

Kol HaKavod News

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The Jewish Orthodox Caregiving Study – The Untold Story

Support for family caregivers is currently a national public health objective. Recognizing the value of this resource can reduce health care costs and make an overall contribution to improved health and quality of life for our loved ones, the rationale for increased federal funding is that the better the health of caregivers, the longer and more successfully they can remain in their valuable caregiving roles.

In previous issues we have discussed the design of the first study of Orthodox Jewish Caregiving (the JOCS) and the findings as presented to the public health community. A collaboration among researchers at L'Orech Yomim/Center for Healthy Living, Case Western University, Columbia University, and the Morehouse School of Medicine,

survey results supported the hypothesis that burden among Orthodox Jewish caregivers is greater than the general population. The questionnaire and report are available on the resource tab at www.lorechyomim.org.

Two aspects of our collaboration heretofore had not been shared:

- Responses to the open-ended questions, and
- A survey instrument designed to learn Jewish community leadership view on the matter.

MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY SEEK HELP

Listen to the voices of our neighbors:

Caregivers express their concerns in the open-ended question:

- Not only am I concerned about the

costs of my mother's care, I also feel the pressure of not being able to do my work effectively (which translates into reduced income). - Even our kosher nursing home makes it difficult for Shomrei Shabbat relatives in walking distance to visit on Shabbat (locked stairwells, alarms, etc.)¹ - I am not opposed to support groups or counseling, but given the time pressure I am under, if I wanted to do something for myself I would much prefer to exercise. - Because I am not available on the Sabbath or holidays in case of emergency the religious issue for me is concern that my aunt will get the care she needs on those days, if necessary. - I do the best I can, but I often

(continues on Page 15)

Mazinke Dance: Source Uncovered

In our last issue we expanded our journey. We've traveled across continents and back in our pursuit of the source for this dance that has become popular in many circles of the Jewish community. We had learned that the lyrics and music were composed in 1901 by Mark (Mordechai) Warshavsky, a colleague of Sholom Aleichem, but had no luck regarding the dance itself.



We searched data banks containing hundreds of thousands of responses, and volumes of halachic, sociologic and historical information. We reached out to former residents of Poland, to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, to experts in Jewish folklore and dance from Minneapolis to Canada, to

Boro Park, the New York Public Library, and to the Catskill Mountains and left off with the National Library of Israel at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. That inquiry had been directed to a Professor of Dance History. The response I received, by now familiar, was: “We have done a very extensive search of material available to us and have not found the source for the custom.”

Still, the word “Ukraine” repeatedly surfaced. It had been invoked again, and again. It appeared in the NY Public Library response, in other correspondence and articles and material I had read, by Yiddishists and others, and we know for a fact that the song was composed in the Ukraine.

If all roads lead to the Ukraine, then let's take it.

I called the Ukrainian Museum in New York, introduced myself and was advised to call back the following Sunday. Their expert who is knowledgeable on these matters will have returned from vacation and should be able to assist me. The person I spoke to was Lubow Woly-

netz. It turns out that she is curator of the Museum's folk art collection, has curated more than a dozen folk art exhibitions at the Museum, written extensively on various aspects of Ukrainian folk art and traditions for the Museum's catalogues, and lectured widely on the subject. She was just completing the finishing touches on an exhibit soon to open entitled *Ukrainian Wedding Textiles and Traditions*. It seems I had come to the right address.

We spoke and it was interesting. She told me that during that particular time period, the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ukrainian wedding celebrations would extend a number of days, and on the last day, it was the custom that parents would be wheeled on a wagon to the local inn where they would treat and frolic with their friends and family. But nothing special regarding the youngest child, broom, or laurels.

At that moment, honestly, I was genuinely disappointed. I had expected to achieve some major breakthrough.

