needs” is an umbrella term, encompassing thousands of diagnoses with varying issues. No two cases are the same. We are called upon to assist in areas ranging from physical disabilities, medical and genetic issues, mental health, behavioral health, and even geriatrics. We have fielded calls from all over the USA, Canada, Israel, and Europe. As much knowledge as we have amassed over the years, it’s impossible to know everything. It takes much research and tremendous *siyata d’Shmaya* to be able to provide the information or connections that people need.

Today, almost every family has a relative with some type of special need- physical, medical, or mental.

4 Can you share a story that highlights the work you do?

A woman from Europe, whose child has a rare disorder, contacted us to help her find other parents dealing with the same issue. After connecting her to families living in Israel, she traveled to meet them. Together, they convinced a hospital to conduct a professional research study on their children's disorder.

In another case, we helped a child with special needs celebrate the bar mitzvah of his dreams. We recruited an entire team of entertainers and rented just the right venue for him to truly feel like the king of the night.

6 What do you wish people would know about special needs?

Today, almost every family has a relative with some type of special need—physical, medical, or mental. Some are quite obvious, others not as readily visible. People with special needs are first and foremost people, just like you and me. They have dreams, hopes, and feelings, too. They want to be loved and accepted. They want to feel accomplished and successful in life. The support of their family and community can help make their dreams come true.

Parents of children with special needs are lovingly doing all they can to make their children the best they can possibly be. They are juggling heavy balls, such as medical issues, multiple therapies, behavioral problems, government bureaucracy, funding, the special ed system, and more—trying not to let even one ball drop. They deserve our support and admiration for the amazing job they're doing.

If you're a parent of a child with special needs, you can lighten the load of fellow families by sharing information and providing a listening ear. Your experience can save others much hard work and heartache. Together we can make the world a better place for everyone.

5 Can you share a positive story you've recently experienced?

Our equipment exchange lists medical and therapy equipment that people are seeking to give away. We try to find new homes for them, where they will be needed. A woman recently contacted us that she was looking for a recliner for a bedridden patient. A motorized recliner in the size that suited her preferences perfectly was listed in her area, and we referred her to a *chesed* organization for transport. Often, knowing that there's someone out there to help out with these seemingly petty details makes all the difference in being able to take care of our loved ones with more happiness and tranquility.

7 Tell us about an interesting request you've received on behalf of a child with special needs.

A young couple gave birth to a baby with Down syndrome. The well-meaning grandparents immediately pressured them to save themselves heartache and give up the child. The grandfather went so far as to call their Rebbe in Eretz Yisrael to push the couple to give up their disabled child.

The couple contacted us for advice, and we spoke about the possible scenarios. Though children with Down syndrome often have certain medical issues, we explained, they usually tend to be warm and loving, and function reasonably well. We even know of a few married couples who have Down syndrome.

We discussed the grandparent's reaction, explaining that they certainly have their children's best interests at heart. They want to save them the difficulties involved in raising a child with special needs; though no one can predict the future of anyone, even those who start life on the right foot.

We emphasized that it's the couple themselves who must make an informed decision. They're the ones who would live with either the challenge of raising a disabled child or the lifelong guilt of having given up their baby.

We connected them with a number of parents who have children with Down syndrome and are active in the disability community. We also sent them a copy of the excellent *chizuk* video, "This Isn't What I Ordered."

Today this couple is enjoying their sweet daughter. They tell us that the grandparents have accepted her and lovingly spoil her as much as all of their other grandchildren.



8 What's the best part of your work? The toughest?

The best part of our work is the satisfaction of having improved the lives of an entire family. The toughest is finding a parent match for a rare diagnosis. Many recently diagnosed families are drowning in a dark abyss and searching for help. There are certainly other families out there with a child who has the same condition, but who are afraid to go public due to the perceived stigma of *shidduchim*. Confidentially volunteering to help would certainly bring a *berachah* into their homes.

9 How do you manage the stress that comes along with your taxing work?

Dealing with people who are in pain is heartbreaking. I bless them that someday they should enjoy the same *nachas* that I now have from my son. Looking for the positive in every situation works wonders.

10 What was the best compliment you've ever received?

We get thanks and compliments all the time from both families and professionals who use our services. But the best compliment is what we see behind the scenes. A peek at our website's statistics shows that many pages of our online database have received well over 10,000 hits. Some hot topics are mental health, special needs *shidduchim*, *bikur cholims*, medical referrals, and medical *gemachs*. Thousands of people benefit from the many hours of work we put in. Without funding or fanfare, we're making a difference in people's lives. ♡



Fitness Quotes I Live By

While the benefits of exercise are many, it's not always that much fun. There are times when the going gets tough, and we simply want to quit. Here are some of my favorite fitness quotes that help me stay motivated. Keep them in mind during your next workout, or for when you aren't getting results as quickly as you'd like.

1

If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you.

If you keep doing the same exercise at the same intensity over and over, your body adapts and stops changing. Unless you increase the stress you place on your muscles over time, your fitness gains will stall. The same is true of cardiovascular exercise. If you run or cycle at the same pace

and never push yourself, you plateau. Remind yourself that getting fitter involves a challenge.

On the other hand, don't do an intense workout every time you train. You need rest and recovery time as well. Exercise is about balance. Listen to your body.

Syma Kranz, PFC, is a certified aerobics, Pilates, and Barre instructor, as well as the fitness director at Fusion Fitness in Lakewood, New Jersey. What started out as a small exercise class in her home catapulted into a popular gym that prides itself with tzanua, professional instructors and an appropriate atmosphere with lyric-free music and proper attire. Syma specializes in training women to integrate fitness into their busy lives, paying special attention to proper form and alignment and specializing in core and pelvic floor strengthening.

2

Do something today your future self will thank you for.

Exercise benefits almost every organ in your body. You hear the most about the heart health benefits of aerobic exercise, but working out directly enhances brain, pancreas, and immune health as well. Plus, it aids other organs

indirectly by controlling body weight.

Exercise adds years to your life, but it also adds life to your years, as staying fit and functional helps you enjoy life to its fullest at all ages.

3

Use it or lose it.

This quote is spot-on for your muscles. If you don't challenge your muscles, particularly the large muscles in your lower body, you'll lose strength, muscle size, and functionality as you age. If you don't strength train, you'll lose around 4% of your muscle mass every 10 years after age 30. Over time, this leads to sarcopenia, the age-related loss

of muscle, combined with gains in body fat. Not only does this reduce functionality, but it's also bad for your metabolic health. The best way to avoid sarcopenia is to weight train. "Use it or lose it" should be a reminder, especially when you feel too lazy to exercise.

4

Strive for progress, not perfection.

The desire for perfection can get in the way of doing anything at all. Perfection is paralyzing. It makes you second guess your abilities and compare yourself to others. You're on your own health and fitness course, and it's different

from everyone else's. Learn from others, but don't measure yourself against them. Your goal isn't to be the strongest, but to be stronger than you were six months ago. Don't live up to some outside standard.

5

Nothing will work unless you do.

You can read all the fitness literature on the market and be no closer to being fitter or healthier. They say that knowledge is power, but real power comes from taking action. Society promotes a "quick fix" approach to getting

fit and healthy. Unfortunately, quick fixes don't deliver long term. You can't swallow a pill and hope to sustainably lose weight. It takes a plan, focus, and, yes, you have to put in the work.

6

You're only one workout away from a good mood.

Exercise has immediate positive benefits for your mood. You've heard about endorphins, chemicals released during exercise, but exercise also boosts the release of BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), a protein linked with improvements in mood. Simply getting the blood pumping and doing something positive for your health can be a

mood lifter. You might have come home from work tired and feeling down, but once you launch into a workout, you feel reinvigorated and the stress melts away. That's the power of moving your body. The times you feel the most stressed are when you need a workout the most, along with a good night's sleep, of course. ♥



From Table to Bed

Eating makes me feel sleepy

Question:

At the end of every meal, I feel tired. I consider my meals nutritious and balanced. I practice portion control and am mindful to include protein, vegetables, healthy fats, and carbs. I limit white sugar and white flour. Why am I still tired?

Don't Pass Over

Skipping meals, a habit many are guilty of on Yom Tov, may be another constipation culprit. When we bank calories for a later meal, we're more likely to overeat, which causes more problems for the digestive system. In order for waste to be eliminated properly, and for all other bodily functions to occur, the body requires consistent nutrition. So, if you finished your Seder or evening meal late, that's not a reason to skip breakfast the next morning. Instead, keep it light. Enjoy a fruit with an egg or yogurt.

Hotel How-To's

If you're spending Pesach at a hotel, here's something important to keep in mind. This concept also holds true when you're eating out at a restaurant, or enjoying a meal you're paying for in any setting. Several years ago, our family spent a beautiful Yom Tov at KMR's lavish Pesach program. We had free access to an ice cream stand all day long, and the tea room filled with chocolates, nuts, and cakes was open all day and night, as well. Still, I ate mindfully throughout our stay, and I didn't gain one ounce throughout the entire week there.

Instead of feeling I was losing out by not "cashing in" on the feasting opportunities, I knew what I had come for. We didn't pay to be treated to calorie-laden dishes all day long. I came with the mindset that I would be served healthful food on a golden platter, which I was. There's so much more to enjoy other than the food! Of course, there's nothing wrong with enjoying a dessert here and there, but not because you "have to make the most of it." Enjoy it because you want it.

When we left after a beautiful week, I was the lucky one. The guests who "packed it in" were the ones who ended up feeling gypped. Especially if you're going to an expensive hotel, request healthful foods. Enjoy crisp salads and hearty vegetable dishes. Be kind to yourself, and you'll be the winner in the end.



Shani's response:

I can imagine that your circumstances are frustrating. On the one hand, it appears you're doing everything right in terms of your food choices. On the other hand, the post-meal response your body is generating doesn't reflect that. Since I don't know the specifics of what you consider a balanced meal, I'll provide a general response that will hopefully offer some clarity on the topic.

Once a health condition, such as diabetes, is ruled out, I've found that the two main causes for the tired, sluggish feeling that people experience upon finishing their meal—postprandial somnolence—are either due to the quality of the food they consumed or its quantity. In terms of quality, certain foods simply cause a strain on the digestive system, burdening it with heavy work that naturally leads to exhaustion. Foods rich in carbohydrates may lead to a peak in blood sugar levels, followed by a drastic drop, which leaves the individual feeling sleepy, as well. Even foods that are rich in protein may lead to somnolence. The amino acid tryptophan, which occurs in many protein-rich foods such as cheese, helps the body produce serotonin, a chemical that plays a role in regulating sleep cycles.

However, while the type of food you eat does contribute to postprandial somnolence, the more likely reason is the *quantity* of food you're consuming. You write that you practice portion control, but the question is what portion control means to you. Many people aren't aware that portion control varies for each individual. What's more than enough food for one person is too little for another. I've found that way more people feel tired after a meal because of the quantity of food they consumed as opposed to the quality. In fact, your body could get even tired from eating too much salad. When you give your body more than it needs, even if it's all healthful food,

you're giving it too much work.

If you feed your body with just enough food to keep you going, dividing your intake into three balanced meals throughout the day, I guarantee you won't be tired. On the contrary, when we eat the right quantities of the right foods, we feel more energized after every meal.

Feeling tired after a meal is a common complaint; I hear it from women of all ages. When these women learn to eat the right amount of food at the right time, they feel instantly more energized.

As a case in point, one woman I'm working with was apprehensive about sticking to her balanced food plan over Purim. I kept reassuring her that this would be her happiest Purim ever. Afterward, she reported that not only did she feel good about herself for having stayed in control, but she also felt more energized than ever. Previously, by the time Purim ended, her exhaustion was so intense that she crashed into bed before having a chance to get the house in order. This year, she went to sleep with her house spic-and-span.

So many women tell me that once they start eating right—in quality and quantity—they're not desperate to crawl into bed on Friday night or Shabbos afternoon anymore. Instead, they feel energized enough to take a long walk. Food is fuel. When the body receives the right amount of fuel when it needs it, the individual feels invigorated.

If you to want feel energized on Pesach and all year round, do not overeat—not even salad. If you don't intuitively feel what a proper portion is for you, consult with someone who can guide you accordingly. I recommend going to every Yom Tov meal in a tailored garment, not a loose-fitting robe, which helps keep us mindful of when we're feeling full. When you're in control of your food intake and you consume the right amounts of the right foods, you feel great in every way. ♥

Please send your questions to the nutritionist to info@wellspringmagazine.com.

Shani Taub, CDC, has been practicing as a certified nutritionist in Lakewood for almost a decade, meeting with clients in person and on the phone. She also owns the highly popular Shani Taub food line, which carries healthy, approved, pre-measured foods and delicacies sold at supermarkets and restaurants.



SAVE ME PLEASE!

Was the brain surgery I underwent a medical error?

By Meira Polatsek

The summer I turned 20 should have been one of the most exciting ones in my life.

I was at the cusp of adulthood, engaged to be married in September. While the preparations and leisure time were fun, I woke up one morning to a sight that marred the joy: the left side of my face looked different, as if it was slightly paralyzed. Although the numbness wasn't so obvious to others, when it persisted for several days, I became concerned.

Because I had been to the dentist just a couple of days previously, our first suspicion was that perhaps there was an infection in my tooth. But when the dentist declared me infection-free, and I broke out in a rash all over my body the next day, we were out of clues. "It must be pre-wedding stress," was the unanimous verdict.

Since my symptoms didn't profoundly affect my functioning, I did my utmost not to focus on them during that hectic time in my life. We continued our shopping rounds and last-minute prep, and before I knew it, my new husband and I were off to Eretz Yisrael to start our married life there together.

During the four months we lived in Eretz Yisrael, I experienced overwhelming fatigue. Perhaps, I surmised, it was due to the climate. Or maybe I was just going through a lot of changes. But when we moved back to the States, the next symptom presented itself: gastrointestinal issues. From having a relatively healthy digestive system, I found myself experiencing intense stomach pain, bloating, and a general intolerance of food. After every

meal, I had to lie in bed for hours until I felt better. Although I was eating very little, I was simultaneously gaining weight due to the swelling all over my body.

When I went to see my primary care doctor, he did all the basic testing and bloodwork. When all results returned completely normal, the GI specialist was my next stop. There too, the array of tests I underwent, including a colonoscopy, left me no smarter. Due to my abnormal swelling, we went to see a nephrologist (kidney doctor) next. We got the same results; from his perspective, I had a clean bill of health.

For six months, I lived with this array of peculiar, uncomfortable symptoms. We trudged from doctor to doctor, while I tried to lead a semblance of a normal life. At one point all my symptoms plateaued, but nothing was improving. I was a relatively newly married young woman, whose life revolved around doctor's appointments and hours of rest. My feet didn't fit into my shoes, and my fingers were so swollen, I couldn't squeeze them into my rings. While I felt uncomfortable about the unexpected chain of events, thankfully, my new husband was fully committed to supporting me along the journey.

Soon after we returned from Eretz Yisrael, so I could continue my studies in graduate school, my first semester started. Although school life was taxing, I wasn't ready to give up on having as normal a life as possible. Toward the end of the first semester, however, I started experiencing painfully acute headaches that I had never felt before, forcing me to drop my head on my desk and control my urge to scream in pain. Thinking of them brings tears to my eyes.

When summer rolled around, I noticed that I was losing vision. I, who had enjoyed 20/20 vision, now had to squint in order to see my notes. And the loss was rapid. With every passing day, I found myself vision becoming increasingly blurry. Before long, I could no longer recognize faces from a distance. As a PA student, where the average number of weekly exams is five, my vision loss wasn't very helpful toward my studies. My friends at school were so nice about it, though. They would read me the notes over the phone so I would be prepared for class the next day.

By the time I had been experiencing symptoms for a year, the only doctor I hadn't seen was an endocrinologist. When we heard of one who was considered an expert at solving medical mysteries, I put all my hopes into my upcoming appointment with her. At my first visit, she did lots of tests.

The results, we hoped, would finally determine the culprit of the baffling assortment of symptoms.

Indeed, the results were different, and I was not given a clean bill of health this time. The diagnosis was frightening: an endocrine tumor. While I didn't have any symptoms of the condition, I was so relieved to have finally gotten a diagnosis. At that point, I was gripped with the fear that I would be sick forever; that I would always be trudging from doctor to doctor, pushing myself to survive another day. I was also terrified I would end up losing my vision entirely. The left or right side of my face would go numb unexpectedly. There were days when I was itching so badly, I couldn't leave the house. Although I had never told anyone, because I didn't want to complain about too many things, there were times I would randomly feel paralyzed in one area or another. With issues like these, I was delighted to hear that there was a way out.

Endocrine (pituitary gland) tumors are so microscopic that they're diagnosed based on lab tests, not imaging. Their removal procedure, too, is thus different from the usual tumor removal process. Through a tool that is inserted into the nasal cavity, the surgeon scrapes off whatever looks slightly abnormal on the pituitary gland at the base of the brain.

Thus, based on the lab results the endocrinologist had ordered, the verdict was clear: I would have to undergo the brain procedure in order to finally get rid of my mysterious issues. Desperate to be freed from my medical bondage, I went into surgery feeling hopeful. As planned, the surgeon did his work, later reporting that he saw a whitish area on my pituitary gland. But what happened next was a great shock for us all. Even after the procedure, which should have removed all traces of the tumor, there was no change in my

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lab results. In fact, my hormone levels were higher than ever. The surgery had not been effective.

When I learned that my last hope had been dashed, and I saw that almost immediately after my surgery all of my symptoms were back with a vengeance, the only thing I could do was cry. Here I was, a young woman married for all but two years, trying to get my life together, only to be told there was no solution to my mysterious problems.

A short while after I had surgery, my endocrine tests were sent to Mayo Clinic's lab, which is known to be more accurate. This time, the results came back completely clear. In other words, the doctors surmised, there was probably a lab abnormality in the first lab where I was tested, which resulted in my erroneous diagnosis. Although what happened in my case was very rare, results showed that I probably did not have an endocrine tumor. It was a medical error.

But what *did* I have? What was inhibiting me from leading a normal life? I was nearing my final semester in graduate school, which had been an arduous experience. I managed to get so far only thanks to the kind student advisor, through whose accommodations I was able to have more than the two allowed annual absences and to take the exams at times that were good for me. But the next phase of the program involved an internship in the hospital, which would not allow for any accommodations at all.

Although I did start off the first rotation of internship with the encouragement of my family and friends—my mother stocked our freezer for us—I took off the second rotation in order to fly out of state with my husband to the Mayo Clinic. World-renowned as the place that provides accurate diagnoses for some of the most complicated symptoms, we hoped their team would give us the answers we were desperate for. For the entire month of February last year, I underwent various invasive procedures. When I started experiencing joint pain while there, all the doctors could tell me was that I had an accumulation of fluid in my joints, but they couldn't determine why. The medical team was kind and helpful, and we did spend a fun Purim there with the *frum* family on campus, who exhibited incredible hospitality, but we weren't getting any conclusive answers.

After one month of testing, we were speculating whether to leave or stay, when I got the phone call from my friend Chaya that turned everything around for us. "Meira," she said, her voice louder than usual, "I know what's wrong with you. Come home!"

She did know me well and she had some medical

background, but how could she know what was going on with me, when all of the experts were stumped? "Were you ever tested for Lyme disease?" she asked me. "Did you ever feel better after taking antibiotics?"

I gave her question a few moments of thought, and I realized that yes, the only time I felt good during the whole episode was the first two days after surgery, when I was being pumped with antibiotics. While I initially thought the surgery had worked, I later realized that the antibiotics had been the secret to my short-lived improvement.

"How are you so sure you know what I'm suffering from?" I asked Chaya. Her father-in-law, it turned out, is a pediatrician who specializes in diagnosing and treating Lyme disease. After decades of seeing patients presenting with the baffling array of symptoms and receiving no cure, he became thoroughly knowledgeable in the field. "Yesterday, he was telling me about the condition's mysterious symptoms," Chaya said to me, "and that's when I realized that everything he was describing was what you're going through."

While I was hopeful that Chaya's father-in-law would be able to help me, we were still waiting for one result at Mayo. Undecided about whether to leave or stay, we reached out to my grandfather, an esteemed Rosh Yeshivah, who gave me a lot of *chizuk* throughout. "Just go to the doctor who specializes in Lyme," he advised. "And may he have the *siyata d'Shmaya* to finally help you."

As soon as we were back in New York, I went to see my friend's father-in-law, Dr. Reinhold, in Brooklyn. His first question was if I have facial swelling. "Of course," was my answer. That was actually my first symptom. That, he said, is a common initial manifestation of the disease. When Dr. Reinhold asked me about other symptoms, I had almost all of them. Why hadn't anyone picked up on this obvious thread? I wondered aloud. In fact, I had even been tested for Lyme during my two years of testing. How was it that the diagnosis didn't come up? "Often, because there are many co-infections that must be tested for, only extensive testing will provide positive results. Someone might get a negative through conventional testing, but still have the disease. Also, Lyme disease is known as the common imitator," he explained. "Because many of its symptoms are usually attributed to other conditions, it's usually not detected early on."


When Dr. Reinhold conducted a neurological exam, he noticed some abnormalities; for example, that I couldn't move my eyes in all directions. While my symptoms all pointed toward a Lyme diagnosis, Dr. Reinhold couldn't confirm it

until the lab results returned.

After two and a half weeks of anxious waiting, a few days before Pesach last year, I finally got the call: You have Lyme disease. So that was the reason I was experiencing so many different symptoms. I had been infected by a tick, probably during my stay in the Catskills the summer that I was engaged, and the disease had spread all over my body. Dr. Reinhold pointed out that the lab results I had received in error, which led to my unnecessary surgery, may have been abnormal as a result of Lyme's interference with my antibody count.

Once the positive results were in, Dr. Reinhold was ready to start me on his treatment regimen, which includes antibiotics along with herbal supplements—not strictly conventional. After following his protocol for one month, the headaches disappeared. As the days passed, I felt better and better. I was

emerging from the fuzz that I'd almost become accustomed to living in for two and a half years.

During the year subsequent to my diagnosis, I've experienced constant improvement. Healing from Lyme is a long process that requires lots of patience and stamina. Any time I have a small flare-up, I remind myself of how I felt just a year ago, and I'm filled with hope again. Over this year, I've had a chance to contemplate and to appreciate how many wonderful people in the community tried to help us out in so many ways, selfless people who had no idea who we are. And I'm so grateful to Hashem that after my seemingly endless trek from doctor to doctor—41 in all—we finally reached the right messenger, the true diagnosis, and the hope I had been yearning for all along. 

Names and identifying details have been changed to protect anonymity.

Understanding Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a multi-systemic illness caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Bb), and is transmitted when a human is bitten by an infected tick. If a person isn't diagnosed early, or if the disease is left untreated or not treated adequately, it may cause debilitating arthritic, cardiac, neurological, digestive, or psychiatric conditions. It can cause long-term disability, or even be fatal. Lyme disease is called the "Great Imitator" because it mimics other diseases like Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, ALS, and an array of mental disorders, like schizophrenia.

While Lyme disease and other co-infections can be dangerous, if an individual who was bitten by an infected tick catches the disease on time, they can save themselves years of aggravation and deterioration. Since most conventional doctors know very little about Lyme disease, and blood tests can show negative while the disease may very well be in the body, it's crucial for a Lyme disease patient to be their own advocate in order to ensure they receive the treatment necessary for recovery.

If you observe any unusual symptoms or some of the symptoms below, especially after the summer, don't waste time in getting the diagnosis and treatment you need:

- joint pain
- persistent headaches
- dizziness
- tingling
- numbness
- anxiety
- sudden change in cognition/behavior

Symptoms can appear from 48 hours after being bitten to weeks later. A small percentage of people with early-stage Lyme disease will see the bull's eye rash, which is a circular pattern on the skin. A common characteristic in the early stage is a stiff neck, which occurs when the disease penetrates into the nervous system. Many people will also feel flu-like symptoms in this stage. However, not all cases of Lyme disease manifest themselves in this way. It's important to note that a large percentage of people who contract Lyme disease don't initially experience any symptoms.

In its later stages, the symptoms are more severe. Because they may disappear and reappear at varying times, people may miss the pattern, attributing their symptoms to immediate issues.



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Age: 23 **Gender:** Female **Location:** Manhattan

Weight: 190 lbs. **Height:** 5'4"

Marital Status: Single **Occupation:** College Student



Favorite health food: Vegetables. I love their refreshing crunch.

That's great! Vegetables add fiber to your meal and make you feel fuller for longer. Vegetables are an important part of healthy eating and are the ideal source for many nutrients, including potassium, folate (folic acid), and vitamins A, E, and C.

Favorite junk food: Ice cream

No worries. Several brands of ice cream can be considered as a treat or even a snack on a balanced plan. You can have your ice cream and enjoy it, too!

Favorite exercise: Bench press. Here's why I love this exercise: besides for the fact that I get to lie down, which as a medical student is a treat for me, I really see my strength building up. I started at merely 60 lbs. on the bench and now I can actually bench 220 lbs.

Favorite nutritious dish: Chicken and quinoa.

Chicken is a great source of lean, low-fat protein, which contributes to muscle growth and development. Quinoa is gluten-free, high in protein, and one of the few plant foods that contain sufficient amounts of all nine essential amino acids. It's also high in fiber, magnesium, B vitamins, iron, potassium, calcium, phosphorus, vitamin E, and various beneficial antioxidants.

My usual bedtime: 2:00 a.m. **My usual wake-up time:** 7:00 a.m.

On average, five hours of sleep is not sufficient to provide the body with the necessary rest for optimal functioning. Aim for 7-9 hours every night.

My biggest meal on a usual day: Dinner. The only time I can actually sit down to a meal properly is dinner time, because I'm in school all day.


My usual dinner menu: Something I've cooked up a night or two before. I usually enjoy a lot of protein, a lot of veggies (either steamed or raw), and a side starch like quinoa or pasta.

My weight loss saga: It's difficult for me to eat on time throughout the day, since I'm in school for many hours. Also, when I'm busy studying, which is 90% of the day, I tend to lose focus on my food.

Greatest weight loss challenge: Not going to the snack machine. Since I don't have much time to prepare my meals, the snack machine is a super-convenient quick fix for a sweet tooth or a small snack. However, they always load it up with candies and junky snack bags because they know how we students get! We "need" the sugar to "keep going."

It makes sense that you get in the mood of a snack over your long day at school, but picking the wrong snack usually means loading up on additional carbs, fats and sugars, which further generate your cravings for more of the same. It's a chain reaction. If you feed your body less junk, it'll crave less of it. Even if you're short on time, you can always go for whole fruit or ready cut-up veggies as a healthy snack.

My weight/lifestyle goals: To lose 40 lbs.

How I would treat myself if I get there: Book a trip to Europe and a membership at a gymnastics studio. 

Rachel Esses is a nutrition counselor at Nutrition by Tanya, a nutrition practice run by Tanya Rosen, which has locations in Boro Park, Flatbush, Lakewood, Monsey, Monroe, Williamsburg, Queens, Five Towns, and Israel. Tanya is the creator of the TAP (Tanya approved products) line available on her website, offices, and at select supermarkets, offering all-natural low-calorie delicious snacks and food. Tanya can be reached through The Wellspring.

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THE POWER OF ONE GOOD BREATH

At 12 years old, he took a deep breath—and his first step.

By Shiffy Friedman

The entire existence of the human being is hinged on his breath. In... out... in... out... 25 to 30,000 times per day oxygen enters our lungs to fill our body with life and then exits in the form of carbon dioxide. With every breath we take, we enable the many complex systems in our bodies to fulfill their vital roles, not only keeping us alive but enabling optimal functioning. While it's common knowledge that breath is life, the extent of the effect breathing has on us is not. Here is one fascinating piece of proof.

When we moved into our current apartment, the first thing I noticed about the Hirschbaum family living next door was the child-sized wheelchair outside their front door. When Ruchama, who has turned out to be the dream neighbor in every way, came to say Hi!, a platter of cut-up fruit in her hands, two of her young sons came along, one standing next to her and the other in a crawling position. “These are my twins,” she announced. “They’re nine years old. He’s Moishy, and he’s Pinchas,” she said, looking toward the floor. In a lower voice, by way of explanation, she turned to me and said, “They were born early.”

Over time, we’ve forged a connection, and often speak about Pinchas, Ruchama’s now twelve-year-old son, around whom her life revolves. Even as a full-time medical secretary and a very astute homemaker, frequent hostess, and mother of six, Ruchama spent hours every day at the various therapy centers that are geared toward children with needs like his, children whose mental and emotional capacity are completely up to par but whose physical disabilities profoundly impact their lives. Children—I only recently learned—with cerebral palsy (CP).

“Until last year,” Ruchama recently confided, “my husband and I didn’t tell anyone, including my parents and in-laws that Pinchas has cerebral palsy. All these years, we decided to keep it a secret. Everyone understood that his complications were a result of his premature birth. Because of the misconception that CP always results in cognitive impairment, we felt it would be better for him to grow up without the risk of being wrongly labeled. He’s a brilliant

child, who does great in cheder. He’s beloved by his friends and does well in all areas, except in moving his legs.”

Indeed, I’m constantly awed by the joy of life Pinchas exudes. Despite his challenges, he’s particularly on the ball and with the program, exactly as his parents want people to view him. To all of us, even my young children, he’s Pinchas, the smiling, cheerful, normal Pinchas, who happened to be wheelchair-bound—until last year. Just about a year ago, the Hirschbaums experienced an incredible miracle. Hashem’s messenger was world-renowned physical therapist Dr. Mary Massery, who was flown in from Chicago for just two weeks to teach her groundbreaking method to physical therapists in Israel. Providentially, Pinchas was the child she used as her model.

In January 2007, when Pinchas and his twin brother Moishy were born, Ruchama was overcome with emotion. Not only was she blessed with two healthy baby boys, but her seven-month bedrest had finally come to an end. Since the twins were born at 29 weeks—a full 2 months premature, Ruchama expected, as with two of her older children who were born early, that their development would be delayed to some extent. “It was such a miracle to look at the two beautiful little boys who had finally come into this world, and I was so happy for our three older children, who were desperate to have me back home and functioning,” she recalls. While the babies did stay in the hospital for a few weeks, their issues were not of particular concern to the medical team. “All we were told,” says Ruchama, “was that in the brain scans of Baby B, who would later be called Pinchas, the doctors saw some minor bleeding, but that they weren’t concerned about it. Neither were we.”

When Ruchama finally brought the babies home, she already had daily sessions with a physical therapist set up for them. As the months passed, however, especially because she had his twin brother to compare him to, Ruchama started picking up on the signs in Pinchas.

At three years old, Pinchas was already learning the *Alef Beis* and speaking fluently, but he still couldn't sit.

“Within a few months,” she says, “the voice I wished to ignore in my head was becoming louder. Pinchas was clearly exhibiting low muscle tone. He couldn't lift his head, and every part of his development was just slower.” So Ruchama had his hours of physical therapy increased.

At six months old—the age the doctors recommended Pinchas be screened due to the bleeding originally seen in his brain—Ruchama and her husband received the diagnosis: Pinchas had CP. As a result of a loss of oxygen at birth, his muscle control, muscle tone, posture, and balance had been affected. Since CP ranges from mild to severe, impacting some children only physically and others also cognitively, Ruchama and her husband anxiously anticipated their child's development, desperate to know how the condition would affect him. “Before long,” she says, “we realized that Pinchas was a child like any other. He was smiling, saying his first words just when he had to, and picking up on all the cues like his twin brother. Physically, however, he wasn't making it.”

Despite their busy schedules, the Hirschbaums spent


hours at therapists' sessions, eager to watch their child show even a tiny step of improvement. “At three years old,” Ruchama recalls, “Pinchas was already learning the *Alef Beis* and speaking fluently, but he still couldn't sit. Because he couldn't even rotate on his own, he slept in my bed every night, waking me up every time he needed to turn. ‘Mommy,’ he would whisper, ‘roll me onto my side please.’ Five minutes later, ‘Mommy, I want to turn this way now.’ Taking care of him was a round-the-clock job.”

When one of the therapists said to Ruchama, “Why are you investing so much in your child? He'll never be able to sit,” she knew it was time to find a new one. “One year later, baruch Hashem, after working with another therapist in the same clinic, Pinchas started sitting on his own. When his former therapist passed by one day, she could not hide her surprise.”

For years, Pinchas's condition took up center stage in the Hirschbaum home. Several years ago, they had moved out of their three-story villa and into a 4-bedroom apartment so they could be in closer proximity to the many treatment centers he visited on a steady basis. Last winter, when Pinchas was eleven years old and still incapable of walking or even standing up on his own—which necessitated Ruchama's intervention in basic everyday activities like getting dressed—the Hirschbaums spent several months with Pinchas in Florida, where he underwent a revolutionary surgery that required months of subsequent rehabilitation and intensive, full-day therapy. Before they left on their lengthy trip, Ruchama confided, “I hope we'll be coming back with a walking Pinchas.”

While Pinchas exhibited some improvement as a result of his surgery—he was able to stand for longer periods of time and take a few steps with his canes—Ruchama was hoping for more.

In May last year, thanks to the generosity of activist Mark Laden of Activix, who recruits international speakers to teach physical therapists different advanced practices, Chicago-based Dr. Mary Massery spent two weeks in Israel. Mary's revolutionary work in the field of psychical

 **He just needed
a little bit more,
to give that good
deep breath
that he didn't
know how to do.**





therapy (as detailed in the Q&A below) is her focus on the cardio-pulmonary-musculoskeletal connection. When she treats children with CP or other physical disabilities, she first assesses how they breathe. The breathing exercises she does with them facilitate good posture and movement.

During the two days Mary presented seminars in Jerusalem, she would model her methods on patients of the physical therapists she was teaching. Pinchas was one of those children.

“As soon as I took a look at him,” Mary recalls, “I said to myself, ‘He should be walking.’ I saw he has all the tools he needs—all the physical abilities that came with years of rigorous intervention, great support from his parents, and he was really motivated. He just needed a little bit more, to give that good deep breath that he didn’t know how to do.”

As often happens with physically delayed children, because they don’t learn how to breathe and move simultaneously, they must learn how to use breathing to facilitate movement. What comes naturally to appropriately developing infants during the crawling stage must be taught to them. Mary spent about twenty minutes with Pinchas on her basic breathing exercises. Then she stood him up and said, “Go!” And Pinchas, at age 12, took his first steps, all on his own—to the sound of applause from all the therapists in the room. “What a moment it was,” says Ruchama. “We just couldn’t stop smiling.”

When I tell Mary about the progress Pinchas is making, she doesn’t take any credit for herself. “I was just the right person at the right time,” she says. “So many of our functions are dependent on breathing. It’s this simple knowledge that makes the difference. When I first discovered this 40 years ago, I was in awe of the concept. To us it seems so simple, but breathing impacts us in ways we can’t imagine.”

Although Pinchas is no longer wheelchair-bound—an incredible breakthrough—he is still dependent on his walker for long-distance walking. Under the care of the physical therapists Mary trained, he’s gradually continuing to make progress. And every time I see him, I marvel at the power Hashem placed in our breath.

Q&A^{with} Dr. Mary Massery

In her Chicago-based physical therapy practice, Dr. Massery uses her multi-system approach to analyze motor dysfunction. She lectures internationally and has received numerous clinical awards for her contribution to the field.

When did you first learn of the connection between breathing and movement?

When I started out in physical therapy 40 years ago, I planned on going into pediatric neurology. At the end of my schooling, we were given a course on the cardio-pulmonary connection to the musculoskeletal system, which I'd never heard discussed before in physical therapy.

While I never would have elected to take this course, it was part of my required classes, so I had no choice but to attend. It was actually a very interactive, fun course delivered by Dana Frownfelter, a terrific instructor who's been teaching for 50 years now.

As soon as I heard what she was saying, I was hooked. "Of course this makes sense," I said to myself. "You have start with physiology—the heart has to be good, the lungs, and the vascular system—before you work on walking and talking. If you haven't worked on breathing, how can you expect the rest of it to happen?"

Right from the beginning, it made sense to me to combine neurology, cardio-pulmonary, and musculoskeletal in order to solve orthopedic issues. That's when I recognized that breathing is the essence of all motor control. If an

individual can't breathe, he won't move. Thus, learning how to breathe properly becomes the first step in facilitating movement. The nice thing about this intervention is that it's not surgery and not medications, and it works.

How is this rule particularly applicable to individuals with physical disabilities?

The muscles we use for breathing are the ones we use for posture and balance. Through breathing, good posture and balance becomes possible. If a child can't use the muscles for breathing, he won't reach his maximum potential. Through my work, I've noticed that if the patient can't use his breathing mechanics efficiently for breathing and for postural control, he will use them only for breathing. Breathing is a must. Walking is something we may want or not want to do, but we can't not breathe. If the body can accomplish only one task, it'll be breathing. And that's all it'll do.

Once we recognize that, it changes how we approach the patient's motor problems, which is a physical therapist's domain. If we're not looking at the conflict between breathing and postural control, we may be missing the

most important underlying issue.

For many children, using the muscles for breathing and posture simultaneously is the big issue. People think the stomach muscles in their trunk are what give them core strength, but we also need them for breathing.

How does an appropriately developing child learn how to coordinate their breathing with movement?

It starts right from birth. All a brand new baby does is breathe. You probably noticed that a newborn baby's arms and legs move randomly, almost as if he's in a punching match. When he's doing those little movements, he's exercising his muscles, but his real focus is on being alive.

By the time a baby starts sitting up, he's been working his muscles and breathing together. It never occurs to him to separate the two usages of his muscles. So naturally, healthy children know how to breathe properly in order to facilitate movement.

Most parents will notice that their baby first starts to babble on the changing table, where he has lots of support and no postural demands, because he's lying on his back. Since a baby in that position has no requirement for balance, he can focus on using his breath for talking.

Later, when the baby is around nine months of age and about to crawl, if he's on his hands and knees and you say to him, "Ho ho ho," he will probably imitate your sounds and start moving. The exhale when making these sounds gives him the ability to engage in movement. He may even get up and start walking.

Because we learn how to breathe as children, we don't need to learn how to breathe as adults.

So why is it adults often discover that they're not breathing properly—that their breath is too

short or shallow?

For most humans, breathing develops so naturally, we never even think about it. But as adults, we think too much. We separate breathing from posture. We think we'll work on breathing in yoga, and on our muscles separately, whereas breathing is part of every movement we make.

Tell us about a memorable client you worked with.

There was a 12-year-old boy who had been born prematurely. He had many medical problems as a baby, but when he came to me he was healthy. However, his voice was always very hoarse and raspy.

When this patient was a baby, one of his two vocal folds (muscles) became paralyzed due to complications from prematurity, so it was always in an open position. These folds are supposed to work like a valve, opening and closing to hold our breath. Because one of his folds was stuck, the air would leak out. He could never hold his breath.

I asked his mother about his balance. "Is he a clumsy kid? Does he trip often?" And her answer was, "Yes. Why did you even think of that?"

And I explained my Soda Pop Can theory to her: that our entire trunk area is like a soda can, where the pressure from the top—diaphragm—to the bottom—pelvic floor—enables us to maintain good posture. If air leaks out, there's no pressure in the trunk, which negatively affects our balance. Every muscle in the trunk is used for a major or minor respiratory and postural task.

Right then and there, I did a little balance challenge with this patient. We both stood with our arms straight out in front of us, and I instructed him to try stay standing, with his feet together, while I would push him gently. Because his balance was so poor, I needed only to push him with my index finger for him to have to take a step back.

Dr. Chayala Englard

My tip for good breathing

Breathing is the foundation of the body on many levels. On a cellular level, breathing is the transportation system for oxygen. On inhale, oxygen is brought to the lungs and on exhale, from the lungs to the muscles. Breathing is also the basis of the body's pressure system. On inhale, the core relaxes and on exhale, it contracts. Breathing helps quiet the chatter in your brain and the tension in your muscles.

Good posture promotes better breathing mechanics and better breathing mechanics promote better posture. Whether you're a teen sitting in class, a pregnant woman, athlete, or bubbly, it's important to learn to connect your breath to pelvic floor movement and strength. The pelvis and its surrounding tissue is the physical foundation for which the body is supported and breathing helps keep that structure stable.

Here's my favorite technique to practice good breathing: Lie on your back, knees bent and place a tissue box on your belly. Inhale through the nose and exhale through pursed lips to slow down the breath. Ideally, you should breathe with double ratio exhale to inhale. For example, inhale for 3-4 seconds and exhale for 6-8 seconds. On inhale, the tissue box should rise up (through the breath, not by forcing your abdominals up) and on exhale it should lower back down.

Dr. Chayala Englard holds a doctorate in physical therapy. In addition to training in orthopedics, post-surgical rehab and vestibular therapy, she has taken specialty courses in the field of pelvic health. With women's health a priority, Dr. Englard actively promotes awareness of prenatal and postpartum physical well-being in the community.

When he tried to push me, however, he couldn't move me. Baffled, he asked me why he, a strong 12-year-old, was moved so easily and I, a 60-year-old woman, was able to stay in place. I explained to him that while his muscles are strong, his core is weak, because one very small muscle—half of his vocal fold—was paralyzed and thus the pressure escaped from his “soda can.”

In order to improve his balance, I recommended he undergo an airwave reconstruction to reposition the paralyzed vocal cord. That immediately improved his balance.

Many other therapists would say that this boy doesn't have good balance, and they would work on that. While that would have helped somewhat, it never would have fixed the problem—the constant leak of pressure out of his system.

I look at problems from a multi-system perspective. Just because a child comes in with a balance problem doesn't mean the issue originates there. I look at the “why.” Why does he have poor balance? If the problem is that he's simply a clumsy kid, we'll work on coordination. But if that's not the real problem, it won't make a dramatic shift in his movement.

What would you like parents to know about their child's development?

Make sure to trust your gut. When your parental intuition tells you something isn't right, keep seeking out another solution. So often, our instincts are right on target.

I saw Pinchas for only one hour. I could have been completely wrong with my assessment of his issue, but as parents, you see your child all the time. You know your child best.

Since I practice primarily in Chicago, please let your readers know that I've trained some excellent PT's, including Nechama Karman, who practice in the New York/New Jersey areas. I would love for as many children and adults who need this type of treatment to have access to it.

Are You Harnessing the Power of Your Breath?

Try these exercises for more effective breathing

According to Stig Severinsen, a Danish diver who had asthma as a child and ended up breaking the Guinness World record for holding his breath underwater for 22 minutes and 22 seconds, the main challenge is not that people don't breathe *properly*, only that we don't breathe *fully*. As the director of Breathology®, a program that teaches people how to breathe to their capacity, he has found that from the thousands of people he worked with around the world, instead of inhaling enough oxygen to fill 100 percent of our lungs, thus providing the body with more of its life-giving power, most only breathe to fill up 75 percent.

When we breathe fully, we fill up with more energy. And so, our goal is to fill up on the most air as possible. Here are Severinsen's three most effective tips for fuller, deeper breathing:

1. Always use your nose.

The nose is for breathing, and the mouth is for eating. The nose filters out dust, and the micro hairs inside it weed out viruses and bacteria from the incoming air, ensuring they don't travel down to the lungs, which are very delicate organs. Another benefit of nose breathing, discovered only a decade ago by modern scientists, is that it generates the production of nitrogen oxide in the sinuses. This gas, which helps the muscles relax, also relaxes the blood vessels, enabling them to absorb more oxygen.

While one should inhale through the nose, it's okay to exhale through the mouth.

2. Pause in your breath.

Did you ever pay attention to the way you breathe when you're running? There's no pause in your breath. That's what happens when we experience any type of stress: we inhale repeatedly, without giving our lungs time to fill. Since this leads to quicker blood flow, the brain feels less focused. Slow, deep breathing, on the other hand, helps us relax. The blood flow slows down, entering the brain at a pleasant pace. Thus, the key to relaxation is in the exhale.

Try this: Inhale with your nose, hold your breath for a pause, and release. Repeat several times and notice how this helps you enter a more relaxed state of mind.

3. Deep into the lungs.

When you take that breath through your nose, feel the air as it goes down your throat and into your lungs. Feel your belly pumping up as you inhale. Place one hand on your stomach and one on your chest and see that the hand on your stomach rises up first. The diaphragm, your breathing muscle, is one of the most important muscles in the body. When you train it right, by breathing in and out fully, you'll enable yourself to breathe fully even when you're breathing unconsciously.

Q&A ^{with} Nechama Karman, PT

Nechama Karman, PT MS PCS is a board-certified pediatric physical therapist with extensive training and experience in pelvic health, orthopedics, and neurological treatment. She is the chief clinical educator at Mobility Research, a faculty member at Massery Physical Therapy, and has a private consulting practice in New York.

How did you become involved in facilitating Mary's training?

I took her course in 2001 at a state conference. I immediately integrated the material into my daily practice and began in-servicing hospital staff on various components. I was impressed by the results it yielded.

Many years ago, I persuaded Mary to teach her approach in an official course with a set curriculum. One summer before she was scheduled to give her course in Washington, she required revision of a previous total knee replacement, and I stayed with her as her live-in PT for a couple of weeks while she recovered. The procedure was more involved than anticipated, and she ended up requiring crutches for 6 weeks. She didn't want to cancel the course. So I threw out a challenge: "Teach the course but bring a faculty member with you, and start their apprenticeship. They can teach, while you sit and rest." So began my apprenticeship in 2014.

What do you feel this method has given you and your patients?

It has given me a comprehensive way of looking at a client and determining how various body systems work together and influence each other, impacting my clients' function. In this day and age of sub-specialization in

all aspects of healthcare, too often providers fail to take a step back and look at the big picture. They're looking at individual leaves and not recognizing the trees or the forest. The approach taken in Mary's coursework involves looking at interactions between systems, but using the respiratory system as the connecting link. How does pressure in the torso affect the musculoskeletal system and posture, digestive/GI system, movement/motor control, breathing, or skin and connective tissue? We can't separate these systems from each other, regardless of our "specialty."

How do you find that breathing affects other body functions?

The simple answer is pressure. Breathing consists of a coordinated series of increasing and decreasing pressure in the thorax to move air. This requires stability in the thoracic cage and spine so that the ribs don't implode when pressure in the chest drops, creating a vacuum. It also requires spinal extension to maintain thoracic volume at the same time. This alignment supports shoulder position and function, as well as head and neck posture, which is necessary for safe swallowing. As pressure in the thorax changes, it drives a change in pressure in the abdomen, which is a source of stability of the lower torso. Diaphragm contraction provides anti-reflux forces, churns the stomach, and massages the abdominal contents and

intestines, helping to move things through to the “exit.” The postural stability afforded by the pressure in the torso allows the limbs to function off a stable base without collapsing. And all of this depends on adequate mobility of joints and connective tissue to function like a “well-oiled machine.” Additionally, if the work of breathing is too hard, the person will not have “reserves” to work on anything besides simply breathing and staying alive.

Shortly after I took Mary’s course, I came down with pneumonia. I gained a new appreciation of what difficulty breathing does to a person and had much more compassion for my clients. It was a full six months before I could climb a flight of stairs without feeling seriously short of breath. It really made me focus on this aspect of function with my clients. Before that, I would have just expected them to “try harder” or “get over it.”

Is learning how to breathe properly something everyone must do, or only children/adults with certain disabilities?

There is no “proper” way to breathe. We all breathe differently under different circumstances. What is normal is being able to efficiently meet your demands and to have options to switch your pattern based on the demands of the task that you are currently engaged in. We walk differently when crossing the street than when walking through a field, or when window shopping, or going uphill or downhill. We can “switch it up,” but a child with cerebral palsy, or an adult who has had a stroke might not be able to. They don’t have the flexibility or options in their movement patterns, and that makes them inefficient at many tasks.

The same is true for breathing patterns. We need options, and we need reserves. We can’t be working at maximum effort just to meet our physiologic needs. For example, I’m predominantly a chest breather, a very efficient one with a respiratory rate of about 10 breaths per minute. I’m also a swimmer. Swimming requires a very prescribed breathing pattern, and my dominant strategies are well-matched to my activity of choice. I can take a quick “bite” of air as I turn my head, and then swim two strokes before needing another breath, swimming effortlessly for long periods without becoming short of breath. But chest breathing isn’t a good match for playing a wind instrument, which

requires a very deep belly breath in order to hold a note. But I’m still normal. I can switch to belly breathing when I’m practicing yoga, or to lessen my level of alertness to fall asleep. I have options. The only reason to “change” a pattern is if that pattern doesn’t work for you, your activities, or is inefficient.

Can you share some important breathing techniques?

The technique would depend on the activity being performed. For example, when reaching overhead to get something off the top shelf, a quick chest breath would extend your thoracic spine and help you get full range of movement in your shoulder, maximizing your reach. But if you’re bending down to tie your shoes, this would block the movement, whereas performing that task on the exhale would enhance your ability to bend. If you match the task to the phase of respiration (inhalation or exhalation), it becomes much easier.

Tell us about an interesting case that you worked on.

When I was working in a pelvic health practice, a gentleman came in for assessment nine months following a prostatectomy. He was experiencing urinary incontinence with movement, especially going from sit to stand. Traditional approaches include teaching the patient how to use the pelvic floor muscles, and he had been through such a course before he came to me. The muscles were strong, but he was using a poor strategy when coming to stand. We worked on diaphragmatic breathing (something people with stress urinary incontinence avoid since they are afraid of losing urine with belly breathing), and slowly transitioned from lying to sitting to standing, using his diaphragm the entire time. We stood on the inhale rather than on a breath hold, and his issue disappeared. I love observing how a simple alternate strategy can be life-altering.

You don’t need to accept pain or dysfunction as a fact of life. Highly trained therapists can implement effective strategies to help you maximize participation in whatever activities you choose. Don’t treat your “condition” as an unchangeable fact. There is usually a lot you can still do.♥

ULCERATIVE COLITIS: A CASE STUDY

Meir was a newly married young man of twenty four, who had started experiencing digestive issues out of the blue six months after his wedding. While initially attributing his loose stools and constant bathroom breaks to the stress of adjusting to married life, continued interference with his quality of life landed him in a gastroenterologist's (G.I.) office.

After a round of testing, including a colonoscopy, Meir was diagnosed with mild ulcerative colitis. He was put on a regimen of mesalamine, a relatively mild medication used to manage the inflammation associated with colitis. Yet Meir's symptoms still weren't under control three months later, which brought him to my office seeking further direction.

TESTING ORDERED

- Comprehensive stool test, utilizing DNA technology to assess bacteria, viruses, and parasites present in the large intestine.
- IgA stool test to gluten, dairy, and yeast.
- MTHFR gene test to assess ability to convert B vitamins to their useable form.

INITIAL INTAKE FINDINGS

DIET

Meir subsisted on the Standard American Diet (SAD), high in processed foods, meats, dairy, and sugary desserts. His G.I. doctor had told him that diet had no relation to his condition, but Meir intuitively believed that line of thinking to be flawed. Recently, due to his G.I. difficulties, he had naturally decreased his food intake, with an accompanying unintentional weight loss of 20 pounds.

LIFESTYLE

Meir considered himself to be more of an uptight/high-strung personality type. While he attributed worsened flare ups in his condition to stress, he found it difficult to improve his emotional state, due to the inherent pressure caused by his medical condition.