Still, I had formulated a theory regard-

(continues on Page 10)

Kol HaKavod News

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The Only Yarmulke In The Room

I had mixed feelings sitting there. I was hoping to find a compadre but deep down knew this to be very unlikely. This was a conference attended by movers and shakers from across the country in the field of environmental health. Participants included academicians, CEOs, PhDs, MDs such as the Senior Director, National Environmental Education Foundation, Professors and Chairs of Intergenerational Programs and Aging at Penn State University, Temple University, and UCLA, Vice President for Programming Strategy, WK Kellogg Foundation, Dean of CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College, as well as professors and practitioners of nutrition, agriculture, visual art, architecture, and music. I had been invited as a member of a national group of professionals dedicated to the field of aging.

I was uncomfortable because my attendance was not purely to learn and share my knowledge, although I certainly did expect to obtain new knowledge. Today I had a mission. The organizers are the very leaders in the field of whom I had written about in this same column expressing disappointment. They seemingly had not taken into consideration the Orthodox Jewish population in their respective projects, the US EPA Aging Initiative and the NYC Age Friendly Project. I had registered to advance my agenda. It offered an opportunity to directly approach them with my concerns. It

needed to be done respectfully to foster better understanding and a positive result.

The other element that was unusual was the very structure of the program. It was touted as an "unconference," with no abstracts, no data nor scientific research presentations. The objective was to collectively address the environmental health aspects of how we live, work, play and socialize throughout life, and how we can transform our environments to promote health and prevent disease. Instead of the standard call for abstracts, the conference issued a call for creative submissions: imagine a world unpaved - I did not know what to expect.

As it turned out, I was welcomed. These are some observations I shared in a letter to the program organizers:

"I registered in order to learn the *state-of-the-art* and become inspired. Indeed, those objectives were readily accomplished.

Secondly, in the spirit of fostering inclusiveness of diverse constituents, engaging every sector, a fundamental theme of the proceedings, I saw it as an opportunity to raise awareness to the cultural practices of the Orthodox Jewish population. I intended to advocate that public health leadership become aware of Orthodox Jewish practices as they relate to health intervention outcomes, and incorporate this knowledge in service delivery. This too was fulfilled.

We all experienced a sampling of this issue at the conference. How many are aware

that the invigorating Breathing Song, Balancing, and Sing Along would not be acceptable to many of those practicing Orthodox Jewish tradition? However, if it were tweaked a bit, we could all benefit from it. As another illustration, use of the Internet is discouraged and not a ready teaching tool. A recent rabbinic outcry regarding the dangers of internet use filled both Citifield and Arthur Ashe stadiums. 60,000 thousand seats were filled that May evening, more than any recent sports event. And what about the physician who orders a two-week regimen of care? If the patient feels it is inappropriate to take the pill or administer the intervention due to Sabbath observance, the physician is unaware of this behavior, the patient is not comfortable discussing this with his doctor, and as a result, the care management plan becomes modified due to incomplete information.

Your program provided the forum to share these insights, and I was heard. I am most appreciative."

A contributing author to this issue of Kol HaKavod News is someone I met at the conference, I was subsequently invited to join a panel at the American Society on Aging in Chicago, and received this response from the New York Academy of Medicine, the lead agency for the City's Age-Friendly initiatives:

"You are right that we have not paid specific attention to the Orthodox Jewish community – within which there is also of course much diversity.

We hope that community organizations and leaders such as yourself will ask the older adults where you live about the strengths and challenges of aging in New York, in your neighborhood, and share what you learn with those who can make change both locally and at the city level. We now rely on neighborhood partners and recently created and are distributing a toolkit that communities themselves can use called *Creating an Age-Friendly NYC: One Neighborhood at a Time*.

Here is a link to the toolkit:

http://www.nyam.org/agefriendlynyc/docs/Toolkit_Report_0321-VA-new.pdf

Editor's Note: Readers, please share your responses and suggestions with me. Your input is welcome.

Letters & Comments

On Kol Hakavod News

I was very happy to read your news magazine. It was given to me by a friend. How often does it come out? Where can I get it? I would like to receive it on a regular basis.