APPROPRIATENESS OF NUTRITIONAL INTERVENTION

Meir was highly motivated to change his diet, due to the decreased quality of life his condition caused and his desire to prevent progression to other more intensive medication regimens. He was also a likely candidate to see success from dietary changes, as he had not yet tried any nutritional intervention, and his diet quality was poor.

PREVIOUSLY DONE LAB WORK

Fecal calprotectin and CRP. Markers of inflammation were high; vitamin D was low.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Frequent use of antibiotics, due to recurrent strep throat infections in childhood and early teens.



SUPPLEMENTS

Meir was to start the following supplements after testing samples were collected so as not to skew the results:

- Curcumin
- Andrographis
- Aloe
- DGL
- Probiotics – Mutaflor, Culturelle, and Professional Grade ordered by my office.
- L-glutamine
- Zinc carnosine
- Vitamin D

INITIAL VISIT DIETARY INTERVENTIONS

As Meir was anxious to get the ball rolling even before testing was done, we decided to try immediately implementing Professor Aric Levine's diet for IBD, while waiting for more concrete food sensitivity results. Meir eliminated gluten, dairy, red meat, many chemicals, and processed foods from his diet. I also advised him to stick with only cooked or blended produce initially, to assist with the healing process.

TEST FINDINGS

- Potentially pathogenic (disease causing) parasite present in the gut.
- Two strains of potentially pathogenic bacteria in the gut.
- Insufficient levels of protective bacteria, such as lactobacilli strains, common in individuals with a history of overuse of antibiotics.
- Elevated stool IgA antibodies to gluten and dairy.
- No gene indicating methylation issues present.

After session two, Meir continued on his original diet, but was happy the test results confirmed the need for his dietary vigilance. We added in a 6-week round of plant-based antimicrobials, such as berberine, wormwood, and oregano oil to kill out the disease-causing microbes in his gut, while hopefully sparing more of the “good guys.” We also added in bone broth and fermented foods to heal the intestinal lining and colonize the gut with healthy bacteria.

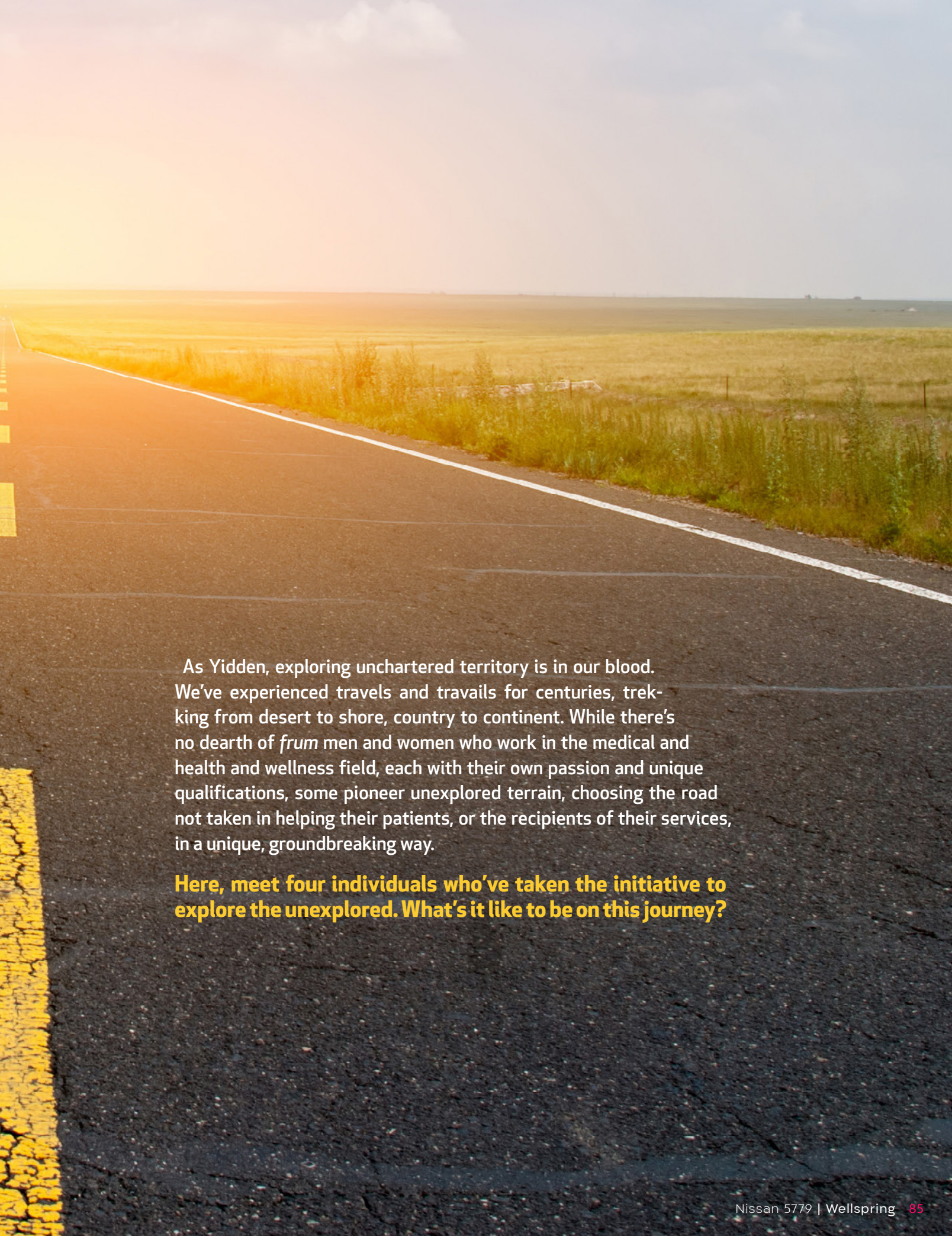
Meir's progress was astoundingly rapid. Although not always typical of all UC cases, he was completely symptom free by the six week mark, even despite discontinuing his mesalamine, which he claimed “never did much anyway.” After two months, he reintroduced raw produce successfully and weaned off some of his supplements. His blood work and stool tests showed almost normal inflammation markers at the three-month mark. It remains to be seen whether Meir will be able to successfully add in small amounts of reactive foods on occasion, once his gut health and healthy bacterial balance are well established, but he is satisfied enough with his quality of life to patiently continue on course for now. ♥

All identifying details have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Tamar Feldman, RDN CDE is a highly acclaimed and experienced registered dietitian/nutritionist and certified diabetes educator. She maintains a busy nutrition practice with offices in Lakewood and Edison, and via phone/skype to numerous international clients, specializing in balanced and sustainable weight loss and nutrition therapy for autoimmune and gastrointestinal issues. She can be reached at 732-364-0064 or through her website: www.thegutdietitian.com. Follow her @gutdietitian.

SPECIAL
THEME
SECTION

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN



As Yidden, exploring uncharted territory is in our blood. We've experienced travels and travails for centuries, trekking from desert to shore, country to continent. While there's no dearth of *frum* men and women who work in the medical and health and wellness field, each with their own passion and unique qualifications, some pioneer unexplored terrain, choosing the road not taken in helping their patients, or the recipients of their services, in a unique, groundbreaking way.

Here, meet four individuals who've taken the initiative to explore the unexplored. What's it like to be on this journey?

DR. MIRIAM KNOLL, MD

MOM ONCOLOGIST

For Dr. Miriam Knoll, being a *frum* wife and mother as well as a radiation oncologist is not a paradox. Here is how she does it.

At 34 years old, Woodmere resident Miriam “Mimi” Knoll is a *frum* wife and mother of four boys. In the morning, she sends her kids off to school with hugs and kisses. In the afternoon, she’s busy preparing her family’s meals and tending to the home. She also cares for cancer patients five days a week at the John Theurer Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey. There, she’s radiation oncologist Dr. Miriam Knoll, MD.

“Medical school was a long road,” admits Mimi of the path that led her to where she is today. “I was in college for four years, then in medical school for another four, after which I trained in radiation oncology for five years.” Having finished her training in 2016, Miriam is currently in her third year of practice.

As a radiation oncologist, Dr. Knoll works with cancer patients and advises if they could benefit from radiation therapy. She recommends if they need radiation, what type of radiation, and for how long they’ll need treatment. “Within the practice of oncology, there are various methods through which cancer can be treated. Medical oncologists are physicians who treatment cancer with chemotherapy or immunotherapy. Radiation oncologists, like me, treat cancer with radiation. I usually see the patient after they’ve already been diagnosed with cancer, and I work as part of their team of physicians to help treat their disease. Most cancer patients need a combination of treatments, with radiation as part of the protocol. That’s where I step in. For example, a woman who has breast cancer will usually need surgery and radiation, and sometimes chemotherapy, as well. Some patients, such as those with a small, early stage lung cancer, may only need radiation, without surgery or chemotherapy.”

Radiation therapy, Dr. Knoll explains, utilizes high-energy x-rays, whose goal is to kill the cancer cells by damaging their DNA. While the patient’s cancer is exposed to high levels of these X-rays, no one else is present in the room when treatment is administered. Still, as an extra precaution, Mimi, and all others who work around radiation wear what’s called a radiation dosimeter, which measures exposure to radiation. “It looks like a little plastic badge that I wear on my white coat or shirt,” she explains. This exposure is measured and tracked by the hospital and government to ensure safety. “Everyone in the world gets some radiation exposure from the environment, but in terms of exposure from the hospital radiation machines, it’s

usually negligible.”

When a patient comes in for a consultation with Dr. Knoll, she reviews their records and makes a recommendation regarding their need for radiation. When radiation is the treatment of choice, she designs the protocol, which includes how much and what type of radiation, as well as how long the patient will be treated in this way. Usually, radiation treatment is administered every day, five days a week, over a span of several weeks. The treatment is administered in a painless procedure with a machine called a linear accelerator. During the actual procedure, the patient, who’s alone in the room, lies on a table and the machine emits the X-rays per that patient’s unique radiation treatment plan. “The side effects of radiation are very specific to the area that’s being treated,” Dr. Knoll explains. “Aside from mild fatigue, there are no across-the-board general side effects of radiation. Unlike chemotherapy, radiation doesn’t travel all over the body. The side effects depend on the area getting radiation. For example, a patient will only lose the hair on their head if the radiation is focused on the head area. As with all cancers and all treatments, the side effects are unique to each individual. Some patients have minimal side effects, and others have more.”

Speaking of how individual every patient and their cancer journey is, Dr. Knoll is quick to point out a very important phenomenon that comes up often in her field. “It’s important to realize that in regards to cancer, the details are very important. Some patients get very anxious, because they hear from other patients that they experienced this or that side effect, and that’s understandable. But they might be getting a totally different treatment from the person they’re comparing themselves to, and that makes all the difference in how their body will react to it.”

“For example, I treat lot of head-and-neck cancer. What many people don’t realize is that treatment for skin cancer on the head is radically different from head-and-neck cancer. A patient receiving radiation for skin cancer will usually have very mild side effects, while a patient getting radiation for head-and-neck cancer will usually experience more difficult side effects. Both patients are getting radiation to somewhere on their head, but the specific cancers and treatments in the two patients are radically different. Cancer, and cancer treatment, cannot be viewed with a one-size-fits-all ap-

proach. Just like every person is different, every patient's cancer is different. And so, even if researchers find a cure for one, they still have their work cut out in finding a cure for another. While this does not provide the encouragement everyone seeks, it helps keep the perspective that doesn't lead to dashed hopes. May a cure for all cancers be found soon."

Wearing a *sheitel* and modest attire, the esteemed Dr. Knoll walks the halls of Hackensack Hospital, guiding patients through the roughest patches of their life. While as a *frum* female oncologist, Mimi is certainly unique in her field, her career choice came as no surprise to her friends and family. As the child of physician parents, a love for medicine is in her blood.

"My grandparents were Holocaust survivors who prioritized education," says Mimi of her background. "My father, Dr. Chaim Gelbfish, practices as a vascular surgeon, and my mother, Dr. Chana Gelbfish, is a beloved pediatrician in her Brooklyn community. My father's brother is a cardiologist, as well. My parents both had offices in my childhood home in Flatbush, and they love their work as doctors." Interestingly, of all five of her siblings, Mimi is the only one who ended up becoming a doctor, and the only one who's married to a doctor. Her husband, Dr. Avrohom "Abe" Knoll, is a vascular and interventional radiologist, with an expertise in vein and artery endovascular surgery. Her father-in-law, Dr. Charles Knoll, is a urologist.

Dr. Knoll's affinity for her field of choice developed over time. "When I was looking for a specialty, I knew I wanted to do something in the area of cancer, which I find fascinating. I liked the idea that radiation patients come every day for a couple of weeks, so we get to know them well and spend a lot of time with each patient. While no one would ever choose to be stricken by cancer, radiation is a great treatment that is tolerated well by patients of all ages, even patients in their 90s. It's also a good treatment for patients with an incurable cancer who are in pain. Even though it's definitely sad to work with such patients, I'm grateful to be able to ease their suffering."

While Mimi wishes to be the messenger of healing for all her patients, there are times when Hashem decrees otherwise. What is it like for her when a patient passes away? "Over the years, several patients passed on, but the death I remember hitting me most deeply was that of a 33-year-old patient whom I had taken care of for a long time. It was a very painful period for me, but I made sure not to keep the grief bottled up inside. If we don't talk about grief, continuing to work in the field becomes arduous. As doctors, we put our heart and soul into helping our patients. When we lose

one of them, it's always painful. It's important for us to reach out to colleagues and friends to share our feelings. I participate in several women physician groups, where I have the opportunity to connect and talk it out with other people who understand what I'm going through."

In the office, she's Dr. Miriam Knoll. When she steps out, she's back in her role as wife and mother. How does Mimi juggle her two separate lives? "I don't think of my work life and personal life as separate," is her prompt response. "I do what I think is best at every moment. I try to be deliberate in my life. If something is good for me and my family, I'll do it. I find that there's plenty of time for me to take care of my children and time for me to take care of my patients. Ultimately, no matter what career we do or don't have, everyone ends up choosing what they want to do with their day, because no one can do everything every day. It's all about making the right decisions. While I'm at work, I do what have to, but I might also be putting in my order at Seasons if that's what needs to get done at the moment."

Having seen this model in her childhood home, Mimi is no stranger to fusing her devotion to her family life with a passion for medicine. "I remember my mother running down to treat a patient and then come back up to be there for us. I never let being a full-time doctor take over what I feel is right for our family. Every year since our wedding, I made my house *Pesachdig* so we could sleep at home, unless we were going away for the whole Yom Tov, like this year. When we are home for Pesach, because I'm out at work until *erev* Yom Tov, I only turn over the kitchen on the last day and cook on Yom Tov itself. That's what has worked for me.

"At every moment, we must choose what's best for us, right then. After my oldest child was born, for example, I took a break of a full year between my second and third year of medical school. But, after my youngest was born, I was home for two weeks and then returned to my practice. That was what felt right to me at that time."

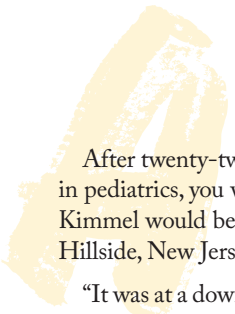
Mimi has found a way to make her life work for her and she's grateful for the support she's been getting from her husband, parents, in-laws, and siblings all along.

"This certainly helps me be confident in what I'm doing," she asserts. "At the end of the day, it's a mindset. If you think what you're doing is the right thing for yourself and your family, you do it. I could have been happy not being a doctor, but since this is what I chose, this is what I'm happy with."

JACQUELINE KIMMEL, PT

PHYSICAL-THERAPIST-TURNED-HEALTH-COACH

When physical therapist Jacqueline Kimmel became certified as a holistic health coach, she combined both passions to form one solid, life-changing health program.



After twenty-two years as a physical therapist, with a background in pediatrics, you wouldn't imagine that the next step for Jacqueline Kimmel would be holistic health coaching. Yet, three years ago, the Hillside, New Jersey mother of four found herself doing just that.

"It was at a down point in my life," Jacqui admits. "Everything was low; my mood, my energy, my metabolism. I was plodding through when I could have been flying, and it wasn't good. I decided it was time to completely overhaul my life. I changed my habits, both eating and exercise. I went from constant dieting to eating for health benefits. The changes were drastic, even my skin, which has always been troublesome, showed major improvement. I felt so fabulous; I had to pass it along."

Having acquired a PT degree from SUNY Brown, Jacqui liked her work as a physical therapist, but it was time to step up her game. Perhaps, she wondered, health coaching would give her what she was looking for. She enrolled in Nutritious Life Studio, an online health program, and completed her holistic health coach certification. "I was also mentored by Rorie Weisberg, of Full 'n Free fame," she adds. "I'm currently registered to take a test to be certified in functional nutrition for pain management in order to continue my education. Because really, fusing physical therapy with holistic health coaching for pain management is my dream."

Jacqui isn't your average health coach or physical therapist. Spending her days surrounded by those in pain led her to connect the dots and, very quickly, a dream was born. She began to dream of a rehabilitation center with a holistic approach, a center whose approach would not be reactive, but rather, proactive. It would be more than movement and exercise; it would be about nutrition and lifestyle choices; about healing and starting fresh.

"Physical therapists are in a unique position, as they are the only healthcare professionals who spend large blocks of times with their patients," explains Jacqui. "Therefore, we're privy to all sorts of pri-

vate life details. For instance, I'll witness a diabetic patient finishing off a double cheeseburger. And I know there's so much more I can offer my patients than just physical therapy. Also, New Jersey law requires we give over some nutritional advice, so my certification helps me combine my two paths."

The area most clients struggle in, she asserts, is truly changing their mindsets. It's so much easier to just want a quick fix, to drop those five pounds or manage stress, than to overhaul one's entire life.

"But there are no shortcuts," Jacqui says. "If you're going to do this; you need to do it right. The clients who crash and burn are the ones who can't commit. The clients who are born anew, who have never felt better about themselves, are the ones who stick with it after our six-eight week program is up."

Remember, says Jacqui, that little hinges swing big doors. With the generation so focused on instant results, it's difficult for clients to connect to the idea of long-term goals. Adrenaline can keep them positive and focused, but then life events, such as a wedding or the holidays will occur, and they'll be thrown for a loop.

"I teach about small victories and long-term goals, how feeling good doesn't necessarily mean you fit into that new dress, but it's about being energetic and confident, understanding that it's a process, and about sustainable changes."

Jacqui provides her clients with an abundance of information and resources, and she lets them know she's there for them if they need her down the road. Her clients are from all walks of life: 20-year-olds, who need enough energy to make it through college; 40-year-olds with changing hormones and new outlooks on life; and those who perhaps have a family history of disease and want to take preemptive measures.

"Many conditions, such as diabetes, Alzheimer's, and strokes, can be prevented or reversed with proper exercise, nutrition, and stress management. There's no need to sit back and wait to be diagnosed.

Today, there's so much you can do to be proactive.

“My next step is to combine pain management with overhauling the way we live. The opioid crisis is no secret. As a physical therapist, I have a front-row seat to the pain and misery of those addicted to painkillers. I have the ability to change that for people, to help them manage their pain before they reach that point. And that's what I hope to do.”

In the meantime, she tells about several clients she's seen wonderful success with. One was a woman with ankylosing spondylitis, a form of arthritis that causes constant pain and stiffness. “She came to me for health coaching. We discussed nutrition and spoke about pain management. She changed the way she ate and lost weight. As I do with my physical therapy clients, I asked her to rate her pain from one to ten when she came in. Unfortunately, her daily struggles caused her to rate it at about six. Yet after our time together, she informed me it had decreased to between one and three. Just from changing way she ate, she was able to bring down inflammatory levels in the body.

“Then there was a woman newly diagnosed with MS, not yet symptomatic, but terrified about what was to come. We worked hard and managed to keep many of the MS symptoms at bay. At the end of our time together, she had so much more confidence to face her uncertain future. After implanting new habits and changes, she felt empowered against her diagnosis.”

And what makes Jacqui feel empowered?

“Knowing I'm giving my clients the best method with which to optimize their health.

People need to know that simple things, like more sleep and drinking more water, can minimize the risk of disease. Knowing I can make that shift for someone, helping prevent them from a serious diagnosis down the line, makes it all worth it.”

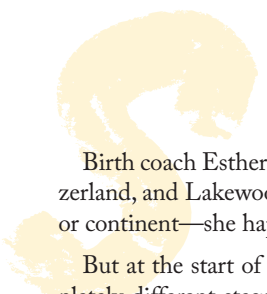
Today, Jacqui is bringing together the best of both of her worlds by focusing on clients with physical therapy issues, such as a muscular skeletal disorder or chronic pain, and teaching them how to truly optimize nutrition and lifestyle to enjoy a pain-free life.



ESTHER MARILUS

ORIGINATOR OF THE SWISS BIRTHING METHOD

What could propel an accomplished first grade teacher to leave the ABCs and flashcards in the classroom in order to help women understand their babies' pre-birth journey? Thirty-five years ago, Esther Marilus started a movement. Today, her success rate speaks for itself.



Birth coach Esther Marilus, who has roots in Eretz Yisrael, Switzerland, and Lakewood, aids expectant women in whichever city—or continent—she happens to be in at the moment.

But at the start of her career life, Esther was focused on a completely different stage in childhood development. “After attending The Teacher’s Institute, a branch of Stern’s College, I first started out as a first grade teacher,” she says of her early beginnings several decades ago. “Eventually, I worked for Headstart as a family worker. Torah Umesorah was involved, and they sent a few of their employees to Columbia University for a six-week program on how to spot disabilities in the classroom. Fortunately, I was one of them.”

Knowledge is power, and newly armed, Esther marched back into the classroom and began connecting the dots.

“I started diagnosing the evidently learning disabled children in my class, and we did good work, pushing through with flashcards and extra attention. But I wanted to know more. Why *these* kids? What was different about these specific six-year-olds that put them at a disadvantage to their classmates?”

With a little research, Esther discovered something both fascinating and frightening: “Most of the children who showed signs of learning disabilities were all born in traumatic births.” Forceps, C-sections, hours-long labors—the scenarios every expectant woman dreads were turning out to have greater effects on the baby than the mother.

In short, Esther discovered, birth may affect the baby in more ways than she had ever fathomed.

“Soon after I made that discovery, I was living in Switzerland and expecting my first child. Today, I’m the proud mother of a large brood, *bli ayin hara*. Then, as a first-timer, I was quite frankly ter-

rified. I didn’t want any part of the process to cause harm to my baby; physically, emotionally, or mentally. I also understood that the medical interventions that could decrease trauma, such as epidural, carried their own risks.”

In order to prepare herself as much as possible, Esther enrolled in three different birth courses in Switzerland.

“I learned everything I could about giving birth calmly and safely without the need for medication, working closely with doctors in Switzerland to develop a technique. Using breathing techniques, positions, and exercises, we developed a natural birth method that would hopefully contribute to a trauma-free birth.”

Esther’s book, *Natural Childbirth the Swiss Way* (Prentice-Hall), provides a combination of techniques she has both used and learned. The book, for which she no longer receives royalties, is being sold on Amazon for around 200 dollars. “But honestly, the method is priceless,” Esther says.

While Esther’s method for a better birth was helping women around the world, she soon realized that the journey essentially starts beforehand. Why solve a problem, she asked herself, when you can do your best to prevent it from occurring in the first place? And so, ever the explorer, Esther combined her research and experience in a pre-birth method that she calls “A Better Baby” because, as she explains “that’s what it’s all about.”

What is this method that has provided women all around the world with an easier, fear-free birth experience? “What I do is start at the beginning,” Esther explains. “And I ask: Why?”

“Why is a woman coming to me telling me the doctors want to induce her, or her water levels are too low, or she regularly gives birth prematurely? The only way to help is to know why. I call it “chicken

or egg childbirth.” We need to know what came first; then we can work on solving the issue. I use sonograms as part of my method; it’s important that I see the baby and view what’s going on. I’m confident the day will soon come when every delivery room will have an ultrasound machine, and guesswork will be a thing of the past.”

As an example of her “Why?” approach, Esther describes a woman suffering from low water levels. “Why is there low amniotic fluid? If the baby goes into saver mode, if he’s brain sparing, it means he’s stopped drinking. In that case, if you look, there’s usually something wrong with the cord.” At such times, Esther gives the mother white Schmerling’s chocolate with almonds. “It’s as close a match to breastmilk as there is. Brown chocolate isn’t good, but white chocolate doesn’t have cocoa, just fat. And it has that vanilla-y breastmilk flavor that babies love.

“Many of my clients are women who are experiencing tremendous pain during a pregnancy. They realize, because they didn’t experience the pain in their first four pregnancies, that this isn’t about them; it’s about the baby. In those cases, we look to see what’s going on, and we try to fix it. My exercises aren’t about the mother; they’re about the baby.”

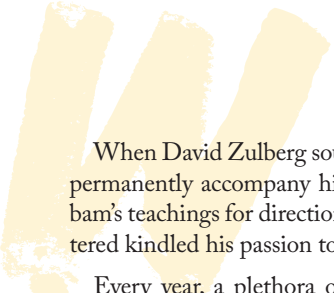
Esther is passionate about the importance for expectant women to pay attention to their circumstances. “Today, doctors tell their patients to remain as active as they have been until now, including continuing to exercise and dance. But it makes no sense to carry on, business as usual, when things are just not the same. We need to listen to our bodies, to what our babies need, to realize that right now, they’re running this show.”

During the time she carries her baby, the mother is the vessel of new life. It’s a special, exalted time. The birth itself is the climax, when new life is expelled into this world, bringing with it infinite potential. Pioneering birth coach Esther Marilus understands this well. With decades of experience under her belt, she’s ready for every woman, chocolate in hand, to help transform the experience into one of serenity and joy.