MD, Boro Park, Brooklyn

On The Jewish Orthodox Caregiver Study (JOCS)

Thanks so much for sharing this survey. This will be very helpful information for our list-serv members.

All the best,

CW, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health,
Baltimore

On Kosher Adult Day Programs

Kindly correct your listing of JASA's Far Rockaway Social Adult Day Care program.

There is ONLY glatt kosher food available (as opposed to "kosher on request", as printed), and the phone numbers are 718-713-3424, 917-497-8288.

Thank you for helping to get the word out to the community about our program.

RW-C, JASA, Far Rockaway

On Travel to Tucson

I read Shaindee Sussman's article. All true. I had the benefit of visiting Tucson during winter intercession and had a great time. What sticks out in my mind is the fact that the community Rabbi is not only responsible for his shul, but is involved in all areas of Jewish life such as being a mashgiach for the local restaurant. I am enclosing some photo highlights of my experience.

MN, Flatbush, Brooklyn

The In-Laws and Kibud Av V'Eim

The Pele Yoetz is a classical work, a compilation of traditional Jewish concepts and practice written by the great ethicist, Rabbi Eliezer Papo (1785-1828). First published in Constantinople in 1824, its influence continues due to its scholarly advice and direction on all aspects of day to day Jewish living. Topics are presented in the order of the Hebrew alphabet. Following is an adaptation found under the letter "ches" – chomiv v'chamoso – father-in-law and mother-in-law.

Q: Is there a difference in status between how one treats one's parents vs one's in-laws?

It is a well-known rabbinic teaching that one is obligated to render respect to his father-in-law and mother-in-law (See *Samuel I* 24:12; *Medrash Tehilim* 7:4; *Tur Yoreh Deah* 240. King David refers to his father-in-law, Shaol as avi, my father). While everyone is diligent in this regard as with one's own parents, the principle obligation occurs after their passing: They should be given honor upon their demise and it is appropriate to render greater honor when living. This is especially true if the in-laws have no son of their own. Who might care for them, show compassion for them, if not the son-in-law? It is therefore befitting to demonstrate respect and care for them while they are living. Should they feel that they merited a good son-in-law, they will feel that their circumstances are even better than if they had given birth directly to

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David I. Troise Jr.

THANK YOU!

a male progeny.

The case can also be made that in-laws are deserving of more respect than one's own parents. Through them you have been presented with a lifelong companion, a means for channeling physical drives to fulfilling mitzvahs and to building a Jewish home. There is a moral obligation of the highest order upon the husband not to be ungrateful and to exhibit gratitude to them for their raising their daughter. How many challenges needed to be overcome by the wife's parents, hard work and diligence, until they reached the point of walking her down the aisle to marry? How can they possibly be fully repaid? It is therefore a great obligation not to be thankless and to relate to in-laws as a son to a parent.

Moreover, a husband needs to encourage his wife to be diligent and attentive to honoring her father- and mother-in-law for yet another reason. Our Sages observed (*Tana D'Bei Eliyahu Raba* 27) that the Scripture places the Commandments of not being an adulterer immediately adjacent to honoring one's parents to teach us that if someone is indeed married to a woman who is contentious and quarrelsome towards her in-laws, especially in their latter years when they are frail and needing assistance, it is as if he has committed adultery throughout his life time, as this woman clearly was not intended as the proper wife for him. After overcoming the great hurdles and challenges of raising their son, how hurtful it assuredly becomes should their son marry someone who is the cause of such family discord. The son himself will become argumentative with his parents in defending his wife's behavior and ultimately their own children will leave the household as the bantering and bickering will become unbearable.

Q: In that case, what is the daughter-in-law's obligation to her in-laws?

A: The praiseworthy, G-d fearing woman should rather treat her in-laws like a king and queen. Her entire focus

should be on learning their wants and assisting them in every way possible. Should the wife, on the other hand, cause rancor – while the parents were so yearning for tranquility but received instead misfortune – the wife will be repaid in kind for such misbehavior. [The son-in-law's obligation were already noted above.]

Q: What if the in-laws are contentious and dictatorial?