DAVID ZULBERG

Author of *The Life-Transforming Diet* and disseminator of the Rambam's teachings on health.



When David Zulberg sought to change his diet to one that would permanently accompany him through life, he turned to the Rambam's teachings for direction. The breadth of knowledge he encountered kindled his passion to spread the wisdom further.

Every year, a plethora of new—often contradictory—research emerges regarding health and wellness. Is there one truth that trumps all the others?

As David Zulberg explores in *The Life-Transforming Diet*, in a territory that may leave us feeling confused, the time-tested principles of the Rambam are exceptional in their accuracy and wisdom. Here, he discusses some of the Rambam's insightful directives in leading a healthy life.

At the root of every passionate endeavor is the germination of a personal dream. David Zulberg's story is no exception. Over two decades ago, when he was newly married and learning in *yeshivah*, this native South African, who was then living in Yerushalayim, found himself putting on weight. "I wasn't doing any exercise, and I wasn't particularly concentrating on the contents of my diet," recalls David, who has been residing in Woodmere, New York, for the past seventeen years. "Before long, I was experiencing constant bouts of heartburn and indigestion. A visit to the doctor confirmed my suspicions: I was suffering from GERD." Gastroesophageal Reflux Disorder (GERD) affects a whopping 25 to 35 percent of the U.S. population. While many turn to acid-blocking medications to ease its symptoms, David's doctor cut it to the core for him: "If you lose weight, you'll get rid of all of these issues."

While David was no stranger to the world of diets, having grown up hearing various ones mentioned at home, this time, he was on a search for The One. "I started researching which diet would be right for me, but I ended up with more questions than I started with. Each promised to hold the key to weight loss success. Which was indeed the right one? Furthermore, if weight loss was a natural result of eating healthfully, why were these diet originators finding

it necessary to come up with a genius solution? Wouldn't the perfect diet consist of a few simple directives that we were somehow missing?"

While contemplating these questions, David suddenly had a thought that ultimately evolved into his life's passion: Why not look into our tradition to see if anything had been written about this? One *sefer* led to the next, until David found himself delving into the brilliant teachings of the Rambam. "Everyone knows that he has a chapter on health in *Mishneh Torah*, but not everyone is aware that he wrote 10 entire volumes on health." David found the most reliable translation of the Rambam's works, which were written in Arabic, are those translated by the Maimonides Institute.

When he discovered these books, David's personal quest for a balanced lifestyle was transformed into an exotic journey. In the works of Rav Moshe ben Maimon (Maimonides/Rambam), he found clear directives from this Torah giant, who spent his life in intensive Torah study and *avodas Hashem*, as well as serving as the doctor of Sultan Saladin of Egypt and Syria, the world's most powerful leader at the time.

Born in present-day Spain on *Leil Haseder* in 1135, the Rambam was first and foremost a prolific Torah author, with the fourteen-volume *Mishneh Torah* his magnum opus. "In addition to his phenomenal breadth of Torah knowledge, he also wrote extensively on health and wellness," says David. "After being introduced to the Rambam's wisdom on health, I knew this was the direction I wanted to take in my life. He doesn't speak only about which foods are good for us and which aren't. Rather, his focus is very much on which habits to incorporate into our lifestyle and how."

With his work cut out for him, David got started on changing his lifestyle, one that he's been maintaining since. What are the Rambam's basic principles that he's put into action in his own life? "The number one principle is not to eat quantities of food. Most diets talk about which foods to avoid and which foods to consume, whereas

the Rambam writes that how much we eat is more important than what we eat. Although what we eat is also important, it's more about the quantity."

Having explored other diets, David understood what set this one apart from the others. "The diets that promise 20 pound weight loss in 2-3 weeks may actually do that. But you need to turn your life around on day one. Conversely, the Rambam is emphatic about changing one habit at a time. When we make small changes at the right pace, we can lose weight and keep it off forever."

After several years of living in accordance to the Rambam's principles and reaping their benefits, David knew his next endeavor would be to write a book. "I felt that I was enjoying one of the world's best-kept secrets, and I wanted to share it with others. I didn't open a practice to guide people, because the principles are simple, straightforward, and don't necessitate constant interaction. All you need is a book to know what the Rambam believed is good for you, and you can follow his advice, too." So, in 2007, David Zuberberg's first book, *The Life-Transforming Diet*, (Feldheim) hit the shelves. (He later published another book on health geared toward the mainstream public, which includes more evidence-based studies.) Now, every individual who wants to live his life according to the Rambam's principles has a clear outline of how to do so. "All you have to do is read the principles and put them into action," he says. "Because the Rambam focuses very much on only changing one small habit at a time, I wrote the book in a step by step, week by week format, advising the reader to take on one change per week over a span of nine weeks." (In his second book, the program spans only five weeks.)

The first change David encourages, based on the Rambam's principles, is concerning breakfast. "According to the Rambam," he explains, "the ideal way to apportion our food is to have two large meals per day, with small snacks in between. This is in line with his quantity vs. quality argument. Thus, the first advisable change is to turn breakfast into a fruit or vegetable meal. Have a fruit or a salad, and that's breakfast for you."

In the second week of the program, David advises the reader to do ten minutes of exercise daily. "Again, that's a small step that makes a big impact. Eventually, someone who follows the program changes all their meals and keeps up a solid regimen of exercise. It all starts

with bite-sized changes.

"When writing about exercise, the Rambam cautions us to be careful not to overdo it, arguing that we could harm ourselves by doing so. In other words, it's not necessary to spend hours at the gym. The two instructions he gives regarding fitness is to do an exercise that raises the heart rate and one that you enjoy. He gives an example of playing with a ball. In another place, he recommends riding a horse or going for a walk. If you enjoy it, he writes, it will positively affect your health.

"Another main principle is to eat when you're hungry and drink when you're thirsty," says David. "It becomes difficult for us to rely on our natural instincts, because our understanding of what's good for us and what isn't has become so distorted. But once we change our habits over a few weeks, we eventually restore the clarity."

According to the Rambam, it's also preferable not to drink while eating, although he does say that one could have a glass of wine at a meal. If one feels thirsty, he recommends drinking in small quantities.

As David explains, his book is more about understanding how habits work and implementing them properly, rather than a list of foods to eat and not to eat. "But," he's quick to add, "the Rambam does talk about certain foods that are harmful or beneficial to our health. In *Mishneh Torah*, as well as in his medical works, he has such lists. For example, he advises against eating fatty meat, but is not opposed to lean meat. He writes about whole wheat vs. refined flours. Many of the nutrition theories that are popular, almost taken for granted, today were already proposed by him all those years ago. His guidance is very up to date with current nutrition research."

In addition to the Rambam's wisdom on physical health, through his writings, one discovers the breadth of wisdom this Torah giant possessed in regards to emotional health.

"He writes a lot about how the mind influences the body," says David. "According to some people, he was the first to clearly delineate the relationship between emotional and physical health. While nowadays this is basic knowledge, hundreds of years ago, it wasn't. His works were the catalyst in the process of putting all the pieces together."

Interestingly, he also writes that all anxiety or depression emanates from living in the past or the future, comparing an individual who's upset about what happened in the past to someone who wishes he could be a star in the sky. Your past is not even part of your reality anymore," is his message. And if you're worrying the future, he writes, either it will happen or it won't. It's fruitless for you to think about it now.

In another text, the Rambam attributes depression to chasing after our apparent needs. "These, he explains, are the things we think we need that aren't really necessary. He writes that every necessity in life, such as air, water, and basic food, is easy to attain and free of charge. We don't have to go on a big journey to attain it. However, when a person starts convincing himself that he needs more, he gets himself into trouble. And then, when the endeavors don't pan out, he has complaints against Hashem. 'Who asked you to travel across the ocean for those exotic spices?' he asks. In just a few lines, this Torah giant sums up the issue that plagues us now more than ever. It's amazing to see how ahead of his time he was."

Although the Rambam wrote his groundbreaking texts almost 900 years ago, his Torah wisdom lives on, and is constantly being proven not only by rigorous research but also from an observational perspective. Since he was focused primarily on disease prevention as a means to lead a healthy life, his principles are as applicable today as ever. "In his *haskamah* of my book," David notes, "Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski writes that nowadays, there's so much confusion and contradictory advice in nutrition that one can hardly say we've made a breakthrough. However, when we read the Rambam's principles, we see how his guidance can be relied upon fully until today."


As an ardent follower of the Rambam's principles, David has been enjoying the benefits for over two decades. How has his life changed as a result? "For starters, I'm certainly able to navigate my choices better. In the world of research, one day coffee is healthy; the next day chocolate is the recommended food of choice. You see people literally changing their kitchen over every few weeks. But according to the Rambam, it all boils down to habits. If my habits are in check, everything else flows. I've also learned that losing weight isn't a goal in itself. While I did lose weight and have maintained the loss all these years, it's simply a consequence of changing my habits, and part of changing is taking the mind and body into account. When

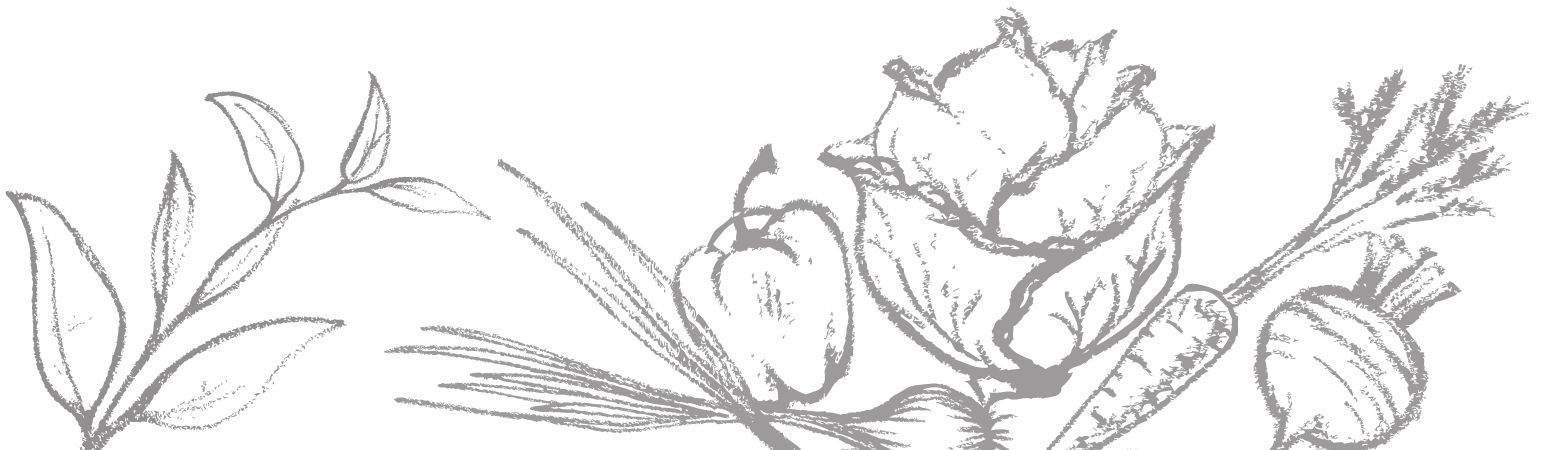
we do this, we get the whole mind and body into shape, and we naturally lose weight. It's the cherry on top."

Indeed, the Rambam's son writes that if we change one habit, it affects another, and then another. "When I follow the Rambam's principles, I don't change only my eating habits, but also the way I think about the past and future. He teaches how to live in the present and to be more mindful. When we eat, we should be sitting down and making a proper *berachah*. He says that the way we get close to Hashem is by making our everyday activities purposeful, not only through thinking lofty thoughts. When we eat healthfully, this curtails our cravings, and we get less angry and are more patient. It becomes a life change instead of just a scale change."

Not only has David's life changed thanks to the Rambam's wisdom, but so have the lives of his children. "When we change the way we think, eat, and live, we become an example for our children," he remarks. "Thankfully, my children are all healthy and follow a healthful lifestyle. Obviously, there are ups and downs, but they definitely have an appreciation for healthy living. Many of the issues surrounding food nowadays result from focusing on the scale."

As the unofficial disseminator of the Rambam's teachings, what's the next project on David Zulberg's agenda? "I'm working on a new book on mental health, again focusing on the Rambam's principles." Because David, for whom international taxes is his full-time job, is so passionate about what he does, he happily answers anyone who contacts him regarding the Rambam's principles—free of charge. "I want to help people on the journey I took," he says simply. "Since it's all about changing habits and the mindset, people who follow the program don't need weekly sessions. I find that weekly visits serve as motivation when you're given a list of what to eat and what not to eat. But, the key is not to rely on motivation in dieting. When the motivation wanes, you break your diet. Rather, the key to leading a healthful life is to implement changes at a pace that's right for you."

"I have a tremendous passion to bring the Rambam's less-known writings to life. I'm constantly amazed how he touched upon everything, which is rare. Whether in Torah, *halachah*, *hashkafah*, or health and wellness, he saw that all aspects of human nature are important in helping us serve Hashem and fulfill our purpose in this world." 



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Brooklyn native Sarah Wolhender, lovingly known as Health Coach Sarah, doesn't exude life only when she speaks about health. This ebullient millennial is passionate about giving, about bringing happiness to every corner within her reach. "We all have something to offer to add more sunshine to the world," she says, her voice cheerful. To Sarah, who grew up seeing her father, the Nikelsburger Rebbe, Reb Mordechai Jungries, dedicate himself to helping the *klal* in every possible way, giving to others is in her blood. Her work as a health coach has simply provided her with another way to be there for others, to give them a chance to lead a better life.

Since her adolescent days, Sarah has always had her eyes and ears open toward anything that would help her, in her words, "stay young forever." "If I ever heard anything about health, even as a teen, I was drawn to it. I remember hearing that salmon was good for me, so salmon it was. The same was true with drinking lots of water. Although I didn't have the breadth of knowledge on the subject that I have today, I was always fascinated by health and well-



Cup of Tea With:

Sarah Wolhender (Wohl)

OCCUPATION: Health coach,
fitness instructor

LOCATION: Brooklyn, New York

PASSION: To make this world a
better place

**WISHES PEOPLE WOULD
KNOW:** the power of the mind-
body connection



ness. Of course, I noticed that whenever I complied with such advice, I felt I was a better version of myself.”

As a teen, though, health wasn't Sarah's main concern. Rather, she was focused on giving. While she took her schoolwork seriously, she managed to find time to in the afternoon and evening to watch her neighbor's kids or to cheer up the seniors in her neighborhood— something she does until this day. “I always felt a need to grow and learn from others,” she says. “As an adult, I'm thankful I have that thirst for knowledge to figure things out for myself so others can benefit too.”

After Sarah graduated high school, she taught grade school and worked as a hairstylist. When she didn't find her work fulfilling, she gave up her jobs to work instead as a teacher for preschool aged children. “I felt great there,” she recalls. “I always say: Go with the G-dly flow. If this doesn't work out, see what else is in store for you. See what Hashem has in mind for you.”

After Sarah gave birth to her first child fifteen years ago, she started noticing that while she was giving to everyone around her, she was neglecting the most important person in her life—herself. “I simply wasn't taking care of myself,” she admits. “I wasn't eating right or doing any exercise. I didn't know what it meant to do something for myself. So I continued to push myself until after the birth of my second child. At that point, I felt so low-energy that the world started looking dreary. My cheerful, chirpy self wasn't coming through.”

Sarah sees this period in her life as her personal wakeup call from Hashem. “It scared me to the point that I was forced to listen to the inner voice that was telling to make a positive change in my life.”

Unsure about what change she needed in order to feel better, Sarah first tried the schooling route in order to increase her credentials as a special education teacher. Loving to work with kids, she hoped she would find her passion there. “The more college courses I took,” she says, “the fascinated I was by understanding how people operate. I also realized that while I loved working with kids, I had *Baruch Hashem* been blessed with my own, to whom I wanted to give my all. Perhaps there was something else I could do while working with adults. After considering various options, I came to the conclusion that what I wanted most was to connect my love for working with people to health and wellness.”

Interestingly, Sarah recently came across an exam she had taken that was intended to help students determine their optimal career choice. “According to the results, I was considered the creative, artistic type, who would enjoy working with people. My answer to the question of what I wanted to be most was a health educator. I marvel that this is what I ended up doing.”

Even after deciding on her career path, Sarah was still at a crossroads. What type of health educator did she want to be? “It was during that time, when I was already giving fitness classes, that I read an article about integrative nutrition. The holistic approach appealed to me, especially the bio-individuality part, which proposes that we're all unique in our own way and that the coach must be attuned to what each person needs.”

Going with what she calls the “G-dly flow,” Sarah took the initiative and



“We don't care where you're up to,” they said. “We need you.” And so, they were my first two clients.

signed up for a course at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN), the world's largest nutrition school.

"The program was incredible," says Sarah of the one-year course that gave her much more than knowledge in nutrition. "The director and instructor, Josh Rosenthal, taught us not only about the structure of what he calls a macro meal, what a healthy meal should consist of, but he focused on the importance of the process, of acknowledging that a healthy lifestyle is a journey—not a place we reach and always excel in. We learned how to breathe properly and how to listen to every client, to meet them where they're at."

In the course, Sarah learned that working toward a healthy lifestyle is all about rewiring. "We're habitual beings. If we're used to doing something a certain way, it becomes a part of us. This is where the coach comes in; to help you create a better strategy. Every time a client comes to see me, we discuss what the goal will be for the next two weeks—not a weight goal, rather a habitual one. For example, if the individual isn't drinking enough water, we might set a goal for her to drink 16 ounces of warm water with freshly squeezed lemon first thing in the morning. For someone who's not used to doing this is, it's a major step. Especially if they're used to drinking coffee, their body may be dehydrated. In the long run, by implementing such small changes, we see big results. It all becomes part of our lifestyle."

When Sarah was reaching the end of her schooling, two of her good friends were already on her back. "Coach us please," they pleaded. "I didn't feel ready yet," Sarah admits. "I thought I had to first be done to start working in the field. I was afraid to take that first step, but they really pushed me. 'We don't care where you're up to,' they said. 'We need you.' And so, they were my first two clients—both success stories in their own way. It was amazing to see how coaching and being there for others, holding them accountable for their actions and helping them create better habits, felt so good to me. It still does, every time."

While most clients consult with Sarah because they want to lose weight, others do so simply because they want to become more balanced human beings. "We're living in such a noisy era," she asserts. "When life is on auto-pilot, we need to take a breather and check in with ourselves."

As a coach, Sarah spends the first session mainly listening to the client so they can start to pay attention to their own selves in order to reprogram their lives. "That first session could be up to two hours long," says Sarah, "so we have time fill out a health history form. I don't want it to be a rushed, technical process. I want to know their medical history, even eating habits from the past, what their goals are, and why they want to make changes. When you know the 'why,' whether it's because you want to be a better wife, a better mother, or a better me, you get the push to do it right."

Sarah has found time and again that eating right is one of the best proactive ways to prevent feeding the body what it doesn't need. One client, for example, kept complaining about her nighttime eating habits. "She was going through her pantry, noshing throughout the evening," says Sarah. "Our first step was to ascertain that she was eating properly during the day. With the majority of my clients, once they learn how to make the time and effort to eat a balanced meal and drink enough water throughout the day, they feel full and satisfied in the evening. If they do feel hungry, they know it's not physical hunger. Perhaps it's an emotional issue. If I eat proper meals throughout the day, there's no reason I should be finishing a bag of chips and licorice at that—or any—hour. If I find one evening that I do feel hungry, I might look back at my day and realize, 'Hey, I skipped lunch today. No wonder I've been searching all day.' Crowding in the healthy helps us crowd out unhealthy food and habits. While most clients have a hard time believing they will ever get to a place where they're not looking out for food at every possible opportunity, it actually happens."

While Sarah is there to guide her clients with the knowledge she's accumulated, she realizes time and again that more than what she knows, it's about simply being there for the client. "It's not only about knowing what to eat. Of course, I teach my clients about how to construct balanced macro meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. These consist of a filling protein; fiber from vegetables or a starchy source, like sweet potato or brown rice; and a healthy fat. However, part of what I learned as an integrative health coach is that leading a healthy lifestyle isn't only about what's in your plate. An imbalance off the plate creates an imbalance on the plate. For example, if I'm not feeling content at work or in my relationships, or if I'm not using my creativity or talents, I could find myself being drawn to food. That's an important angle to explore, as well, in pursuing a healthy lifestyle. I could be eating all the kale in the world, but if I'm having issues in my relationships, I won't be very healthy at all."

What Sarah has found most fascinating along the way, in addition to the incredible lessons she learns from every client, is how easy it is to swap unhealthy ingredients with healthier alternatives. "If I'm making an omelet, I want to use less inflammatory oils, such as avocado oil, which doesn't oxidize in a frying pan in the same way canola, cottonseed, or corn oil do. Swap table salt for Himalayan salt for more minerals. Swap margarine or shortening with coconut oil; sugar or brown sugar with coconut sugar; soy sauce with coconut aminos. If a recipe calls for white flour, do it with whole spelt instead. I wished someone would have told me that when I was a young mother with little kids, but there was no *Wellspring* magazine around in those days.

“Here’s something else I wish someone would have told me that I tell others today: When you see a package with a gluten-free label, that doesn’t mean it’s good for you. Everything you’re feeding your body is a code for your brain. Of course, we’re human, and we do consume foods that aren’t always best for us, but at least 80% of our food intake should be constructive to our functioning. The more we take care of our health, the more our children and other family members will want to join the bandwagon.”

One principle integrative nutrition places much emphasis on is that while certain general health rules apply to every human being across the board, others are more individual. Sarah tells of a client as a case in point. “I had a client who experienced excruciating migraines as well as a health scare that landed her in the hospital. As soon as she started eating balanced meals, her migraines disappeared. But after five to six weeks of following the program, she called to tell me she felt her migraines coming on again. She wanted to know if the apple cider vinegar she was drinking in the morning was the culprit. I told her there’s no way for us to know for certain. ‘See how you feel when you drink it, and you tell me,’ I said. It turned out that this wasn’t good for her body. While apple cider vinegar can be an excellent detoxing liquid for one person, that may not be true for another. It’s about helping the client figure out what their particular sensitivities are. Sometimes I send a client to a specialist, to test thyroid function or do blood work to figure out if there are underlying medical issues that are inhibiting their ability to lead a healthy lifestyle. There’s no one right answer for everyone.”

Of course, Sarah reaps much satisfaction from her clients’ feedback. “I love when they tell me how changing their habits, one baby step at time, makes such a difference in their lives. Even something like going out to get their food at the supermarket instead of having food delivered makes an impact. It gives them an opportunity to actually read the labels of the foods

they’re choosing. I encourage my clients to read the ingredients even before the nutrition facts label. If there are ingredients you can’t read, you don’t want them in your body, no matter the calorie count.”

As an advocate for gut health, which she sees as necessary for achieving overall health, Sarah is a big proponent of fermented foods, which are saturated with probiotics, the organisms that facilitate balance in the gut. But, while she loves experimenting with interesting or exotic health foods, such as the adzuki bean (her latest discovery), she understands it’s not everyone’s forte. “When women tell me, ‘Sarah, I’m not into chia and flaxseed. Can you help me?’ I tell them to take it as they could handle it. Those health foods are bonuses, not a must to leading a life that allows us to function as our best selves.”

While serving as a health coach has become Sarah’s official career, it’s the passion she has for helping others that comes through with every client. “I feel it in my heart that I want to help others. Essentially,” she notes, “we’re all one. If I give from this perspective, by creating more energy in this world, I’m getting back as well. It’s nice to make money from something I love doing, but I like offering health tips even for free. Knowing I could enhance someone’s life is everything to me.” ♥

Sarah can be reached via The Wellspring.

Sarah’s Favorites

Here’s a kosher for Pesach recipe I love, which I actually once clipped from none other than The Wellspring’s Seasoned.

Vegan Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

1¾ cups almond flour	⅓ cup honey
2 Tbsp tapioca starch	3 Tbsp non-dairy milk
1 tsp baking powder	½ tsp vanilla extract
pinch of salt	¼ cup chocolate chips
	1 Tbsp coconut oil

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Mix almond flour, starch, salt, and baking powder in a medium bowl.
3. In another bowl, mix honey, milk, oil and vanilla extract. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mix well. Add chocolate chips.
4. Form ping pong ball size dough balls and place on a baking tray lined with parchment paper.
5. Press down and bake for 10-12 minutes. Allow to cool for 5 minutes before handling.



(Credits: Naomi Hazan)

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Monday, May 20, 2019

8:15 AM - 3:45 PM
Registration at 7:45 AM

Brooklyn, NY

Course Description

Executive Functioning skills are becoming a big "buzz" word of today, though in reality always was encompassed in the world of occupational functioning. Therapists working in education systems will find this course very practical in approach, as well as understanding in more depth the contribution we are making in the child's occupation as a school student. Therapists in clinical practice will find this course helpful in analyzing and implementing the contribution that clinical practice brings to the daily occupational function of the child. Sensory processing is the foundation on which skills are built in the early developmental years and executive functioning is the skill set needed to see the child through his school career, preparing him/her to go to university/college/vocation of choice. Executive Functioning goes beyond intelligence and speaks to the ability to organize, to write what you are thinking, to adhere to time-lines, to be disciplined in study methods. This will provide the therapist with the building blocks necessary as well as discuss tools to assess, intervene and support clients.

Play the Floortime Way

Introduction to the Dr. Stanley Greenspan Model An Intermediate Level Course on DIR/ Floortime.

Tuesday, May 21, 2018

8:15 AM - 3:45 PM
Registration at 7:45 AM

Brooklyn, NY

Course Description

This course will cover the 6 developmental milestones of Dr. Stanley Greenspan's model of understanding the functional emotional capacities in typical children, applied to children with special needs. He started this model to target children on the autism spectrum, though it is widely used with multiple diagnostic categories today. Together we will discover the importance of relationship, affect, and harnessing intrinsic motivation within the child to learn and grow. The attendee will leave the workshop equipped with ideas, techniques and practical information that could be used the very next day. The DIR/Floortime model is very complimentary to many models, including the model of Sensory Integration and is not restricted to a certain age group. Professionals working in the school and pre-school setting, as well as private practice will find this model helpful in understanding different behaviors, as well as gain strategies could be applied to support learning behavior.

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Not Just Skin Deep

Eczema is more than an external condition

As a frequent contributor to *The Wellspring*, I've received a fair share of phone calls from readers across and outside the country regarding various health issues. In one such call, a woman who lives in the West Coast asked if I could help her find a support group for parents of children with eczema. Her six-month-old baby, she confided in tears, was suffering from a severe skin condition that was leaving her helpless and pained. She couldn't bear to watch him cry in pain, giant tears staining his inflamed, raw cheeks.

After checking our local *chessed* lists, I learned that while there are many support groups for parents of children with diabetes, Crohn's, hair loss, etc., none catered to parents of children with skin conditions. I felt sorry that I couldn't help this distraught young mother. After traveling from dermatologists to skin specialists and allergists, with minimal improvement, parents in her situation are desperate for advice and help.

In addition, not having one address to turn to makes the situation so much more complex. Usually, when a child has a health-related problem, it is obvious who can help. For poor vision, an ophthalmologist is the place to go; for a sprained foot, an orthopedist would be the answer. So why can't dermatologists cure eczema and alleviate the suffering of so many of our children?

In order to cure eczema we must first understand what causes this skin condition. Many years of extensive research have revealed that eczema is *not* a disease of the skin. Rather it's a disease of the digestive system. Foods that are not easily digestible, as well as foods the individual can't tolerate or is allergic to, will become toxins. The body naturally tries to rid itself of these unwanted toxins, which can later damage internal organs. As the body's largest organ, the skin lends itself to assist in the elimination process. Thus, the toxins leave the body via the skin in the form of eczema.

The understanding that eczema is an internal problem clarifies

why moisturizers and medicated creams are of little help. The relief they provide is only temporary—for as long as the skin is being treated. The obvious solution, therefore, would be to determine which foods the body can't tolerate and eliminate them from the diet.

As a kinesiologist, parents ask me which foods are the culprits of their child's hives, blisters, and raw skin; which foods are the most beneficial, etc.

There is no general answer to these questions. Since each person has an individual digestive system, there is no one regimen that works for all. Some people have a more hardy constitution than others, and some have weaker systems due to stressful conditions, or may suffer from lower immunity, yeast conditions, lack of enzymes, or increased acid levels. I advise parents, since they are the ones who know their children the best, to try adding or eliminating one food at a time and see how their child's skin reacts to each change. I advise them to keep a record of beneficial foods and foods that the child is better off avoiding.

This process may be especially difficult for children who spend many hours every day at the baby-sitter or in school. If this is the case, contact the caretaker or teacher and explain what your child may or may not eat. It's also helpful to supplement with probiotics, which may improve the child's digestive system. Keep in mind that your child's skin may appear worse before it becomes better, as the toxins are released from the body in a process called cleansing. Be patient and try to make your child's meals attractive so he or she doesn't feel deprived. In addition to tweaking meals, use fragrance-free laundry detergents, mild soaps and shampoos, and keep the child's environment perfume-free.

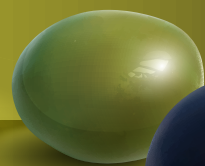
I agree with the distraught mother who reached out to me that a support group for parents to discuss these issues would be very beneficial to both the parents and their children. If you know of any such group, please contact *The Wellspring*. ♥

Miriam Schweid is a Brooklyn-based kinesiologist. She can be reached through The Wellspring.



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DIY

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All Starched and Sparkling

Homemade Spray Starch

Starch is a multi-purpose laundry tool that helps keep wrinkles at bay and prevents dirt from accumulating on shirt collars. Starching clothing stiffens the fabric, particularly when using heavy starches, such as on tablecloths and linens. Especially for Pesach, you may want to have some starch handy to get a perfectly stiff and wrinkle-free white tablecloth. In honor of the Yom Tov, when you may prefer not to use store-bought starch (which may contain chemicals and added fragrances), here's a recipe to make your own Kosher for Pesach brand. Potatoes are naturally starchy and thus lend themselves to making a great linen starch.

Add one heaping tablespoon potato starch to one pint cold water. Shake very well until starch is totally dissolved. Use only a fine mist spray bottle so there will be no clumps when you spray on clothing or linens.

If your tradition is not to use ready-made potato starch, you can easily make your own and use it not only for linens but in your cakes as well. Here's how:

Wash, peel, and grate 5 medium potatoes. Add 3-4 cups water. Cover a second bowl with cheesecloth and pour the potato water into the bowl. Squeeze out as much liquid as possible. (You need only the potato water, not the potato itself, to make the starch). Repeat this process twice. Allow water to stand. The starch will settle on the bottom of the bowl in about 20 minutes. Allow the starch to dry in a flat pan overnight.

To make a spray starch, simply add water to the homemade potato starch, following the directions above. ♥





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My only sister is very critical of me. I'm dreading to spend time with her on Yom Tov.

How letting your toddler manage on his own facilitates development

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Is there a need for a kosher health magazine?

That was the big question that took up center space in the minds of the tentative *Wellspring* team in the months leading up to its inception.

“Certainly,” said the voice of reason.

“Certainly not,” said the skeptic. This wasn’t any particular person, rather a collective voice in all of our minds that essentially emanated from fear but was clothed in impressively named ideals, such as “practicality” and “healthy realism.”

And then came the question: What will this magazine provide that the community doesn’t yet have? We started with one answer, then another, and another: A balanced, Torah-based perspective on health and nutrition; wholesome, compelling content; appropriate images; nutritious recipes; current research; expert guidance; and medical information relevant for the *frum* reader. All of these reasons were certainly substantial, but it is with the inauguration of our expanded *Wellbeing* section that I can truly experience the culmination of my dreams for the *frum* community’s health magazine.

You see, while I appreciate leading a healthy lifestyle, I can’t say that nutrition and dietetics is my passion. As I’ve mentioned previously, our pantry isn’t stocked with organic sugar, and I’ve never tasted coconut aminos in my life (though Sarah Wolhendler, interviewed in this issue’s Cup of Tea, certainly convinced me to try it one day!). Rather, as someone who went down the psychotherapy career path, only to realize that my place to find guidance for emotional health is elsewhere, my passion lies in this arena. The journey toward emotional, which is inherently tied to spiritual, health encompasses all areas of my life, from relationships to *mitzvah* observance to eating patterns. Because I believe that emotional and spiritual health are the cornerstone of all other health-related pursuits, giving them more space allows me the pleasure of ticking off my most important reason for the need of this magazine.

What can a kosher health magazine innovate in regards to mental and emotional health? In other sections of this magazine, you will often find reference to academic journals citing peer-reviewed, evidence-based research on top-

ics related to health, as well as interviews with or references to medical professionals in the mainstream world. After all, the *Midrash* in *Eichah* (2:13) famously tells us *chochmah bagoyim ta’amin*, believe that there is wisdom amongst the nations. Their knowledge in fields such as nutrition, medicine, science, and mathematics is not only valuable but could contribute to our own quality of life. However, the verse continues, *Torah bagoyim al ta’amin*, as much as there is wisdom to be found out there, don’t believe that they have Torah. From a simple perspective, of course it makes sense that we shouldn’t turn to the mainstream world for direction in how to live a Torah life. What do they know about Shabbos, kashrus, Pesach?

But here’s where the weight of this verse lies, which I only learned after emerging from my travails in the world of psychotherapy: Torah does not refer only to the *halachah* around which our lives revolve. Torah, whose root is the word *horah* (instruct), encompasses the guidance as to how we should live our lives—how we should relate to others and to ourselves. How should I process my emotions? How should I deal with my anxieties? How can I improve my marital relationship? How can I be a better parent? Because these topics pertain to the *nefesh*, the answers to these questions necessitate more than conventional wisdom. They require the wisdom of Torah. And that’s where we can find all the answers to the questions that plague us, the questions that will ultimately lead us to the life we want. If we are fortunate enough to have all our answers in the real thing, why should we go for second best?

And so, we at *The Wellspring* feel honored to be inaugurating an entirely novel concept in the community. *Wellbeing*, our emotional health section, does not look like a section that could have been clipped from any mainstream psychological periodical, only with a few italicized words here and there to remind the readers that this is a *frum* publication after all, but the entire essence of the topics, guidance, and food for thought we offer in these pages is based strictly on our ultimate sourcebook for leading the life Hashem has in mind for us: a life of *menuchas hanefesh*, *simchah*, *ahavah* and *achvah*—true emotional wellness from the core.

Wishing you *hatzlachah* on your journey,

Shiffy Friedman

If you’d like us to address a particular topic or issue in this section, we look forward to hearing from you!

I'M NOT A SUPER WOMAN

Being human is super enough for me

How 6 wise women help themselves to make
Yom Tov and year-round living a pleasure.





ONE HECTIC WINTER AFTERNOON, WHILE I WAS PREPARING DINNER,

the Heaven-sent woman who helps me with light housework joined me in the kitchen. Leah, the quintessential middle-aged European *balabusta*, spends several hours a week working in homes like mine, helping young mothers like me with no family on this side of the ocean keep their house in shape, while accumulating untold *zechusim*. While Leah scrubbed the counters and I filled a pot with broccoli, I said to her, “I don’t know how I’d do this without you.” And she said, “You know something, throughout all generations, Jewish women took household help. In every story of bygone eras, there’s a maid in the picture. Young mothers, especially, have so much on their plate, and there’s only so much they can do. It’s only normal that you should have someone helping you out.”

The validation Leah’s words provided immediately sparked the writing of this feature. While feelings of self-doubt can’t be washed away with an article or two,

sometimes, all it takes is a change of perspective for us harried mothers to realize that, no, we don’t have to do everything on our own. Perhaps there are corners we should be cutting, shortcuts we should be taking, in order to ensure that the pleasure of life doesn’t get sucked into a deep, black hole, all in the name of being the exemplary homemaker. We don’t want to cut so many corners that there’s nothing left to give to our families, but can it be that our current expectations of ourselves are sapping us of our strength and the ability to enjoy our daily life?

A woman’s emotional health is a vital component in running a fully functioning home that’s filled with love and laughter.

In this feature, six productive, influential women share how they validate their humanness, while preparing a beautiful Yom Tov for their family and guests. How do they come to Pesach feeling like the energized, happy wife, mother, grandmother, and hostess? Spoiler alert: They don’t draw their energy from perfection.

- Shiffy Friedman



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Mrs. Baila Friedmann

My Four Tips

Here are four things that help me immensely with housework, especially in preparing Yom Tov.

1 Start In Advance

In order to start cooking in advance, treat yourself to an extra freezer. You don't have to tell anyone about it—so you don't give others a complex, nor to have them snicker and say, “We only like fresh food,” which may give *you* a complex—but there's nothing wrong and everything right about cooking for the Yamim Noraim in August, and for Pesach in February.

Obviously, if you don't have a Pesach kitchen, it's more of a challenge, but even then, I have some friends who turn over their kitchens late in the winter for 48 hours and do all their Pesach cooking then. It takes planning, especially with obtaining the ingredients, but I'll gladly help anyone who's interested in trying this. (I can be contacted through *The Wellspring*.)

Starting to clean in advance also helps me come to Yom Tov feeling more composed. I do one room a week for 10 weeks in advance (we have a large house, *baruch Hashem*).

2 Three for One

When you're doing the cooking, why not double or triple your recipes so you have more meals ready at one time? When I cook for a long Yom Tov, I cook everything times three. On Rosh Hashanah, first and second days Succos, all menus are repeated. Most families prefer their favorites twice or three times, rather than an exhausted Mommy/hostess who has something new for each meal.

3 Lists

I use lists a lot. I don't think I could manage without them. While I don't worship my lists—if I don't complete some things, I just move them to the next page—they make the workload so much easier. Once my tasks are on the list, I feel like they're on the way to being done, and I don't have to “carry” them in my mind...

4 Acquainted with the Greatness of Yom Tov

Learn about the enormity and *kedushah* that is inherent in Yom Tov preparation. Knowing this is our ticket to Gan Eden, and an amazing opportunity to bring Divinity into our lives, makes Yom Tov and Shabbos cooking a constant highlight and absolutely thrilling. Turn on the music while you peel mounds of veggies, especially songs that pertain to that Yom Tov. Add \$16 to your list of Yom Tov expenses and treat yourself to a new CD; Hashem pays you back anyway! And by the way, it's a beautiful time to *daven* for whatever we need. Tapping into this knowledge makes Yom Tov prep not only easier, but also helps us realize we don't have to have the latest and fanciest dishes to consider ourselves great. Rather, bringing Hashem into our kitchen makes us feel truly superb.

The same is true for any other work we do around the house. One of my favorite stories in teaching is about the matriarch of one of the great *chassidishe* dynasties who was referred to as Yenta d'Nevia. She was called that way because when she would sweep her kitchen floor, she would suddenly stop, leaned over her broomstick, lift her heels three times, and whisper, “*Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh*.” She overheard the *malachim* singing *Kedushah* while she was *sweeping*! We have such opportunities to connect to Hashem when we clean our *mikdash me'at*. My mother raised us this way. She always thanked Hashem that our homes need to be cleaned, but in His love for us, He turned it into a special mitzvah. How fortunate we are to be Yidden!

On this note, while I'm doing work in the home, I try to remind myself how lucky I am to have a family to prepare for, how lucky I am to have the *koach* to prepare, and the home in which to do it. May Hashem always *bentch* us with these gifts. Mrs. Tammy Karmel, my dear friend who lives with ALS, is always at the forefront of my mind, as well as my close friend Liz, whose ex-husband convinced all her children to leave their mother. If all the skies were parchment and all the trees were quills, it wouldn't be enough to even start thanking Hashem!

Mrs. Friedmann, a wife and mother of a large family of children and grandchildren, is a kallah teacher, lecturer, and counselor in Monsey, New York.

When you think
about mornings...

MEDIAOTG



SINCE 1945



Basie (Tress) Rosenblatt, LCSW

Eye on the Ball

The first thing is that I don't need a lot of sleep. This certainly helps me prepare large meals into the night after a long day at work.

But being more realistic; I keep my eye on the ball. I ask myself, "What do I really want to happen this Yom Tov/Shabbos/Tuesday?" Once I have a vision of what I want, everything else falls into place.

If I want to have the most majestic Pesach table, or the most fun Purim, I will then be able to determine what it is that needs to be done in order for that to happen.

Also, I have a relaxed nature. If something breaks or flies out of the refrigerator, I don't sweat about it. Perhaps this is a matter of priorities as well, which I learned from my dear mother, Mrs. Hinda Tress, *a"b*. If three bowls come flying off the shelf, I'll say, "Okay, so the bowls broke." What would make me more upset is if the atmosphere on Yom Tov would be compromised. I don't always take a manicure that I plan a month before—sometimes I do, sometimes I don't—but I always want the atmosphere to be beautiful. I don't sweat any of the details, as long as the end result is the way I want it to be.

Because the atmosphere is so important to me, I'm very focused on keeping the tone even. There's no screaming in our house. Even if it's a few minutes to Shabbos and so much still has to get done, it's all going to happen without the noise. As we speak, my coffee just fell out of the fridge. How's that for a live example?

With a lot of humor and good cheer, and the knowledge that this is what the family's memories will be made of—not the extra dessert or wine reduction—Yom Tov and Shabbos become a true pleasure.

Of course, if you could afford it, get cleaning help. You don't have to micromanage every detail. Do what you can do and have them do the rest.

Here's a great story about my mother. She was the calmest, most lovely person, and my role model in keeping her eye on the ball. She

taught us how to live our lives in a most amazing way. She never sweated anything. There could have been a hundred dishes flying out of the closet, and she'd say calmly, "Can somebody please get a broom?"

One erev Pesach when I was about ten years old, my oldest brother was about to get engaged. He wanted to bring his *kallab* home literally in the hours leading up to Pesach, so she could meet our family. All my married sisters were living in Cleveland at the time, where their husbands were learning in Telshe. Of course, they had flown in for Yom Tov with their young, lively broods. In preparation for meeting the *kallab*, we got the house in order. It had never been so clean before.

When we heard the bell ring, my mother went to get the door. There, in front of her eyes, she saw six kids swimming in eggs. They had taken all the eggs from the cartons lined up outside our front door and thrown them all over the floor. And there, stood my brother and his future *kallab*. And I will never forget my mother's reaction. "Isn't it wonderful?" she asked in all sincerity. "The children are having such a great time."

That was it. My sister-in-law jumped over the egg mess, and whatever happened, happened. But what we remember from this incident many decades later was the atmosphere.

Will our loved ones remember anger and blaming, or will they remember the happy atmosphere in the home on Yom Tov? Will they remember that Rosh Hashanah is about *tefillab*, not about recipes? When we keep our eye on the ball, everything else falls into place.

Basie is actively involved in her family life (her highest priority), while maintaining private psychotherapy practices in Brooklyn and Lakewood. As the wife of a Rosh Yeshivah, she happily hosts her family and friends, as well as the bachurim from the yeshivah.

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Miriam Meiselman

Is This Causing Me to Feel Tension?

When I first started working as a parenting teacher, my life went haywire, to the extent that I couldn't put up a pot of pasta because I was so overwhelmed. I knew there would be things that would fall through the cracks as a result of my work and that things wouldn't be the way I wanted, but I couldn't imagine how my work would take over my life.

After a short while, I took a step back and realized I had undertaken much too much. I had to strike the right balance between my work and my family, and all other areas of my life. That was when I got much more housekeeping help and decreased my workload.

Whenever I feel that something I'm doing is triggering tension and pressure, that it doesn't allow me to feel the fullness of life, I know I'm going beyond the *hishtadlus* that Hashem wants of me. I explain it to my students that it's as if I'm stepping into Hashem's circle in a Venn diagram. One of the foremost thoughts at the top of my head is: Is this the correct way to do this?

If I don't feel the fullness of life and I feel pressure to do something, such as preparing extra courses or desserts, I know the need to do this is coming from an egoistic place, and I won't do it.

This has become my guide. I'll do this quick self-check even before doing something that appears spiritual, such as going to a *shiur*, to make sure it's not coming from an egoistic place.

And so, I'll have guests, but I'll work on not preparing the extra dessert. This is very hard for me, because I would love to do it "all right," but if it will cause me any undue pressure, it's not the right thing for me.

It's not about cutting as many corners as possible. Rather, it's a perspective that everything counts, but only at the given moment. Cleanliness, nice meals—they're all important, but what's right for me now?

This approach carries over to all areas of my life. Right now, I

give one parenting class via telephone to England, a refresher class once a week, and a new class once a week. Perhaps next year seven classes will suit me, or maybe I'll be giving none. Hakadosh Baruch Hu creates the challenge as we go along. Whenever I feel a surge of pressure, I know that's the moment when I must take a step back and make a *chesbbon*.

As another example, I do many things for *chinuch* that take a lot of time, such as spending time with every child at bedtime. As time goes along, perhaps I'll cut down on that in order to have more time to prepare for Pesach. When the moment comes, I'll prioritize, but I can't know that beforehand.

This Pesach, we will have the honor of hosting my parents, who will be coming over from England. In the back of my mind, I'm thinking that this will entail a new load of work, because my father has many more *minhagim* than we do. At the same time, I'm so excited that they're coming, and I won't allow myself to go down the track of feeling pressured. My ego tells me to plan my parents' visit, but my *yetzer tov* tells me not to.

What will I do? At every moment, I will decide what is the correct thing for me to do right now. I'll take each day as it comes and see what's in store for me that day. I haven't felt pressured for a very long time thanks to this approach.

Miriam, a wife and mother of a double-digit family, is a parenting teacher in Yerushalayim.

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Perl Abramowitz

Thank Hashem for Rosy

I am blessed with many roles. Here they are in order of importance: I am a very lucky wife, a blessed Mommy of eight children, and a Bubby to one delicious grandchild. I work as an addictions counselor every morning and every evening, and I deliver up to eight lectures a week.

How do I do it all? I don't! I make sure to take a nap every afternoon. I take *lots* of cleaning help. I don't even know how to turn on my washing machine. I give my housekeeping help, Rosy—Hashem should bless her with long years of good health—a shopping list. She peels and chops the dinner ingredients, too. All I do is put them together in the pot.

When my children come home from school, Mommy is after a good lunch and a nap, the house is clean, and supper is ready. I cut every corner I can in order to make myself available to the most important priorities in my life.

If having so much help doesn't feel like a Jewish value to you, it's worthwhile to check out the words we say in *kiddush* on Shabbos morning (*Shemos* 20:10): The seventh day is Shabbos... you should perform no labor, neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant... Here, the Torah acknowledges that having others help us out with our work, whenever possible, has always been a normal part of our lives.

A wife and mother living in Brooklyn, Perl is a popular addictions counselor, parenting and self-parenting teacher, and lecturer.

Abbey Wolin

You Can't Do It All Alone

My secret to managing is called, "Get help."

In the Wolin family, we all stick to what we're good at. I'm not good at cleaning. My husband, on the other hand, is exceptional at cleaning. Our marriage is not 50-50; it's 100-100. We each put in everything we're good at to get things rolling.

So what do I do? I make sure that the food is prepared, that the table is set beautifully, that the holiday has a beautiful spirit and a beautiful look.

At the end of the day, if a woman did everything according to the letter, but she was screaming at her children and there was no happiness in the house, that's not a holiday, and she didn't fulfill her *mitzvah* as a mother and caregiver.

I understand that my family life is unique in the fact that my husband is eager and able to do the cleaning—he sees it as an honor to help get the house ready for Pesach—but what others can take from

this is that the help doesn't have to come in the conventional way and to accept any help that's being offered. My husband has taught all of our children how to clean. As soon as the kitchen is ready for cooking, I step in. He also makes an amazing chicken soup, so we cook Shabbos together. I'm happy for him to do the things he likes to do.

Because of my line of work, painting glass and shipping the hand-painted items all over the country, I used to work until the last minute because people wanted their new dishes for Pesach. Since I created a certain amount of balance in my life and I no longer do custom orders, I'm more available to do work in the kitchen from two-and-a-half weeks before Pesach.

There's no way a woman can do everything herself. It's not about balancing it all, but rather about being centered. If I'm moving from one side to the other, busy chasing my tail, I'm not balanced. To be centered is having clear goals and holding ourselves accountable for what we could do.

Artist and innovator of the 30 Day Biz Challenge, Abbey Wolin learned the hard way how to run a successful business. She started painting glass in 2010 and has since grown her business, selling out her items in stores throughout the world. With her vibrant personality and charismatic nature, this mother of 5 has a way of making the most complex ideas simple to achieve.

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Raizy Fried of @Raizyscookin

Hungarian & Chilled

I don't want to be loved for my babka

The high is real when you sit down at the Pesach Seder, knowing that every crack in the house has been carefully scanned with your own eyes and skimmed with your dandy toothbrush. Every pocket and page has been aired, every pot handle removed to clean the grease beneath it. No dust anywhere, not even those places you hadn't even known existed before you got started on your cleaning spree. Every closet is organized and “container-ized,” and both freezers are stocked with Pesach lukshen and compote for an army, including all those guests who might pop in unexpectedly. When your mind wanders through the food in every container, you can feel the euphoria enveloping your entire body in a glow of deep pride.

The physical exhaustion quickly fades away at the mere thought of all those perfectly matched Chol Hamoed outfits you mended and ironed perfectly—just the way you like it.

Oh sisters, how I can relate to that rush and delicate “pride-flies” that would flutter in my chest. They would dance around looking pretty, as I obsessed over the fruits of my labor and attained perfection. And although those flies would dance about noiselessly, they were sometimes so loud in my mind, blocking out the present. Suddenly, I would notice everyone picking up their glasses for *Vehi She'amda*. Huh? How did they get here so fast?

Although I would love the thrill and rush, I now understand that the only way I could realistically achieve perfection was by going cold on one of life's most crucial relationships: the friendship between me and myself. Back then, I was convinced I had to focus on the things that fuel me—accomplishments. Pursuing this goal came at a great expense: I avoided hanging out with the woman who should have been my best friend, myself, because I knew she would reason with me. I always knew she wasn't dumb, this friend of mine. I knew she wouldn't fall for the “shoulds” and the sky-high standards I imposed on myself. That's why, when I would run the superwoman race, I tried to hide from her. I knew it was painful for her to watch me being so hard on myself. I couldn't look her in the eye. I made believe she didn't exist. When I felt the guilt creeping up, when I heard the “I should know better” voices emerging from within the shadowed folds of my brain, I turned up the volume of my life to block them out. I organized another closet. I popped another cake into the oven. I rewrote my schedules and lists so they'd appear neater. I invited guests. I cleaned the cracks of my cordless phone, removing every ounce of residue with toothpicks around the dial keys. I filled my day with “things to do,” the kind of drugs that made me feel oh so much better. I whipped up a batch of

cookies for a *simchah*; I scrubbed the pots; I filled the freezer; I crossed off another thing from my to-do list. Aaah... that always uplifted me. It felt heartwarming, like I was being enveloped in a long, tight hug.

You know what else worked like magic? When I would do something to help a neighbor. Her praise and thank yous consoled and healed my heart. Gone was the guilt, powerful Me was back, re-energized to continue conquering the world.