A: It is a well known teaching of our Sages (*Kiddushin* 31a) that one can be wealthy and provide a parent with delicacies such as pheasant, yet nonetheless be destined to Gehinom, if he is resentful and rough in the presentation. On the other hand, the support can be minimal, but if rendered in a pleasant tone and with a respectful demeanor, he is destined to Gan Eiden.

Even if the in-laws are difficult and cantankerous, as if often the case with the elderly, following the mitzvah is only truly accomplished when done with a smile. One who does so, despite the difficulties, will be repaid many times over.

It is incumbent upon the husband to guide and direct his wife, placing great effort to her being accepting, patient and especially sensitive to his parents. Should he observe that she seems to

be disrespectful, takes this obligation lightly, or even if in his view she is in the right, he should reprimand her in deference to his parents. Privately, he needs to appease his wife and maintain shalom bayis.

Q: What are the obligations of the in-laws themselves?

A: We know that true wisdom emanates from our elders. They need to serve as role models of common sense, tolerance and relate calmly to children's spouse. If there is need to provide them with direction, it should be done privately. They should praise them publicly. Never publicly berate them. Certainly they should not share or reveal their disappointment to their own children, lest their children will come to despise their spouses. Woe onto parents who generate such contentiousness. HKB"Y allowed His very name to be erased in order to preserve family unity and peace between husband and wife (See *Tractate Shabbos* 116a: G-d commands that His name become erased and dissolved in water to exonerate the Sota, *Numbers* 5:23).

It is far better that parents withstand a thousand instances of being wronged by their child's spouse than to cause one moment of machlokes between husband and wife.

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The Walkability Institute

General safety is of course a concern of young and old alike. In Jewish communities elderly folk often walk alone to and from daily prayer services, study halls, lectures in dark, unsafe areas, over surfaces that are rife with obstructions. A cane or walker may readily get caught, causing falls with potentially disastrous consequences. Passageways can be narrow, with protruding fences or shrubbery catching clothing. Potholes are a real physical danger at night as well. Even during the day, a grandmother pushing a stroller can confront cracked sidewalks and uncontrolled traffic patterns. Through federal government support the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute has developed a structure offering community leaders and private citizens a true opportunity to correct such hazards.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research has documented that:

- The use of walking and cycling for transport is directly related to improved health and longevity in adults aged 50 and above.
- People who live in areas that are more conducive to walking and cycling are more likely to engage in these forms of active transport.
- Differences in the built environment, availability of public transit, street connectivity, housing density, and mixed land use, influence the likelihood that people will use these modes of transport.
- Walking may be just as effective as running to benefit heart, reducing high blood pressure, and control cholesterol.
- Daily physical activity protects against Alzheimer's disease, even in elderly adults over 80.
- Physical inactivity contributes to increased risk of chronic diseases and health conditions.

*American Journal of Preventive Medicine;
US Environmental Protection Agency;
American Heart Association;
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

- The Talmud teaches that walking uneven and difficult terrain reduces longevity and causes premature aging.

Tractate Eruvin 56a

PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION

While such moderate and relatively effortless physical activity as walking has great benefit, there is a concern. Senior citizens who travel on foot are injured by motor vehicles at disproportionately high rates. Across the nation, older people are overrepresented in intersection fatalities by a factor of more than two-to-one. A New York City study noted that seniors constitute 12% of the population but comprise 39% of pedestrian fatalities citywide.

There is a national grass roots movement underway, including federal funding, to address this concern.

It is buttressed by the experience

that if communities are designed to be accessible and safe for seniors, they will be accessible and safe for all residents, including children.

Maintaining surfaces to allow people to walk without fear of falling, creating walking routes in and near neighborhoods that connect to stops for buses, trains and trolleys, changing the programming of traffic lights and calling

environmental improvements for pedestrian safety including Road Safety Audit, Toolbox of Safety Interventions, Crosswalk improvements, Intersection design/physical improvements as well as signal hardware and technology. Local cities have followed suit. The NYC Department of Transportation has adopted a Safe Route for Seniors program uses federal funding for pedestrian safety

built environments.