I'm ambitious by nature; I always strived to be the best person. Back in the day, being a better person translated into doing more. I was very strong minded about what a Devoted Wife must do. I knew Good Mothers bend over backwards for their children, right? Close Friends offer help and over-extend themselves. Caring Family Members never miss a *simchah* and send over homemade delicacies at every occasion.

I considered myself lucky, for goodwill and problem solving came naturally to me. Because I sincerely care and really like helping others, the rat race of life wasn't even that exhausting. But here's where the problem came up.

So many of us women were raised with the mindset: “To be a good woman is to be good to others.” If you're a good mother to your children, a good wife to your husband, a good friend to your friend, then you are good. While acts of kindness are always admirable, too many of us live with the misconception that our value is inherently tied to the things we do for others.

I find that many women, particularly of Hungarian descent, especially pride themselves in the way they model exemplary homemaking and generous hospitality. They live by the golden rules of etiquette; they host and treat everyone the way they want to be treated. Many women I know display a combination of beauty and strength. They are delicate and ornamental on the outside, yet strong and fiery on the inside. These are women who always look elegant and put-together, are quick with a warm smile, a warm meal, and are simultaneously undisputed bosses at their place of business and in their homes.

I give tribute to so many of these awe-inspiring women I grew up admiring. Yet while I appreciate the glamor and commend the generosity, I've *Baruch Hashem* come to recognize both the grace and the fire, the goodwill and the martyrdom—because I've come to the awareness that striving to be that Ultimate *Balabusta* often feeds into this idea: you need to show up for other people in order to be of value.

Over time, I've realized that giving and doing is only commendable

when it comes from a healthy mindset and with a genuine, happy heart. I've yet to find a martyr who deep down isn't a smidgen resentful or bitter. It's something martyrs won't admit, not to anyone, not even to themselves. Because as soon as they feel the bitterness creep up, they quickly close the "feelings file" and run back to their place of comfort—their plans and mental "to do lists." They would rather clean all the crevices with toothpicks and scrub the white molding till they glow. You know why? Because as exhausting as that work is, it's easier than facing the truth. People-pleasing and running away from yourself to attain materialistic perfection is so much easier than facing yourself and dealing with all those turbulent thoughts and emotions.

I've created a new class for myself. It's called being Hungarian and Chilled. Being Hungarian and Chilled isn't an oxymoron; it's the phenomenon of snatching the best of both worlds. I believe you can be at once tough, kind, and beautiful. I hold on tightly to the beautiful European etiquette I was raised with. I try to maintain exquisite poise, but only when it's realistic. I could make you feel infinitely welcome, but also let you know when you've pushed too far. I can be impeccably mannered and still enjoy a joyful mess created by my precious children. I can now fully enjoy being that *geshikt* Hungarian *balabusta*. I love the creating, the cooking, and serving up homemade delicacies on fine bone china, because whatever I do, I check in first with myself to make sure I feel up to it. I don't push myself; I respect myself. I try very hard not to call myself lazy when I'm simply exhausted. I now feel proud and deserving of the ultimate *Eishes Chayil* medal, even when we have store-bought *challah* for one month straight.

This self-love is freeing. And the new mindset I've cultivated made me realize that contrary to my old beliefs, my loved ones haven't been sticking around for my babka with streusel crumbs. They are here because they love *me*.



Raizy Fried of @Raizyscookin

Here are some of my tips that will help you become THE TRUE SUPER WOMAN you need in your life:

1 Accept Help

Stop depending yourself from the people that love you and want to help you. So many women have people offering them help, but they wave them off with a "Nah, I'm good," all to prove to the world that they've got everything under control. Accepting help is a sign of strength.

2 Self-Care

Dedicate at least 30 minutes a day to relax and do something just for yourself. A burnt-out, over-exhausted, depleted human has very little left to give. Giving yourself permission to pause and regenerate means the people in your life will get the best of you, rather than what's left of you.

Self-care isn't about \$100 massages, lush bath bombs, and face masks. Sometimes, it's going to bed at 8 p.m. or letting an old friend help. Sometimes, it's serving amulets for dinner or choosing not to attend a cousin's wedding. It's forgiving yourself for not meeting your impossible standards and understanding you're worth it.

3 Know You're Enough

An emotionally healthy person feels valuable and content—even on days when she didn't accomplish anything. Keep telling yourself, "My value is mine. It has absolutely nothing to do with what I do."

It's so easy to get caught up in comparing ourselves to others. It can be ridiculous. Make sure to treat yourself kindly and pick yourself up when you fall with all the compassion. Wipe away those tears with love. It will take time, but if you believe in yourself, believe in the people that love you, you will get there. 

Raizy Fried is a wife and mother who works as a creative entrepreneur and lifestyle influencer.



I'm a Mess When I'm With My Sister

For a long time, we've been contemplating an emotional health column in a question-and-answer format. Our main hesitation was our reluctance to give the questioner and our readers a generic response based on an unexplored question. Since we did not think it was possible to provide appropriate direction based on just a few lines submitted by the reader, we sought a style that would allow for more back-and-forth, allowing us to gain more clarity on the question. With gratitude to Hashem, we introduce you to the column that we hope and pray will do justice to the depth and infinite value of the nefesh.

In this column, the respondent will not answer a question based on a few lines, but rather portray some of the back-and-forth that went on behind the scenes between him or her and the questioner. The summarized interactions in this column are either based on reader-submitted questions or are a portrayal of several sessions that helped guide the individual toward the first step of his or her emotional health journey.

Since emotional work is always a journey, the goal of this column is to provide direction toward the first step, as well as important points of exploration that could be'zras Hashem lead to the menuchas hanefesh the questioner, and every Yid, seeks.

The Editors

I dread any time I'm together with my sister, which isn't very often, but on Pesach I'll be spending a few days with her at our parents' home. I wish we could just be together and have a good time.

■ What do you dread about being with her?

I basically remember her always being my scary older sister. She's ten years older than me and there are only boys between us. We're the only two girls in the family. It probably doesn't help much that I have a better marriage than she does. And she's struggling financially. But I always felt that she was critical of me.

■ Give me an example of something she said to you in the past.

She's very critical. Every time we interact or meet up, she finds stuff to criticize me about, whether it's the way my kids behave or my choice of clothing or even how I parent.

■ Is this something that recently started or has this been going on for a while?

"You should have gotten Pinny the next size pants. Was this one on sale?" She usually says it as if she's trying to be helpful.

■ Do you feel that she's being helpful when she says that or do you feel hurt?



Of course I feel hurt.

■ And what do you do about it?

Sometimes I'll keep quiet and get out of her radius. Other times, when I can't control myself, I answer back, like "That was rude!" And when I'm really good, I'll talk to myself, either that she's saying it because she's jealous, because she doesn't have what I have, or that she's trying to be helpful but she doesn't know how to do it right.

■ Does telling yourself these things make you feel better?

Yes.

■ So you have a good solution to the problem. You're good to go.

I'm not. Though it calms me down a bit, I'm still really upset deep inside. And it eats me up. I then find myself lashing out at my kids or my husband, feeling self-conscious, and really not in a good mood. And all I could think of is getting Pinny new pants.

■ So the solution of talking to yourself helps you but it doesn't do anything to calm your heart down. What do you think about the way you feel? Is it okay for you to feel hurt when someone says something critical to you?

For sure.

■ Could it be that you know that it's okay but you don't feel that it's okay?

Maybe.

■ Let's look at the reaction you consider the best—the one you turn to when you're what you call "really good." Does telling yourself those things reflect your hurt feeling or are they more of a voice that says, "It's not okay for you to feel hurt right now?"

It definitely doesn't give me the validation. I guess I don't *really* feel that it's okay for me to feel hurt. It doesn't feel right to me to be upset about this.

■ Why isn't it right?

I'm not exactly sure. I feel like I'm doing something wrong, like maybe I have to have more compassion for her, to be less sensitive and more understanding, or maybe it feels silly for me to take her words to heart, like "Big deal! Why can't you just get over it?"

■ Does telling yourself these things make you feel better?

It only makes me feel more horrible. And before I know it, I'm a mess.

That makes sense. Not only are you being criticized and feeling hurt, but you're inadvertently continuing to hurt yourself with your own confirmation that the way you're feeling isn't right. What do you really need when you're feeling hurt? To acknowledge that this is how you feel, and that it's perfectly normal and legitimate for you to feel this way. You're afraid to feel hurt.

In your mind, you *understand* that the words you're being told are objectively hurtful. It's not that you're digging up reasons to blame your sister. The words she's telling you don't feel good to you. While you may very well be right that she has your benefit in mind, the end result is that you don't feel good. But based on your reaction to her comments, it appears that although you understand in your head that it's okay to feel hurt, you don't *feel* that it's okay. You feel that it's not a proper, mature, and/or sensible reaction. And so, you only feel worse. Not only are you now feeling hurt because of the comment, but you're also having a hard time accepting yourself for feeling the way you do. In other words, you're putting yourself down for being human. Did you ever stop to tell yourself, "It's okay for you to feel hurt right now. What you're feeling is perfectly normal."?

You say that feeling hurt isn't a smart, sensible, mature reaction. Do you associate feeling hurt or being sensitive with being immature, silly, or improper? You may want to explore whether this has been an erroneous conclusion you've been carrying around for a while, possibly since childhood.

To strive toward not being hurt when someone criticizes us may be a lofty goal, but for most of us, that's not within our reach. Pretending to be there while seething inside and bottling up the pain not only backfires, as you describe, but it is also not the truth. Emotional and spiritual growth only occurs when we go with our truth.

Going with the truth, however, does not mean hurting back because when we look deeper into the source of the pain we realize that it's not about the other person. Rather, it means first acknowledging that this is how you feel and that you're not accepting yourself for feeling the way you do. If all your life you've been admonishing yourself for feeling a certain way, this takes work.

While doing your own work, if you find that you still feel uncomfortable, in pain, upset, or resentful, your next step might be to discuss the matter with your sister. To carry the hurt in your heart is not only a transgression of *lo sisha es achicha bilvavecha*, but it enables the resentment to fester, further alienating you from your sister and yourself. Although it may be frightening to open this up with her, not doing so is a lose-lose situation. In order for this not to turn into a battle, your conversation should be focused on how you feel, not on evaluating her or her actions.

The next time your sister makes a comment that hurts you, what do you think of telling her, "You know, sister? I feel hurt right now. The things you're saying don't feel good to me." It's very possible that she'll be shocked, especially if you've never responded to her in this way, and then answer back with another biting comment. When that happens, continue with your original statement, staying with the point you originally made. "We're sisters and I want to love you. This doesn't help me love you." Or, you can choose to address it proactively.

With the help of Hashem, accepting that the way you feel is legitimate and deserving of your empathy, and addressing the issue in a respectful manner will help make Yom Tov with your sister more pleasant. I'm tempted to tell you that being with your sister will become a joy, but that would be burdening you with another unrealistic ideal. Just as when it rains, we inevitably get wet, when someone makes a critical comment, we inevitably get hurt, and when someone consistently makes critical comments, we inevitably find it difficult to be in their presence. Our work is neither to get rid of the hurt feelings nor pretend they don't exist. It's also not to convince ourselves that we love being in the presence of someone who has their work to do. Rather, it is to be there for ourselves when we're feeling this way and to use the emotion as a catalyst for growth. ♥

Vantage View

Isn't swallowing hurt a virtue?

Being subjected to criticism or hurtful comments and accepting them with joy and composure, with the knowledge that this too is from Hashem, is certainly a virtue. In fact, numerous stories are told of *tzaddikim* who were genuinely grateful to perpetrators of their hurt, who were able to express love toward those who slighted them.

However—and this is the big but—not only is this level of acceptance a product of intensive inner work, but it is also only a virtue if this is how we truly feel. To Hashem, whose signature is *emes*, being aware of our truth is a priority. The point is not whether or not we say that something bothers us, but how we feel in our heart. If I feel hurt in my heart, this is where I'm at. And right now, in accordance to the instruction of *hamakir es mekomo*, one must know his place, my work is to acknowledge that.

Furthermore, the reason why we find it hard to admit that things bother us may be because, in essence, we wish we would be at the level where we aren't yet. Ironically, however, as long as we don't admit where we're really at, we can't get there. We're like the pauper who tells himself he's already a millionaire, so he never gets out there to find himself a job. When we see where we're at, on the other hand, we realize what we need to work on. And when we get there, it'll be real. It'll be the fruits of our labor. It's certainly hard to admit, but what admitting brings us to makes it well worth it.

In her practice as an LMSW, Shiffy Friedman realized that her knowledge in psychology was not helpful in healing the infinitely profound *nefesh*. An intensive search led her to discover the Torah's direction toward a more connected life. To sign up to receive Shiffy's weekly message on this subject, write to emotionalwellnessthroughTorah@gmail.com.

To submit a question for this column write to hearttoheart@wellspringmagazine.com. The respondent will then be in touch with you to further flesh out the issue.

Understanding
Reflex Integration
Part II

**How
Your
Baby
Crawls
or Sits
May Be an
Indication
of Future
Development**



Primitive reflexes, such as the startle reflex, are crucial to an infant's survival at birth and during the first few months of life. In a typically developing child, they integrate, or vanish later in infancy, once higher levels of the brain are developed and the child no longer has a need for the reflex.

As we discussed in the previous article, reflex integration utilizes neurodevelopmental movements to facilitate the maturation of a child's central nervous system. This enables the child to successfully gain independent control of his body while challenging his cognitive abilities to learn, in addition to developing

Physical Effects

As a baby starts to develop muscle tone, he gradually integrates reflexes that were essential to him earlier in life. It's incredible to watch the intricacy of movement that a crawl involves. Getting from sitting to the crawl position and then developing a cross-pattern crawl necessitates an intricate amount of movements which eventually lead to the child's first step. All of this becomes possible when reflex integration occurs at the developmentally appropriate time.

Poor reflex integration may affect children physically, in many areas. They may not have automatic, appropriate movement patterns or independent use of their body, which affects them physiologically. Overall, these children will appear to be uncoordinated, clumsy, and have poor balance, which will affect them in the playground and amongst their peers. Unintegrated reflexes may also be correlated to a child having difficulties with sleeping patterns, eating related issues (i.e. hunger drive, overeating, etc.), bedwetting, motivation, and attention. Thus, a child with poor reflex integration often exhibits delays in their overall physical development.

Academic Effects

Because certain parts of the brain related to learning and processing are limited in children with poor

healthy social-emotional responses with his peers. How babies "graduate" from exercising certain reflexes and then developing postural control is indeed an indication of their current development—and a reflection of so much more.

While every child may have certain reflexes that haven't been integrated appropriately, we treat reflexes only if they're affecting functioning. For many children, poor reflex integration has a significant impact on their development. In this article, we will discuss how it can affect physical, academic, and/or social-emotional development.

reflex integration, such children may be very smart but unable to process information in an academic setting. They may present as having difficulty with handwriting and reading skills, auditory processing and attentional delays, but in fact their difficulties are not in their ability to "learn" but their ability to take in the information presented accurately and interpret or express what they know.

These are the children who have the intelligence and ability, but are almost "pulled" away reflexively from expressing or exhibiting the skills that they have. It's frustrating for the student and the teacher/tutor, as no matter how much they "practice" or "pre-teach," the child cannot make academic progress. The reflexes that affect learning develop later in the child's development (after the reflexes that affect emotion and regulation), so children who suffer with lower level reflexes that are unresolved tend to struggle emotionally with the effects of being labeled. For example, a child labeled with ADD/ADHD, dyslexia, or Auditory Processing Delay may actually be suffering with anxiety, but it may not be stemming from a psychological source, only unintegrated reflexes. As we know, these "labels" affect the children, impacting their overall self-esteem and emotional identity. It is critical to consider, when looking at the child as a whole, whether this physiological component is affecting their academics. Many times, treating

this area effectively yields results without needing tutoring or practice. When needed, working with the child in this way facilitates consistent and generalized results over all academic areas.

Social-Emotional Effects

When reflexes relating to social-emotional development are present at the appropriate stage, they're not a cause for concern. For example, when an 18-month-old child has difficulty separating from Mommy, this is a sign of a typically developing child. However, if a 4-year-old child can't let go of Mommy, if she has a meltdown at the door to the nursery classroom, she won't leave Mommy's side at school, or even at her grandparents' home, this may be a cause for concern.

Children who always need more time than the typical child to warm up to their environment, or must exert control over the environment, such as by choosing which CD to play or who will take them to school, may be presenting with these behaviors due to poor reflex integration. These children are usually brilliant. They've learned how to manipulate the environment and the individuals around them to do what they need because they're in survival mode. In order to be at peace with themselves, which they're not, they exhibit such behaviors.

Like a deer in a headlight, such children may often feel stuck. If they can't see themselves out of the situation, that's the end for them. They become reliant on immature ways of handling their stress. They're like the baby who needs to suck on his pacifier in order to calm himself down. For a baby, that's perfectly developmentally appropriate, but if a child is still relying on the sucking reflex at 8 to calm himself down, either with a pacifier or his thumb, it's not.

Since children are smart, they may realize it's not appropriate for them to use these particular solutions to calm themselves down. But because they're desperate for the calming effect it provides, if they don't have a method to alleviate their stress, they may become oppositional or anxious. All of this is occurring because these children are in survival mode; they will do anything to flee a situation that

doesn't feel comfortable to them.

If you've ever observed what happens to a newborn baby when they hear a loud sound or their head is extended unexpectedly, you've witnessed the Moro reflex, also known as the startle reflex, in action. This reflex, normally present in newborns and lasting until three or four months of age, is the baby's fight and flight response to help him survive. Once the baby starts to differentiate what's dangerous and what's not, the reflex is no longer needed and thus gradually integrates. The child is no longer constantly in the fight or flight mode.

When a baby who still operates with this reflex hears a loud noise, he startles. But when a child or adult with the integrated reflex hears the same noise, he might turn his head to see that it was just a book that fell from the shelf, and he'll move on. A child or adult with poor reflex integration, though, might not exhibit the physiological startle, but may be chronically anxious. The constant unease of dealing with the fight and flight response may lead to digestive issues, loss of energy, and/or a weakened immune system, which results in constant illness, allergies, and warts. Often, immunological issues in children are a result of constantly being in the fight or flight response.

Reflex Integration for All?

While movement that reflexes initiate, as well as movements that occur as a result of integration, should be encouraged, just because your child isn't exhibiting one of them doesn't indicate he will eventually have any of the issues mentioned above. It's certainly beneficial for every child to crawl, but if your child skips the crawling stage or does the bunny hop as an alternative, poor reflex integration in this area may not necessarily impact his general development. Thus, reflex integration intervention may not be necessary.

Even when poor reflex integration does affect functioning, reflex integration techniques alone may not always be the solution. If a child is in therapy for a considerable amount of time and isn't exhibiting progress, there may be a physiological reason behind his delays that is not related to re-

flexes. Many parents come to us thinking this therapy is what their child needs but, based on our evaluation, we see that the child doesn't fit the profile. Sometimes, they may need psychological help or movements to release neurochemicals that will help control the fluctuating neurotransmitters in their brain and body.

What is more concerning is clients having come from performing reflex integration treatments that should not have been done, either because the child was too young to receive such treatment or the treatment was not performed correctly.

Your Golden Opportunity

Reflex integration is crucial to social-emotional, academic, and physical health. As parents, we must have our eyes and ears open to see what our child is doing and what he's not doing. There's so much we can do to help facilitate the movement they need. When a child is already at the phase that he must go into therapy in order to facilitate reflex integration, the work is more complex, but when parents catch the issue when the child is young, that's their golden opportunity to do it right. If your baby isn't getting up on his arms, your child isn't sitting up on his own, or your baby cries when he's on his stomach, take the steps that are necessary to ensure he will have the brightest future possible.♥

Practically Speaking

4 tips for facilitating reflex integration in your child

1. Pay Attention from the Start

In the first 2-3 months of life, your child has to learn to regulate and soothe himself, so that he can begin interpreting and integrating sensory stimulation and movement patterns at the proper developmental stage. As his mother, you can help ease the process along in various ways. First, you want to make sure he is feeding properly, from latching on to sucking, and that he isn't experiencing any physiological issues, such as acid reflux. If you notice your baby has difficulties with the suck/swallow reflex, it's important to get help. An additional thing to look out for is whether or not he's tongue-tied, as taking care of this issue early on can have huge impacts on the feeding process. It's crucial to look at the entire area to find out why the child isn't eating properly.

Since feeding is the child's primary way of connecting to his caregiver, a child who isn't good at the feeding process may later struggle with attachment/emotional bonding. In addition, through using this essential process, it facilitates regulation, oral motor strengthening necessary for speech, and helps the baby's eyes begin to align.

During the first couple of days of the baby's life, it's very important for him to establish an eating pattern. The strength of a baby's suck is at its peak the first couple of hours after he's born and it naturally diminishes as the days go on. Thus, it's important to strengthen this reflex at that time, giving the baby as many opportunities as possible to use it. Even if the baby isn't sucking on his mother's breast, regardless of the reason, he should be given the stimulation by a mother placing her finger in their mouth, so he utilizes sucking. (It's optimal to stick the finger in milk or formula, so the baby receives some gratification from the actual sucking). This is the time to make sure that this reflex is being activated.

Another reflex that should be activated during this critical period is the rooting reflex, which is a precursor to sucking. Every baby has a natural tendency that when the side of their cheek is stroked, they instinctively turn their head to find their source of food and start sucking. Searching for food is connected to the eating process and for fulfilling the survival mechanism that every baby is trying to integrate in the first couple months of life. Instead of putting your child's source of food directly into his mouth, stroke his cheek and let him practice using his reflex on his own.

2. Encourage and Facilitate All Developmental Movements

Make sure your child practices and exercises all developmental movements, including on the stomach, back, and side. In every position, different reflexes come into play, and that's why it's as important for your baby to be on his stomach as to be placed in all the other positions. It's important to mention that babies should not be sat up before they're ready.

Pay attention to which movement your child finds difficult. When a mother tells us that her child cries when she puts him on his side, we advise her to let him cry for a couple of minutes so he'll learn to tolerate the position and hopefully use the transitional movements that are hard for him. That's his exercise. When toys are used appropriately, they can make the position more fun for your child, while helping to ease the movement along. For example, if you want your baby to rotate toward his side, put the toy at an angle where he will force himself to roll in order to reach it. Let him work a little harder to get to where he needs to be.

Once a child has achieved independent sitting and has improved his muscle control, observe the seating positions he prefers to use. If he constantly uses the W-sitting position (his bottom on the floor and his feet splayed out to the side) after one year, it may be red flag.

If you see child your child isn't sitting properly, either have him sit in a pretzel position (ring sitting) or straighten his legs out gently in front of him (long sitting). To maintain the position, place a tray over his lap and have him play with a toy on it.

It's important to put your baby in different positions to see what's difficult for him to do.

3. Environmental Exposure

Another way to facilitate reflex integration is to expose your child to different environments and different sensory experiences, so that he will utilize emotional and sensory components in addition to physical components, in development.

For example, allow him to explore with different movements at the playground. We often observe that when mothers watch their baby go down the slide, they instinctively want to turn the baby onto his stomach, because they're nervous about his safety. When that keeps happening, it's not surprising the child is still sliding down on his tummy at the age of four. He simply never experienced the right way to go down the slide. It's important to provide him with the experience of perceiving the movement of sliding down forward, since vestibular stimulation must be experienced in all planes.

Postural reflexes are developed in the first year of life, which is when the child should be allowed to experiment with different positions. Since a five-year-old already passed that stage, if he wasn't given opportunities to use the reflexes at the right time, movement will not become automatic and he'll use his mind to guide him, perhaps even avoiding movements that elicit a feeling of discomfort and fear in him.

In the same vein, when a parent sees their child may be ready to go from crawling to begin standing, they should allow them to go through this milestone naturally. There's no need to encourage them by saying: "Come to Daddy," or by placing chairs and other small tables to reach. The longer a child remains in the horizontal plane (crawling) before naturally transitioning to the vertical plane (i.e., standing and walking), the better it is for his brain development. The child will figure out a way to get up on his own. Obviously, if a child isn't moving at all, he will need certain help, but a typically developing child doesn't need crutches in order to develop what comes naturally to him.





4. Sensory Exposure

Another way to give your child the opportunity to use and integrate his reflexes is to provide him with as many different sensory experiences as you can. Let him play in the bath, mash his food, and be exposed to different textures and sounds while he is in different physical positions and tumbling around. Expose him to moving rides, such as the little cars that move for a quarter or two. If you see he has a hard time on these rides, put him on your lap and mimic the back and forth movement. This will provide him with the experience in a downgraded version.

Of course, having toys all around the house for the child to play with is another excellent way to expose him to as many opportunities for reflex activation and integration as possible. Make sure you're choosing the ones that don't restrict your child, though. (A future article will explore this topic in more detail.) While many of today's toys are beautiful, they keep the child in one position, restricting his movement. Putting a baby in there for five minutes will do no harm, but if he's in such a toy for hours, he won't have the opportunity to practice important developmental movements.

Keeping a child back from environmental and sensory exposure makes him miss out on movement he needs to experience in order to integrate his reflexes. The more experiences you present to him, the better he will be able to practice. It also gives you a greater awareness regarding what he is having difficulty with. Remember, it's the continued exposure, exploration, and movement that cause reflex integration to happen, ultimately letting the child consolidate everything he does in the first year of life so that he can continue to develop appropriately.