Click on <http://www.walklive.org/project/walkability-workbook> to access the workbook and get started!

Fort Lauderdale, San Diego, Detroit, Philadelphia, Dallas, as well as other communities and neighborhoods across the country large and small are utilizing the workbook and mobilizing to improve their local environment.

Jewish community leaders should consider doing likewise, availing themselves of this momentum and accommodating the special needs of its elders due to cultural practice and basic life routines. It may seem to be an overly ambitious undertaking, but it is working in locals throughout the United States.

DISCUSSION

The goal of the Walkability Workshop is to engage communities in making streets and neighborhoods more walkable, safe, livable, healthy and welcoming.

Our discussion has relevance both on a personal level and a communal level.

Walking regularly is one of the safest and most effective forms of exercise available. You can proceed at your own pace and reap the benefits – including a healthier heart, lower stress and higher energy levels. For those who say they don't have enough time to exercise, walking can be transformed into utility, a mode of transportation. Incorporate your walk with a routine activity. Don't think of it as exercise. For example, every time you go to the local food store, walk there instead of driving. It is also helpful to have a standing date with a "walking buddy," a "chavrusa" to keep you on track.

On a communal level, becoming active today in a Walkability project to make the environment more suitable for elders will have far reaching impact on the welfare of your families, neighbors and friends for years to come. Our communities should be engaged as are other neighborhoods across the nation in benefiting from this government sponsored initiative.

- RGB

Q: Isn't it better for older adults to "take it easy" and save their strength?

A: Regular physical activity is very important to the health and abilities of older people. In fact, studies show that "taking it easy" is risky. For the most part, when older people lose their ability to do things on their own, it doesn't happen just because they've aged. It's usually because they're not active. According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health, inactive people are nearly twice as likely to develop heart disease as those who are more active. Lack of physical activity also can lead to more visits to the doctor, more hospitalizations, and more use of medicines for a variety of illnesses.

Q: I get tired easily. What is the best physical activity for me?

A: Once you become active, you're likely to have more energy than before. As you do more, you also may notice that you can do things more easily, faster, and for longer than before. Regular, moderate physical activity can help reduce fatigue and even help you manage stress.

National Institute of Aging

on citizens to step up their participation in local planning efforts to find sites for new walking paths are among the outcomes of this multi-faceted effort.

The federal government through its Environment Protection Agency is providing a wealth of information, support and advocacy for the establishment of new initiatives for redesigning communities to adapt to health needs of an aging population. The Walkability Institute is one example. It is a comprehensive program that guides community leaders for self-advocacy, engage in the political process, mobilize the neighborhood to affect change where appropriate. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) also provides detailed resources for effecting

improvements to better encourage senior mobility and physical activity. The New York Academy of Medicine, the Mayor's Office, and City Council launched *Age-friendly NYC*.

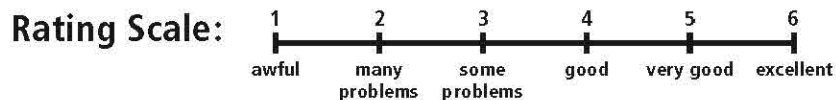
THE WALKABILITY INSTITUTE

The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute's Walkability Workbook is a free guidance document that gives community members the resources needed to deliver walkability workshops and conduct walking audits on their own; to empower residents and leaders alike to improve health, well-being, economic vitality, environmental sustainability and quality of life by assessing their streets and prioritizing opportunities; to create walkable places, livable towns and better

Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability.

How walkable is your community?

Location of walk _____



1. Did you have room to walk?

- Yes Some problems:
- Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
 - Sidewalks were broken or cracked
 - Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
 - No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
 - Too much traffic
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one) _____
 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?

Could you and your child...