UNVEILED

LIFE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS #8

WRITING POETRY IN THE PSYCHIATRIC WARD

Three months after our second child was born, we packed our bags, setting out for a new phase in our life. We had spent six years living in Eretz Yisrael. Despite it being of the most tumultuous years in our lives, it was a *zechus* for us to live there and my husband and I were happy that we had the opportunity to start out our married life there together. While I did whatever I could to be as mentally and emotionally present to my husband and children, including taking my medication and seeing a therapist on a consistent basis, being far away from our extended family at a time when we needed so much support was only getting more arduous. Various members of our families would fly in to be there for us, but it wasn't the same as living nearby.

Since we were at the stage in life where my husband was transitioning from being in *kollel* to working, and I needed to be near my family, we decided it was time to move back to my hometown, where both my parents and in-laws lived. As soon as I arrived back home, I was on a mission: to prove that I could be who I was before. I pursued jobs in fields I had originally worked in, and my success as a tutor soon led to an offer to teach and work with school-aged girls. I felt really good about having "made it," but shortly afterward, I experienced my first relapse. Even while on being medication and in therapy, my mania returned. Before long, not only was I out of a job, but I was admitted to the psychiatric ward for the first time in my life.

When the doctor I was seeing realized that I was getting more and more psychotic as I was talking

to him, he treated me differently than I had been treated in Eretz Yisrael. "If you continue this way," I remember him saying to me, "you could be a danger to yourself." And he sent me straight to the emergency room. When I arrived there and the admission staff asked me if I felt I was a danger to myself or others, I answered, "Not yet."

The first thing they did was administer more medication. But, as the dose increased, so did my mania; I was getting more delusional by the second. The next step the doctor wanted to try in order to calm my mania was electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). In this treatment method, the patient receives a medically induced seizure that is intended to treat both depression and mania. Beforehand, I was shown a video of what the procedure would be like. I was so in another world that I remember seeing the woman in the screen and thinking it was me. In the demo, I was shown how electrolytes are placed on different points in the patient's brain and how the shock that is administered helps reverse symptoms of mental health conditions.

Since the procedure is done under general anesthesia, I have no memory of the treatment itself. When I woke up, it was like waking up from any procedure that necessitates general anesthesia. I felt a bit lightheaded, but none of the side effects that have been attributed to ECT (which I did experience in later rounds). In fact, the ECT helped the medication do its job, which had not happened prior to this. While I did go into depression as a result of the medication (as always), I found that this time, I was able to emerge from it quicker.

Spending two and a half weeks in the psych ward was certainly an experience, one that took a great toll on me and my family. I suddenly found myself in a place that was far away from everyone and everything that was familiar to me, totally detached from the real world. My hospitalization forced me to realize how I wasn't functioning as a wife and mother since I barely took care of myself. On their end, my husband and kids missed me immensely. At that time, because of their young age, my

kids didn't know much except that Mommy was in the hospital and that she would be back soon, but it certainly impacted them, as well.

Because the nurses wanted me to sleep, I was placed in the geriatric section, which is a quieter, more peaceful section of a ward that could get quite noisy and hectic. Of course, I was the liveliest patient there. For the most part, I didn't realize where I was. In my delusional state, everyone I saw was someone else. I saw my being there as part of the *tikkun* I was bringing to the world. But when part of me snapped back to reality a bit, I seriously panicked. What was I doing in a psychiatric ward, of all places? I had no possessions with me; I wasn't even allowed to cut an apple with a plastic knife. Although I was able to get visitors, I couldn't go out to the real world. And this was in the weeks between Purim and Pesach. In my lucid moments, which usually happened at night, I felt so far away from my two little boys, who were home with my family. I remember breaking down crying on those nights, feeling so sad about my reality. It was in one such moment that I sat down to write my first song, which I called "A Hidden World" (see sidebar).

When I showed it to one of the nurses who was a musician, she said, "That's the type of song that will be ringing in people's ears." Later, I had the opportunity to record the song on my friend's music CD.

I was finally discharged from the hospital right before Pesach. I remember sitting at the Seder, listening to my son say the *Mah Nishtanah* for the first time. It all felt surreal to me, especially since I still had a bit of mania. It's like driving a car, and the windshield wiper suddenly comes on. I could be feeling completely present, when I would suddenly be hit by a burst of mania, and it would take some time until I was able to adjust back to myself. When I was present and not thinking about Eliyahu Hanavi and Mashiah, I felt grateful to be home, surrounded by my family. I felt that I was back again. When people would say to me, "I'm so happy you're back," they weren't just referring to my physical presence, but that the real Zahava was returning, too. I had a lot to thank for that Pesach.

In Hindsight

As I learned over time from my personal perspective, not as a professional, bipolar disorder is a more extreme reaction to the ups and downs in life. While every human being experiences highs and lows in their regular life, an individual with bipolar disorder experiences them with greater intensity. In general, this intensity is sparked by a trauma that is more severe than average. When the pain is so overwhelming, the individual must exercise more extreme mechanisms in order to escape it.

With this awareness, when I look back at my life and the psychotic episodes I experienced, I notice that every time I got sick, a certain emotion came up for me. When the emotion threatened to overwhelm me, my body automatically resorted to mania as an escape mechanism.

Although all of my relapses were similar in nature, each one exhibited a bit differently. The relapse I had when my oldest was six months old, for example, was not the same as when he was two and a half. Looking back, I see each one like an onion peel. With each layer that got peeled away, I got that bit closer to my essence. And once the episode was over, I wasn't the same person anymore. Each one served as a stepping stone into the next level of recovery. ♥

To be continued...

A Hidden World

*Did you ever wonder what's above
And see Hashem is filled with love?
Or have you looked up and see
That true hopes are for eternity?*

*How do we find Him?
To find Him will put us at ease.
Hashem will You help me, please?
Shivisi Hashem l'negdi samid
I place Hashem before me always.
Ein od milvado
He's there wherever we go.*

*So when do we find the cure
To reach our neshamah, soul so pure?
When we stand in harmony,
Giving others is our legacy.*

*Step out of your own "four amos,"
For all we do, it's Hashem who knows.
When we search for Him, it's true,
That he speaks to us anew.*

*When feeling a bond with our Creator
And seeing Hashem as our Maker,
We can hold on to His embrace
To overcome challenges we all face.*

*New hope is what we will earn,
As long as we know where to turn,
To ask for the guidance we need,
With Hashem's help we will succeed.*

*How do we find Him?
We find Him in each of our hearts,
When we ask Hashem right from the start.
He's there wherever you go,
Ein od milvado.*



IS THERE A TRICK TO CONTROLLING OUR EMOTIONS?

IF YOU WISH THERE WOULD BE, THIS ARTICLE IS FOR YOU

Yom Tov meals are not only supposed to look festive, but we're supposed to feel festive then too, so they say.

But what if when I'm sitting at said festive-looking meal, everyone's apparently having a wonderful time, and I'm the only one for whom feeling festive seems like an elusive dream? Whether I attribute the way I'm feeling to my appearance, the company, or the argument I had last night, I can't fight it off. And in my stuck state, I find myself reaching for seconds—and then thirds—of the lemon meringue pie at the center of the table. The filbert cookies are amazing too. Who knew Pesach food could taste so good? Where does my feeling come in here? The food is too good, I say. I simply can't resist it. I'm out of control.

There's a lot of talk about control in regards to eating. "Instead of having food control you, be in control of your food." You'll often hear nutritionists and dietitians say, including in these pages, "There's no better feeling than the feeling of being in control." But if you've been struggling with emotional eating, chances are you hear these words and think, "That's no news to me. Of course eating right gives the best feeling in the world. I've tasted it once in my life. But I just can't do it! Every time I feel overwhelmed/stressed/anxious/alone, I just find myself eating again." Is it possible for someone who's been using food to distract herself from difficult emotions to suddenly stop doing so? Hard to believe, right?

In this article, I won't merely tell you that it's possible. That would be quite a tease because, whether they're consciously aware of it or not, no one who engages in emotional eating wants to. But it's not enough for you to hear that you have the ability to experience freedom from this bondage. Let's discuss a Torah perspective on how and why you can bring an end to this practice.

First, let's understand the core of the issue. The question people often ask regarding this topic is: If I'm overeating because of my emotions, is it possible for me to control my emotions so I can stop the cycle? In other words, they understand it's the emotion that's leading to the response, and thus, they conclude that the only way to eradicate the response is to eradicate the emotion. This assumption emanates from two common misconceptions in regards to emotional health, whose repercussions permeate some of the most integral parts of our life, including our relationships and eating habits. First, that once we're feeling an emotion, we

have no control over our actions. Second, that we have the ability to manipulate our emotions. Both of these fallacies, which have infiltrated into our mindset through various mainstream schools of thought, imply, among other things, that the way to deal with a difficult emotion is to fight it, as if it can be switched on or off with the flick of a button. In other words, suppose you're feeling alone: tell yourself you're not alone, think thoughts that you're not alone, and bingo, you don't feel alone anymore. You feel incompetent, that you're a lousy homemaker who just doesn't have it in her to do it right? Look at all your other strong points, tell yourself that you don't have to be a *balabuste*—especially not in 2019—and yippee, you don't feel the pain anymore. (Of course, focusing on our strengths and giving ourselves self-encouragement is always a good idea, but when we use it to fight an emotion, it's a lost battle.) We may wish the process was that instant, but it's certainly not, and here's why.

Trying to control our emotions is a fruitless endeavor. If you've ever tried handling emotion with logic, the following explanation is completely unnecessary. You know the truth in your heart. Our emotions, which accompany us through life, are embedded deep within our *nefesh*. Most of the emotions we feel don't suddenly crop up in adulthood. Rather, we've been feeling them since childhood; they're often based on conclusions we have drawn in our youth. For example, a child who is raised in a home where the parents have little or no respect for each other or for others may very well deduce from her environment that she's worthless, regardless of her intellectual acuity, talent, or other virtues. This feeling accompanies her through life, exhibiting in different forms as she graduates from one stage of life to the next. She may end up feeling like a not-good-enough wife, not-good-enough mother, or not-good-enough friend. And every time the feeling comes up, no matter how successful this individual becomes, it's a deeply painful emotion that can't be whisked away with a cognitive switch. In our desperation to believe that such a switch exists, we might attempt to convince ourselves that these tricks do work, but whom are we kidding when we keep encountering the feeling again and again? In the best case, fighting the emotion or pretending it doesn't exist does nothing to make us feel better.

From a Torah perspective, when we fight an emotion, we're fighting the will of Hashem. It's our way of saying, "No, no. This is not what I had in mind. This doesn't work for me." It's like a person who receives a dire medical diagnosis and says, "I don't have this

illness.” To an outsider, he may appear to be admirably positive and cheerful, but in actuality, he’s antagonistic to the Divine plan. Hashem has planted an emotion in our heart and instead of seeing it as a means to come closer to Him, we’re playing Boss.

The *sefarim* tell us that *galus* Edom, our current exile, is the *galus* of the *nefesh*. We’re not forced to build pyramids in quicksand or to bow down to idols by threat of the sword. Rather, the darkness we experience is in our hearts. The difficult emotions we feel are part of Hashem’s plan. They didn’t happen by accident. They didn’t happen because of our parents, teachers, children, or spouse. They happened because Hashem willed it that way in order for us to come closer to Him, to fulfill our purpose in this world.

Thus, denying or trying to exercise control over our emotions is not only comical, but inherently wrong and counterproductive. But here’s the million-dollar question that automatically arises once we understand what not to do: So what *should* I do? What should I do when I look happy but inside I feel depressed, angry, resentful, or alone? What should I do when my difficult emotions threaten to overwhelm me? The answer to this question is that there is nothing we can do, except to accept that this is how we’re feeling. While hearing this may be a tad disappointing, especially in a problem-solving era where every issue must have its go-to solution and it’s difficult for us to accept our reality, the exciting part about this is that once we surrender to this knowledge, this in itself brings us the healing we yearn for.

Although this discussion is beyond the scope of one article, the reasoning behind our desire to get rid of difficult emotions is because we don’t understand the essence and purpose of emotional pain. However, once we do understand its purpose—as a vehicle that helps us fulfill our purpose in this world—the first thing we do is accept the feeling instead of seeking a means to get rid of it. The Gemara in *Berachos* (62a) tells us, “*kibla diyisura shtikasa*, the way to accept suffering is through silence.” In three words, Chazal tell us the secret to emotional wellness. When you feel pain, stay silent. Silence doesn’t mean denying that you’re feeling pain. On the contrary, pretending it doesn’t hurt, putting up a show, or trying to distract yourself from the emotion is not acceptance. That’s denial.

Rather, the silence our Sages refer to is not to seek an escape route. Let the pain come up for you and do nothing to fight it. Simply acknowledge that this is how you’re feeling right now. When you let your emotion surface with your hands up in surrender, you give yourself the gift of true healing. As the Gemara tells us, once pain achieves its purpose, it is no longer necessary.

Thus, when a difficult emotion comes up for us, our work is not to combat or repress it, only to let ourselves *feel* it. But, here’s the part where we do have control, which is also contrary to common mainstream belief: Just because I feel a certain way does not give me permission to act upon it. As the Chazon Ish explains, our *bechirah* does not lie in what we’re feeling. That’s Hashem’s domain. But, our *bechirah* lies in whether or not we allow ourselves to be driven by the emotion.

My emotion/childhood/life circumstances are not an excuse note for any conduct that is antithetical to Hashem’s will. Yes, I’m aware that I’m feeling an unpleasant emotion, but my emotion is not what’s causing me to do what I’m doing, only my own choice. Just because I’m feeling sad/alone/hurt/unloved, I have no permission to hurt another human being. I have no permission to hurt myself. I have no permission to transgress any commandment. Yes, I’m feeling what I’m feeling,

and there’s no denying that. This is the feeling Hashem wants me to feel right now. This is my *galus*. But to act upon this feeling is where my *bechirah* comes into play. I don’t have *bechirah* over how I feel, but I do have *bechirah* over what I do. Will I let the feeling drive me, or will I acknowledge that this is how I feel and connect to Hashem through it?

Sometimes, when young children do something they know is wrong, they’ll attempt to excuse themselves by saying, “It wasn’t me. The *yetzer hara* made me do it.” If the kid is three years old, we might find the comment cute, but when this fallacy grows along into adulthood it’s not quite cute anymore.

I’ve worked with women who said to me, “My parents never had a good marriage. Instead of expecting more of me, my husband should feel blessed that things aren’t worse in our relationship. I don’t know any better,” “Depression is in my genes. I can’t be this happy, cheerful mother my daughter wants,” “Too many people have betrayed me. I can’t let anyone get close to me,” “How can I not eat all that food, when I’m so anxious and stressed out?” In all of these statements, the women express that they’re feeling difficult emotions. And that’s perfectly human, perfectly normal. What’s not okay is to act upon those feelings in a way that harms us or others, in a way that conflicts with Hashem’s will.

When we allow ourselves to acknowledge what we’re feeling as opposed to pretending we don’t feel it or fighting the emotion, something incredible happens: acting upon the emotion becomes less automatic. Because we’re conscious of what’s going on inside, we can allow ourselves to move out of our heart and into our head. Ironically, specifically when we do allow ourselves to feel what we’re feeling, as opposed to trying to manipulate the feeling, can we then make a logical decision: Is what I’m about to do right or wrong? If I acknowledge that I’m feeling anxious or alone right now, I will find it much easier to control my eating habits than when I push it all under the rug and say, “I’m craving something sweet now/I have the munchies/I need a sugar fix/It’s all about social eating.” With this clarity, I understand that while it’s okay for me to feel what I’m feeling, and that I should give myself permission to feel it, acting upon it, such as by overeating, is my *bechirah*. My *bechirah* also lies in my ability to stop even while I’m already engaging in the self-destructive behavior, to pick myself up from there, cut myself some slack for by-gones, and make a renewed commitment to stick to my boundaries. As a human being, I can make that choice.

On the one hand, the Torah perspective toward emotional health obligates us—to take responsibility. It doesn’t let us cruise through life waving our excuse note. Just because I’m feeling a certain way doesn’t mean I have permission to do as I please. On the other hand, it’s profoundly relieving. So I’m allowed to admit that this is how I’m feeling? I don’t have to keep fighting what comes up for me? The knowledge that Hashem is the One Who orchestrates my inner emotional world and plants the feelings in my heart, that feeling difficult emotions is a part of the life of a *galus* Yid, that my job is not to “get rid” of them, is so, so comforting. Furthermore, Chazal famously teach us that *lefum tzara agra* (*Avos* 5:25). The reward we receive is in accordance to the effort and discomfort we endure in any endeavor. Our work is not to fight the pain or pretend it doesn’t exist. On the contrary, allowing ourselves to feel the pain while not acting upon it only increases the reward we’ll receive for doing Hashem’s will with complete subservience. Every time we do so, we experience an iota of our personal *geulah*; we fill one corner of our heart with light. May we be *zocheh* to the *Geulah Sheleimah* very soon! ♥

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CHILDREN
ARE MINI
MIRRORS
OF US?**

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INDIVIDUAL
IS OBLIGATED TO SAY.
...
THE WORLD
WAS CREATED
FOR ME.

(MISHNAH SANHEDRIN 4:5)



The Peak of Winemaking



PEAK

פסיטה

פסיטה (42%), Petite Sirah (42%), Mourvedre (16%)

PSAGOT in Hebrew means peaks.

PEAK is a blend, creating an elegant and layered wine.

750 ml. \ 14% Alc. by Vol.

Jerusalem

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**FEAST OF
FREEDOM
SIDES AND SALADS**

**Make your own
fruit jam in 3
easy steps**

Nutrition Facts
The easiest, most
refreshing Pesach
dessert ever has
one ingredient.

**Salted Chocolate Cream
Tart can be healthy too!**



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seasoned

LANDMARK

From the
heart of the
land, where
the earth is
as rich as
its history.



Gamla

THE NEW LOOK OF

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ROSÉ





Dear Cooks,

It was fun writing up the recipe for the world's easiest, most refreshing Pesach dessert that has one ingredient only. (Check it out in this issue's *Nutrition Facts!*) As Malky and Yossi Levine write in their introduction to their magnificent Pesach feature "Feast of Freedom," part of the joy is in creating something so good while working with a whole list of restrictions. When you concoct a dish with the limited ingredients you have at hand and you're happy with the results, you'll give yourself a pat on the back and say, "Wow! I did it! There will be good food for us to eat this week!"

While everyone's tradition is different, with some people using fewer ingredients than others, and then some who use *even* fewer than that, everyone's Pesach diet is limited in some way. And if you're also focused on creating healthful dishes, the list of restrictions only grows longer; you don't want to simply combine sugar and potato starch to create all of those desserts and treats everyone else is raving about. So how could you enhance your Pesach meals so they're more than just chicken and sweet potatoes? Leave it up to the talented *Seasoned* team to create the variety for you. In most recipes, you'll find we catered as much as possible to those with a more limited choice of products, so that more of you will be able not only to feast your eyes on the beautiful spreads, but also to enjoy these dishes over Yom Tov.

A wonderful, happy Pesach to you all,

Esther

The Best For Last

For us, creating late harvest wine is a work of passion that keeps us in the vineyard long after others have left for the season. Leaving the clusters on the vine until just the right moment, we harvest and bring them to the winery at 45°F. The fermentation is slow and kept just above freezing to capture every essence and flavor.

The result is worth every minute.



Late harvest wine is wine made from grapes left on the vine longer than usual. Late harvest grapes are often more similar to raisins, but have been naturally dehydrated while on the vine.

Feast of Freedom

To many of us, Pesach connotes tradition, which often carries over to the foods we eat and recipes we try. Despite that, every home cook out there is eager to find and try some new twists on the traditional dishes.

When we sat down to brainstorm for Pesach recipes, we thought we'd feel limited by the minimal ingredients we could use. However, the more we got into it, the more we realized that creativity thrives within limitation. There's only so much that can be used, but the ideas are endless. It was definitely a fun challenge.

Most of the foods we eat on Pesach are healthier than usual just because they're homemade, with fewer processed ingredients. It's the perfect time to think about incorporating these healthy, unprocessed foods and ingredients into your year-round menu!

Have a wonderful and meaningful Yom Tov!

**Recipes, styling,
and photography by
Yossi & Malky Levine**





Asian Chicken Salad with Citrus Pineapple Dressing

Besides being delicious, of course, this salad presents itself beautifully, with all the vibrant colors. I love the combination of textures and its unique crunch. To kick it up a notch, I paired it with a citrus pineapple dressing. That tang is a game changer.

4 chicken breasts
1 bunch romaine lettuce
2 cucumbers, cut in strips
2 carrots, julienned
1 medium beet, julienned
1 kohlrabi, julienned
2 scallions, thinly sliced

Dressing:

1 cup pineapple chunks
juice of 1 orange
juice of ½ lemon

Preheat oven to 400 °F. Bake chicken breasts in a pan for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside to cool. You can also use baked chicken leftovers.

Add all vegetables to a large bowl and toss.

Use two forks to chop/shred your chicken breasts and add them to the bowl.

Blend all dressing ingredients until smooth. You can add more juice if you like it thinner.

Yield: 8 servings

Apple-Pear Crumble

What's a meal without a good, traditional apple pie? I'm always experimenting with different toppings for the crumble. This time I was challenged to come up with a version that's both healthy and within the Pesach boundaries. I decided to combine apples and pears because they're both great fruits with natural sweetness. I knew I wouldn't be adding sugar, so these fruits are able to carry some lightness. If pears aren't your thing, feel free to omit them. Just apples works great too.

5 apples, cubed
4 ripe pears, cubed
juice of ½ lemon

Crumble:

1 ½ cups roughly chopped walnuts
¾ cup shredded coconut
¾ cup almond flour
cup coconut oil
½ tsp cinnamon (if using)
optional: 2 Tbsp honey (or any other sweetener you use on Pesach)

Preheat oven to 350 °F.
Add chopped apples, pears, and lemon juice to a baking dish (oven-to-table is great) and stir to combine. In a separate mixing bowl, add crunch ingredients and mix until well combined and clumpy.
Spread the topping over apples. Bake 40-50 minutes, until golden brown and bubbly. Serve warm and enjoy!

Yield: 8-10 servings









Avocado Citrus Salad

The secret to making a great avocado salad is to have an acid that cuts through the richness of the avocado. The citrus fruit in this salad is perfect for that. I personally love blood oranges or Cara Cara, but feel free to mix and match your favorite kinds.

- 2 avocados, sliced**
- 4 oranges (you can use naval, blood orange, mandarins, or 2 grapefruits)**
- 1 red onion, sliced**
- 1 cup pomegranate arils**
- 2 Tbsp olive oil**
- 2 Tbsp lemon or lime juice**
- ¼ tsp kosher salt**
- tsp freshly ground black pepper**

Prepare the oranges by cutting off the tops and bottoms. Place each orange cut-side-down on a cutting board. Use a sharp knife to follow the curve of the orange and slice off the peel and any white pith, then slice the oranges.

Arrange the avocado, oranges, onion, and pomegranate on a platter.

Add olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper to a small bowl and whisk to combine.

Drizzle the dressing on top of the salad and sprinkle with additional sea salt (optional).

Yield: 6 servings

Butternut Squash Risotto

What I love about this recipe is that it's not about multiple complicated steps, but rather a simple change in the way you prepare the squash that turns it into a whole new dish. It's super easy to make and yet elegant at the same time. The squash is converted into smaller rice-like pieces, in much the same way as cauliflower rice, in a food processor. But instead of rice, the squash more closely resembles risotto by cooking for a long period over low temperature.

- 2 Tbsp olive oil**
- 1 onion, diced**
- 8 oz mushrooms, diced**
- 4 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 tsp salt**
- 1 butternut squash, cubed**
- 2 tsp lemon juice**
- 1 ½ cups chicken soup**

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions, mushrooms, garlic, and salt. Cook for 15-20 minutes until slightly caramelized, stirring occasionally.

Meanwhile, working in two batches, place the squash in a food processor and pulse until it reaches a rice-like consistency. Be careful not to overprocess.

Add squash to pan and allow to cook for 5 minutes. Then add lemon juice and chicken soup. Cover and cook over medium heat for 30-35 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the squash is completely tender. Add more chicken soup if necessary and adjust the salt to taste.

Yield: 8 servings







Pastrami Fry over Sweet Potato Tortilla

Yes, it's potatoes again (shocker!), but this is not the typical potato dish you've been eating up until now. It's the combination of sweet potato, potato, and pastrami that'll have you drooling over these beauties. You can serve this as an appetizer or side dish for your Yom Tov meals and beyond. Also, it's a great way to serve up any leftover mashed potatoes you may have.

Tortillas:

2 cups mashed sweet potato (2 medium potatoes)

1 egg

cup potato starch

½ tsp salt

1 Tbsp oil

Pastrami Fry:

2 Tbsp oil

1 onion, diced

1 pkg pastrami slices, cut into strips

salt and pepper to taste

¼ cup sweet red wine

Mashed Potatoes:

3 potatoes

2 Tbsp oil

salt and pepper to taste

Tortillas: Add sweet potato, egg, potato starch, and salt to food processor and pulse until smooth.

Heat a frying pan over medium flame with oil and place a large, round-shaped cookie cutter in the center of the pan. Fill the bottom of the cookie cutter with tortilla mixture and sauté until edges start to brown (2-3 minutes). Flip and sauté on the other side, set aside, and repeat for the rest of the tortillas.

Pastrami Fry: Heat 2 Tbsp oil in a medium skillet and add onions, pastrami, salt, and pepper. Sauté for 10 minutes and add the wine. Bring to boil and remove from heat.

Mashed Potatoes: Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add potatoes and cook for 20 minutes until tender; drain and mash while slowly adding the oil. Season with salt and pepper.

To serve: Place a scoop of mashed potato on each tortilla, make an indent in the center, and fill with fried pastrami.

Note: If your tradition is not to use pastrami on Pesach, this recipe also works with any meat cut into strips.

Yield: 8 servings

One vineyard.
One Or Haganuz.



Mevushal

· Have it Homemade ·

By Yossi and Malky Levine

Fruit Jam

There's nothing quite like homemade jam. When you make it yourself, it tastes so much more like the fruit it's made of, rather than the overly sweet variety you find at the supermarket. The perks of this natural fruit jam extend beyond the obvious health benefits. It'll make a world of a difference to your Pesach dishes. It's perfect as a duck sauce replacement, enhancing any sauce for chicken, or to glaze your meat.

Store-bought fruit jams are often packed with sugar and other unhealthy ingredients, such as high fructose corn syrup, so you may want to use this all year round. Of course, you can experiment with other fruits, such as plums, peaches, and berries.

1 pineapple finely chopped, 4 oranges peeled and chopped, or 8 apricots peeled and chopped

½ cup water

optional: 1 tsp potato starch, diluted in 1/8 cup of water, for thickening

Add the chopped fruit of your choice to a saucepan over low heat. Cover the pan and cook for 1 hour, stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Add water and simmer for an additional half hour.

If using potato starch, dilute it and add when done cooking. Stir to combine. Let the jam cool to room temperature and then store in a glass jar. It can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 10 days.





*From Generation
to Generation*



Thyme for Dinner

By Yossi and Malky Levine

HAWAIIAN CHICKEN MEDLEY

Though this is a classic restaurant dish that looks complicated, it's really simple and easy to prepare.

- 8 chicken breasts**
- ½ cup potato starch**
- 2 Tbsp olive oil**
- 3 carrots, thinly sliced**
- 10 shallots, sliced**
- 2 cups chicken soup**
- 1 cup pineapple jam (see Have it Homemade)**
- ½ tsp salt or more to taste**
- ¼ cup honey, optional**

On a medium flame, heat a large skillet with 1 Tbsp olive oil. Coat the chicken breasts with potato starch and fry the cutlets until crispy and golden on the outside; set aside. Add 1 Tbsp olive oil to the skillet and sauté the carrots and shallots for 5-7 minutes. Add the chicken soup, pineapple jam, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil and cook until carrots are soft (about 20 minutes). To serve, place the cutlets in a dish and pour sautéed vegetable sauce over it.

Yield: 4-6 servings

Before I sat down to brainstorm for the Pesach issue, I crowdsourced my sisters to find out the kinds of recipes they felt they were lacking. Appetizers, side dishes, and desserts were recurring responses, and I wanted to deliver. Truthfully, Pesach menus are not that different from my yearly rotation, but what I'm extremely conscious about is keeping the recipes doable and interesting—we all feel the endless cycle of meals and the preparation involved in the "Pesach production." Here are a few ideas. The cannelloni would serve as a beautiful appetizer or even a side dish, and the crumble is comfort food at its best. Finish off with some salted chocolate tart, and it's like we're eating the meal together! Chag Sameach!

EGGPLANT CANNELLONI

INGREDIENTS

Basil and Spinach Filling

- 2 cups cashews, soaked for minimum 4 hours
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- ½ cup almond milk
- ½ cup basil
- ¾ cup spinach
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 2 eggplant

Tomato Sauce

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 can chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp honey or other sweetener, optional
- salt and pepper
- 2 Tbsp chopped basil

FRESH

By Rivki Rabinowitz
Photography by Ksenija Ilotic





INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 ° F.

Drain the soaked cashews and place them in a blender or food processor with lemon juice, salt, and almond milk. Blend until the cashews have broken down into a creamy consistency. Add in the spinach and basil, and continue to blend until completely smooth. Season again with salt, now adding pepper, and set aside. This can be made up to a day in advance.

Cut the eggplant lengthwise into ¼- to ½-inch-thick slices. Lightly salt each side and allow to rest for 10-15 minutes to remove excess moisture. After 15 minutes wipe the eggplant with paper towels to remove the salt.

The eggplant can be grilled for 2-3 minutes per side on a well-oiled grill, or baked in the oven for 15 minutes at 400 ° F. Once cooked, remove and set aside.

To make the sauce, heat the canned tomatoes and sweetener in oil, and let simmer for 10 minutes until it begins to thicken. Season with salt and pepper, and pour a small amount of the sauce into the bottom of a baking dish.

Place about 2-3 spoonfuls of the spinach and basil mixture onto the end of each slice of eggplant and roll tightly, placing them seam-side down on top of the sauce in the baking dish.

Pour the remainder of the sauce over the rolls and bake in the oven for 15 minutes.

Serve straight from the oven, sprinkled with chopped basil.

SAVORY BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND KALE CRUMBLE

SQUASH AND KALE FILLING

- 2 lbs butternut squash, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
- 3 cups kale, stems removed and roughly chopped
- 1 onion, diced
- 4 slices crispy cooked beef fry, crumbled or diced
- 2 tsp fresh thyme
- 2 Tbsp oil
- 2 Tbsp almond flour
- 1 ½ cups coconut milk or almond milk
- sea salt
- black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large mixing bowl, add the cubed butternut squash, chopped kale, onion, beef fry, and thyme. Set aside.

In a small (2 quart) heavy-bottomed sauce pot, melt oil over medium-low heat. Add the almond flour.

Cook, whisking constantly, for five minutes.

Add the coconut/almond milk, in a slow and steady steam, whisking constantly. Heat the sauce until it thickens, about 3 minutes. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper.

Pour the sauce over the bowl of veggies. Toss well until the veggies are well coated by the sauce. Pour the filling into the prepared casserole dish.



INGREDIENTS



INGREDIENTS

CRUMBLE TOPPING

- 1 ¼ cup almond flour
- 8 Tbsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
- sea salt and black pepper, to taste
- ¼ cup toasted hazelnuts, roughly chopped (instructions to toast included below)

INSTRUCTIONS

Place the almond flour, thyme, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl. Add the coconut oil and pinch with your fingers until mixture is the consistency of coarse meal. You should have pea-sized lumps of coconut oil.

Scatter the crumble topping over the filling. Cover with foil (to keep the crisp topping from browning too much) and bake for 1-1 ¼ hours. You're looking for the squash to become tender. Remove the foil for the final 15 minutes of baking to get the topping browned and a bit crispier.

In a heavy-bottomed pan over medium-high heat, spread the hazelnuts out in a single layer.

Stir or shake constantly for 5-10 minutes or until hazelnuts become fragrant and brown. They may not brown evenly; that's okay. Remove immediately from saucepan, as they will continue to brown. Do not overcook or they will taste burnt and bitter.

Once nuts are cool enough to handle, remove skins by rubbing with a clean, dry dish towel or use your bare fingers. A small amount of skin remaining on the nuts is normal. Roughly chop the hazelnuts.

Preheat the oven to 375°F and lightly grease a casserole dish.

Prepare the squash and kale filling, as above.

Prepare the crumble topping.

Toast the hazelnuts.

Remove the crumble from the oven and scatter the toasted hazelnuts over the top. Serve while warm.

SALTED CHOCOLATE CREAM TART

INGREDIENTS

Brownie Crust

1 cup Medjool dates, pitted (if not soft, soak in boiling water 10 minutes)

½ cup raw almonds

¾ cup raw walnuts

4 Tbsp smooth almond butter

½ tsp kosher salt or sea salt

½ tsp ground cinnamon

5 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

2 Tbsp cacao nibs or chocolate chips

Salted Chocolate Cream Filling

320 ml (10.5 ounces or 1 cups) coconut cream

1 3.5 ounce bar of 85% dark chocolate, roughly chopped

cup coconut oil

cup Medjool dates, pitted

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

a large pinch of kosher salt or sea salt

a few sprinkles of sea salt

Garnishes

- Fresh berries
- Toasted almonds, chopped
- Raw cacao nibs or chocolate chips





INSTRUCTIONS

For the brownie crust, add the dates, almonds, walnuts, almond butter, sea salt, cinnamon, and cacao powder or cocoa powder to a high-speed blender or food processor. Blend until you have a slightly sticky dough that comes together when you press it with your fingers.

Fold the cacao nibs into the dough with a rubber spatula.

Press the dough onto the bottom and up the sides of a 9" tart pan with removable bottom. Place in the freezer to firm up for 20 minutes and clean out the food processor.

Heat a saucepan over medium-low heat and add the coconut cream, chopped dark chocolate, and coconut oil until melted and smooth.

Add the melted chocolate mixture to the clean food processor along with the dates, vanilla extract, and kosher salt. Process until everything is combined and completely smooth. Your filling should be smooth, silky, and rich.

Remove the tart crust from the freezer and pour in the chocolate filling. Garnish with flaky sea salt and taste for seasonings. Chill the tart in the refrigerator for 2 hours or until set and firm.

When ready to serve, garnish with berries, chopped toasted almonds, and raw cacao nibs or chocolate chips.

In the pages of *The Wellspring*, we get to read expert advice from the community's most popular and competent dietitians and nutritionists. In this column, we get to see how they practice what they preach in their own kitchen. Pull up a chair at *My Table* and join the chat!

This Month: Chol Hamoed Pesach Lunch

Most of our usual carb fare—think whole wheat bread, Melba toast, and rice cakes and quinoa (for those who don't eat *kitniyos*)—is off limits on Pesach. At the Yom Tov seudos, matza provides the carb fill, but what is your go-to carb for Chol Hamoed lunch?

How does it look IN YOUR OWN KITCHEN?

Rabbi Eli Glaser, CNWC:



Sweet potato chips are my favorite Pesach starch.

Peel and slice sweet potatoes thinly and spread on a baking pan with a light coating of olive oil spray. Season with cinnamon or paprika and kosher salt. Bake on 375° F until well done.

Besides really enjoying the taste, I try to use this recipe as an opportunity for genuine appreciation of the bounty of food we have so readily available to us today. It's perhaps no more than two generations ago that our grandparents or great-grandparents subsisted on potatoes all year round. What they would have given to eat one potato a month that wasn't moldy or full of spots. We've become so inundated with luxuries that our basic expectations—and subsequent disappointments and frustrations—have grown wildly out of proportion. We shudder at the thought of having to be "limited" to only potatoes for eight days, to the extent that the companies are constantly creating Pesach bagels, Pesach pizza, etc.

Beth Warren,
MS, RDN, CDN:



Since my goal is to eat plant-based food always, a Pesach lunch doesn't look very different than lunch on any other day. I usually have a protein, like tuna or 2 poached eggs, with a variety of non-starchy veggies, like kale or romaine lettuce or arugula (or a mix!), as well as cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, red onion, a little chopped jalapeño for a spice, and then a starchy veggie for some complex carbs, like roasted sweet potatoes or butternut squash.

Shani Taub, CDC:



I never skip carbs at any meal, whether during Pesach or all year round. For Chol Hamoed lunch, I have matza, sweet potato, or plain potato as my carb. When the body is used to getting carbs at a certain time every day, it feels weak without it.

Nutritionist Tanya Rosen,
MS, CAI, CPT:



My typical Pesach lunch consists of either a light whole wheat matza (usually ranges between 70-90 calories per board) or a small baked potato (cubed) with a mixed greens salad, and cottage cheese, tuna, or turkey slices as my protein. It's very important to include vegetables, protein, and an optional starch to stay full.

Tamar Feldman,
RDN, CDN:



I usually take some baked butternut squash or sweet potato chunks and throw them into my salad for lunch on Chol Hamoed. Or I replace the carb with an almond flour pancake or two, in order to provide longer term satiety. Here's the recipe:

Ingredients:

- 1 cup almond flour
- 1 Tbsp chocolate chips (optional)
- 1 pinch salt
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 1 pinch ground cinnamon (optional)
- 1 egg
- 1 egg white
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ cup water, or as needed

Directions:

Whisk together first five ingredients in a bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk the egg, egg white, honey, and vanilla extract together. Stir flour mixture into egg mixture, adding enough water to reach a pancake batter consistency. Preheat a lightly oiled frying/crepe pan. Drop batter by large spoonfuls into pan and cook until pancakes are golden brown and edges are dry. Flip and cook until browned on the other side, 2-3 minutes. Repeat with remaining batter.

Source: Allrecipes.com

Dr. Rachael Schindler:



I love to make Pesach crepes with eggs and a little potato starch. I use them to make blintzes, like mushroom and onion, or as a wrap to hold turkey and avocado, or egg salad with pickles. The crepes are a great low-carb, low-calorie, delicious alternative to grain carbs and can even be sliced to make noodles. Yum!

Laura Shammah,
MS, RDN:CDN:



Every year I get in the mood for something else, and I usually want the same thing daily throughout the holiday. Most years it's eggs, sometimes alone, sometimes with potatoes, sometimes with spelt or light bran matza. Years ago it was matza pizza. Last year was one of the first years that I had quinoa (we eat *kitniyos*) so all I craved for lunch was quinoa with a loaded veggies kale salad. I eat what I'm in the mood of on that day.

My Tables

Compiled by
Shiffy Friedman



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The Magic Word

8

Foods with the highest fiber count

If you're not sure why fiber is the magic word on Pesach, you may want to read some other columns in this magazine. As various articles explain, it's the one nutrient your body needs in order to facilitate smooth elimination. So you know you need fiber and that you won't find it in matza made of white flour. But which foods do score high on the fiber chart? Here are eight of the highest-fiber foods that are kosher for Pesach, with the percent of the recommended daily intake each provides. Enjoy them!

1. Almonds (12.5%)

3.4 grams per ounce

With a whopping fiber count like this, it's worth cracking almonds all day long.

2. Dark Chocolate (10.9%)

3.1 grams in a 1-ounce piece

It's amazing that one of the world's most delicious foods is so high in nutrients and antioxidants. The same cannot be said about other varieties of treats with the same name, though. Make sure to choose dark chocolate that has a cocoa content of 70-95% or higher, to avoid products loaded with added sugar.





3. Avocados (6.7%)

10 grams in a cup

Loaded with healthy fats and other nutrients, and tasting great on matza with some cukes on the side, avocado has become famous as a healthful Pesach food, and for good reason. There's a fabulous avocado salad recipe for you in this issue's Seasoned.



6. Beets (2.8%)

3.8 grams in one cup

Loaded with inorganic nitrates—nutrients shown to have various benefits related to blood pressure regulation and exercise performance—beets make a great addition to salads. Packed with important nutrients like folate, iron, copper, manganese, and potassium, they're certainly one of the root vegetables worth including in your Pesach menu. Get the gloves out!



4. Pears (3.1%)

5.5 grams in a medium-sized pear

Check out the apple-pear crumble recipe for one great way to incorporate this fabulous fruit in your menu. (No, we did not coordinate with the recipe developers on this one!)

7. Sweet Potatoes (2.5%)

3.8 grams per medium-sized sweet potato

Probably the most popular Pesach carb amongst The Wellspring readers (after matza), this tuber is very filling and has a delicious, sweet flavor.

5. Carrots (2.8%)

3.6 grams in one cup

Given its low calorie count, this root vegetable scores relatively high on the fiber chart. It's a good thing we use it in most of our Pesach cooking.

8. Apples (2.4%)

4.4 grams in a medium-sized apple

Enjoy this versatile fruit in whole, cooked, or pureed form for a quick dose of fiber.

Get Cracking!

How to make your own blanched almond flour

Almond flour has been gaining popularity as a fabulous, nutrient-dense alternative to all kinds of flours. On Pesach, it has become a welcome substitute for potato starch—and rightfully so. Why load up on empty carbs when a fiber-and-protein-rich ingredient can do the job? If you'd prefer not to pay what the ready-made flour costs, or your tradition is to refrain from using processed foods, here are simple instructions for homemade, blanched (skins removed) almond flour.

Ingredients:

shelled, raw, unsalted almonds with the skin on

Process:

Bring water to a boil in a small pot.

Once the water is boiling, add the almonds and cook for about 30 seconds.

Place almonds in a strainer and run them in cold water to cool them down. Remove the skin of each almond with your fingers. The skin should come off easily.

Spread the blanched almonds on a large cookie sheet in one layer and let them dry in a cool, dark place, such as your oven.

Once almonds are completely dry, place them in a food processor and pulse to break them down. Process them as finely as possible, but be careful not to process them too much or they will start to release some of the oils and turn into almond butter.

Sift the flour with a fine mesh sieve to remove any larger chunks. Store flour in an airtight container in a cool, dark place, such as your pantry or fridge.

Yield: 1 cup of almonds yields about 1¼ cup almond flour

Good to know: If you're stuck without almond flour and the recipe you're in the middle of preparing calls for it, you can substitute finely ground almonds (almond meal) instead. The main difference between them (besides for their price) is that almond meal is ground more coarsely with the skin on, whereas almond flour is made of finely ground blanched almonds. While blanching almonds gives the flour a fluffier, lighter texture, most of the time, they can be used interchangeably.

Bonus! Due to the high natural-fat content in almond flour, many recipes that call for almond flour require less of another fat, such as oil or butter, or omit them altogether. ♥



Here's the place to check out nutrition labels for the nutrient-dense produce that come in their natural peels-- just so you know what wholesome goodness you're feeding your family and yourself!

THIS MONTH: ORANGE



Principle	Nutrition Value	Percentage of RDA
Energy	49 Kcal	2.5%
Carbohydrates	11.89 g	9%
Protein	0.94 g	1.5%
Total Fat	0.30 g	0.5%
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Dietary Fiber	2.50 g	6%
Vitamins		
Folates	39 µg	10%
Niacin	0.274 mg	2%
Pantothenic acid	0.250 mg	5%
Pyridoxine	0.063 mg	4.5%
Riboflavin	0.040 mg	3%
Thiamin	0.087 mg	7.5%
Vitamin A	230 IU	8%
Vitamin C	48.5mg	81%
Electrolytes		
Sodium	0 mg	0%
Potassium	179 mg	4%
Minerals		
Calcium	40 mg	4%
Copper	39 µg	4%
Iron	0.09 mg	1%
Magnesium	10 mg	2.5%
Manganese	0.023 mg	1%
Zinc	0.06 mg	1%

Ready to hear the complicated, multi-step recipe for our family's favorite Pesach dessert? Peel an orange, place the slices on a flat freezer-safe plate, and freeze for 10-15 minutes before serving. My friends, this is the most refreshing, flavorful treat to help wash your food down after every meal. Feel free to enjoy it as a snack too.

Seriously, oranges are so bursting with flavor that there's really no need to start squeezing them, mixing them with cup-loads of sugar, blending, and refreezing so many times that you lose count of which container needs one more blend. They're fabulous as is, with a bit of freezer time to give them that perfectly half-frozen exterior and ice-cold juiciness inside. Once you become acquainted with their impressive nutrition content, you won't need any more convincing. Packed with health-promoting antioxidants and a whopping 163 percent of the daily recommended vitamin C amount, this citrus food is known to boost immunity and give you a much-needed fiber boost, greatly appreciated on Pesach.

HIGH IN ANTIOXIDANTS

Citrus fruits like oranges are packed with health-promoting antioxidants, compounds that fight free radicals to prevent oxidative stress and protect against chronic disease. Antioxidants are believed to play a role in combatting conditions like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

In particular, oranges are high in bioflavonoids like hesperidin and hesperetin, which have been shown in test-tube studies to help neutralize free radicals, reduce inflammation, and decrease oxidative damage to cells.

RICH IN FIBER

Oranges are a great source of fiber, with just one large orange providing up to 17 percent of your daily fiber requirements. When you eat fiber, it moves through your gastrointestinal tract slowly, promoting satiety, adding bulk to the stool, and getting things moving.

ENHANCES IMMUNITY

Oranges are one of the best sources of vitamin C, packing in 163

percent of your daily needs in just one serving. In addition to its powerful antioxidant properties, vitamin C is also praised for its ability to improve immune function.

One review published in the *Annals of Nutrition & Metabolism* showed that getting enough vitamin C could help reduce symptoms and shorten the duration of respiratory tract infections like the common cold.

IMPROVES HEART HEALTH

Adding oranges to your daily diet can have a profound effect on the health of your heart. Multiple studies have found that upping your intake of citrus fruits like oranges could improve your cholesterol levels and protect against coronary heart disease.

In one study, people with high cholesterol were supplemented with citrus flavonoids for a period of 4 to 12 weeks. Daily treatment reduced total cholesterol by up to 30 percent, slashed bad LDL cholesterol by up to 27 percent, and cut triglyceride levels by up to 34 percent.

Similarly, another study published in the *Journal of Epidemiology* showed that frequent consumption of citrus fruits was associated with a significant reduction in the risk of heart disease and stroke.

FUN IN THE KITCHEN

Zesty Orange Chicken

Oranges make a great healthy alternative for sweet, sticky sauces in Chinese-style dishes. Here's one recipe that makes for a fabulous main course at your seudah or Chol Hamoed dinner.

4 chicken cutlets, cut into 1-inch cubes
4 cups steamed broccoli or green beans (if use)
2 Tbsp sesame oil (or the oil you use on Pesach)

Sauce:

2½ cups freshly squeezed orange juice
½ cup chicken broth
¼ cup coconut aminos (optional)
3 Tbsp honey
1 tsp garlic powder (optional)
1 Tbsp fresh ginger (or ¼ Tbsp ground)
1 Tbsp orange zest (optional)
1 tsp black pepper

In a large frying pan, cook the chicken in oil until the edges are brown and slightly crispy. As the chicken cooks, stir together the sauce mixture in a separate bowl. Once chicken is thoroughly cooked, transfer to another bowl and bring sauce to a boil in frying pan for 15–20 minutes, stirring every minute or so until it starts to thicken. Once it does, add the chicken back in, stirring to coat it.

Serve over vegetables and/or mashed potatoes. ♥

IN YOUR PLATE

Especially if your tradition leads to significantly restricting your food choices on Pesach, oranges can add a great deal of flavor to your dishes.

- Enjoy them as a refreshing semi-frozen dessert.
- Add orange wedges to your salad.
- Fresh orange cubes taste great with roasted beets and makes a colorful, tasty side dish.
- If you use chocolate on Pesach, dip fresh orange wedges into melted chocolate for a sweet treat that even the kids will love.
- Enjoy a cup of freshly squeezed orange juice. It's way more refreshing and authentic—and nutritious, of course—than the commercial version.
- Okay, so I understand why you may not want to serve a few frozen fruit slices as dessert at your festive Yom Tov meal. Fruit salad is one of the few healthy desserts that work great on Pesach too. Cube melon, oranges, grapefruit, apples, bananas, mango, and kiwi. Add pomegranate seeds. Dress with freshly squeezed orange juice and you have a party in your mouth.



JUICE DOESN'T CUT IT

While orange nutrition benefits are pretty impressive, it's important to remember that the same benefits may not extend to orange juice. This is because oranges contain a good amount of fiber, which helps slow the absorption of sugar in the bloodstream. Orange juice, on the other hand, provides a concentrated amount of the sugar found in oranges, without any of the beneficial fiber. Commercial varieties, in particular, are pumped full of sugar and additives, minimizing the nutritional value of the juice. Enjoy a cup or two of freshly squeezed orange juice, but stick to the real thing for the real nutritional deal.

BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY

BY YOSSI & MALKY LEVINE

Rejuvenating Root Juice

As spring is approaching, allergies are on the rise. Weather change is also a time where many of us end up feeling “under the weather.” It’s a time when your immune system can use a good boost.

On those days when you neither have the energy or motivation to make anything proper to eat, freshly pressed juice can go a long way in supplying much-needed nutrients. This particular one starts with a base of fruits and vegetables to which fresh ginger and turmeric root are added. Turmeric, with its earthy flavor pairs nicely with root vegetables like carrots and beets, which offer their own anti-inflammatory properties. The lingering heat of ginger helps numb scratchy throats and clear up those sinuses, while the orange and lemon supply vitamin C.

It’s fresh, it’s bright, and it comes to the rescue, soothing sore throats, easing congestion, settling upset stomachs, and, as a bonus, offering a welcome dose of energy.

- 1 medium beet, chopped
- 3 medium carrots, chopped
- 1 orange, rind, pith, and seed removed
- ½ lemon, rind, pith, and seed removed
- fresh ginger (1-inch piece)
- fresh turmeric (2-inch piece)

Add all ingredients to a juicer and serve over ice.

Fresh juice is best enjoyed immediately, but you can store it in an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 3 days.



Why these fruits for immunity?

Beets

boost your immune function and help prevent chronic diseases from developing. They are packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nutrients in beets are responsible for this immune support, including vitamin C, folate, manganese, iron, and phytochemicals. Juicing them will get you the most nutrient content from each beet.



Carrots

come in a variety of colors: purple, red, yellow, and white. Carrots contain vitamin C and antioxidants which help boost the immune system, prevent diseases, as well as reduce the severity of a cold and the length of time it lasts.



has an abundance of vitamin C, which strengthens our immune systems by protecting cells and promoting the production and function of immune cells. One 8-ounce glass of OJ provides 120% of your recommended daily value!

Oranges

Ginger

is filled with immune-boosting benefits. It's antibacterial and helps support the immune system, prevents nausea, and soothes a sore throat or upset stomach. Ginger is also a natural blood thinner and contains a phenolic anti-inflammatory compound called gingerol that is responsible for relaxing blood vessels.



Turmeric

should be added to your cold and flu prevention regimen. Turmeric is a natural way to help protect the immune system, increasing the immunomodulating capacity of the body. Try adding extra turmeric to your diet during periods of stress or during flu season to help give your immune system a boost.



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Definition:

noun

a condition marked by impaired muscle coordination and/or other disabilities, typically caused by damage to the brain before or during birth.

“When I treat children with **CP** or other physical disabilities, I first assess how they breathe.”

- **Dr. Mary Massery, feature**

“Because of the misconception that **CP** always results in cognitive impairment, we felt it would be better for Pinchas to grow up without the risk of being wrongly labeled.”

- **Ruchama, feature**



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