- Yes No Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
- Yes No Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?
- Yes No Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?
- Yes No Cross with the light?
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one) _____
 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

- Yes Some problems:
- Road was too wide
 - Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
 - Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
 - Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
 - Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
 - Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one) _____
 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

5. Was your walk pleasant?

- Yes Some unpleasant things:
- Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
 - Scary dogs
 - Scary people
 - Not well lighted
 - Dirty, lots of litter or trash
 - Dirty air due to automobile exhaust
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one) _____
 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

3. Did drivers behave well?

- Yes Some problems: Drivers...
- Backed out of driveways without looking
 - Did not yield to people crossing the street
 - Turned into people crossing the street
 - Drove too fast
 - Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights?
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one) _____
 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

How does your neighborhood stack up? Add up your ratings and decide.

1. _____ 26-30 Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.
2. _____ 21-25 Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.
3. _____ 16-20 Okay, but it needs work.
4. _____ 11-15 It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.
5. _____ 5-10 It's a disaster for walking!
- Total _____



How To Battle Stress

In the previous article on stress, we described how stress negatively affects your health. The next logical question is, "Now that we know, what can we do about it"? One possibility is to reduce the stress in our lives. If that's possible, it's certainly the way to go. Very often, there are concrete steps we can take to change our physical or emotional environments, or the way we view them (perhaps a topic for another series of articles). However, sometimes there is little we can do to control these factors. The one thing we can always control is our own physiological responses to them.

Many of us have been brought up to think that our physiological responses to events "just happen," that we have no control over them. I have often heard patients say, "I can't help it, that's just the way I am." Before any progress can be made, the first order of business is to convince them they can help it, that we are in control of how our bodies respond.

We have all heard of responses that the body automatically makes to various stimuli. Among the most popular is the fight-flight response. In 1975 Dr.

Herbert Benson, a pioneer in mind-body medicine, wrote a book called "The Relaxation Response." In it, he criticizes our over-reliance on medication and surgery to treat conditions that can be regulated by our own bodies. This book became one of the most popular self-help books ever written, and was often suggested to clients by their psychotherapists. His major premise is that just as our body responds to stress or attack with such physiological reactions, triggered by the sympathetic nervous system, as changes in blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate, muscle tightening, and hormonal balance; so too, the body responds to attempts at relaxation, through the parasympathetic nervous system, with a lowering of the blood pressure and heart rate, deeper and slower breathing, muscle relaxation, and a calming of hormonal secretions. His claim that the body could be trained to achieve a state of relaxation and quietude, and that this could result in a state of better health and cure serious illness, was considered outlandish and revolutionary by the medical establishment at that

time. Today, it has become universally accepted medical wisdom.

So now that we've established that relaxation is a good thing, how do we go about achieving it? Paradoxically, trying too hard to relax can often bring about the opposite result, greater tension and stiffness. I have often had patients tell me that they get annoyed when people tell them to "just relax," because they don't know how.

Let's begin the discussion by describing the different types of relaxation. Although there are, literally, thousands of different relaxation exercises, I've found they can be divided into four basic categories:

1. Breathing
2. Muscle relaxation
3. Visual imagery
4. Movement

While there are many other things that can lead to relaxation, such as music, meditation, etc., they can generally be subsumed under these four categories.

Let me provide a brief introduction to each of the above.

Breathing is very tied-in to autonomic nervous system activity, and often acts as a signal to trigger fight-flight or relaxation responses. In Eastern medicine and philosophy, it is integrally connected to the flow of energy through the body.

Muscle relaxation seems like it should be easy and almost automatic, but many

people have little awareness of whether their muscles are tense or relaxed. This is especially true of the more subtle muscles, such as the frontalis muscle, at the forehead. Walking around with tight muscles all day causes aches and pains, and also triggers the sympathetic nervous system. Muscle relaxation can be achieved through training.

Visual imagery allows us to see things in our mind's eye that are not actually there. It is a window to our inner world, as well as a means of transformation and liberation from distortion. It allows us to exert greater control over our feelings and thoughts.

Movement, such as tai chi or yoga, can also be a pathway to relaxation and inner-peace.

Future articles will explore these four areas in greater depth, as well as provide examples of specific exercises for individual practice.

— **By Dr. Yitzhak Berger**

Dr. Berger is a licensed psychologist who has been practicing in a variety of settings for over 35 years. He has a specialty in rehabilitation psychology. He currently teaches in the Applied Psychology Department at New York University. Dr. Berger is particularly interested in the mind-body therapies and has expertise in relaxation training, biofeedback, and hypnosis.

The Value of Technology

Our community has legitimate concerns regarding the hazards of the internet. There are some beneficial aspects. I have had some wonderful experience with this technology boom relating to caring for my mother that I feel it important to share.

My mother prefers to live independently in her own home. Yet it is quite some distance from me. To help address the family's concerns regarding her safety and care management we decided to try one of those electronic monitoring system you read about, and found it extremely helpful. It was customized to our specifications and has the capacity to help monitor medication compliance, whereabouts in the house, or coming and going out of the house. As promised, it unobtrusively lets you know how much time your parent is spending in bed, in the bathroom, or in any other place in the home without compromising their privacy. They can contact you by e-mail, text, telephone, etc., at night only, all day, or any combination thereof.

We had used the program successfully when our mother was still safe alone in the house, and now have continued to use the system in conjunction with the help we have hired.

Be assured that I am not a vendor and have no financial interest in the company. I simply want to offer a solution that worked for us to other caregivers in a similar circumstance. I will be happy to share my experience in greater detail with those interested through the KHN editor.

Mindy, Staten Island

The Family Event

Dear Readers,

When I learned that my friend R' Reuven is actively involved in assisting families in their care giving roles and fulfilling the Mitzva of Kibud Av V'eim, I asked him to publicize to the klal a vital lesson that I learned and observed first hand many times over.

If you have a family simcha, a wedding, a bar mitzvah or the like, and your elderly parent insists that he/she is unable to attend, it is too difficult, do not impose upon them to come. Not having the parent participate certainly leaves a void. Uprooting them from their regular routine, however, can have catastrophic results. Take heed to their remarks. I have seen instances where the family pressured a parent to travel the relatively short distance of Monsey to New York for a simcha only to find themselves sitting shiva for the parent shortly thereafter. We have an expression. Never move an old sforim shrank.

*Rabbi Mordechai Shain
Monsey, NY*

Medicaid Requirements: Frequently Asked Questions

Individuals in need of homecare or nursing-home care should understand that despite on-going changes in the Medicaid eligibility rules, they do not have to spend down their savings to qualify for Medicaid services. Valuable planning options exist. The following questions and answers illustrate some of these options:

Q: My mother suffered a stroke several months ago. She has been managing with four hours of homecare five days a week that she has been paying for herself. My sisters and I believe her condition has taken a downturn and that she now needs more hours of homecare. We are concerned that increasing her homecare will deplete her savings. Will Medicaid help her?

A. If your mother needs homecare and the costs are so significant that she will be spending down her lifetime savings, she needs to know that she may be made eligible for Medicaid homecare services that will provide her with as much as 24-hours/7-days-a-week services at no cost to her. Such a plan will allow her to conserve her savings to help pay for expenses other than homecare. Expenses may include luxuries and necessities, such as vacations, theater and clothes as well as rent, food, telephone, electric, cable, transportation, etc.

Q: My brother has dementia and needs round-the-clock homecare. I believe he has between \$70,000-\$80,000 in savings and stocks. His Social Security and pension income is \$2,000 per month. Currently, he is paying \$700 a month for 10 hours of homecare a week and \$850 for rent. He is just barely able to cover his other expenses. Can we protect his savings and income and still have him qualify for Medicaid homecare?

A. The answer is a very affirmative “Yes” to both parts of your question. Under the Medicaid program, the value of his assets, such as bank savings, stocks, bonds, etc., cannot exceed \$14,400. However, the law permits him to reduce his assets down to the required limit and apply for Medicaid homecare for such services. If he gives away (i.e., transfers to an individual or to a trust) in any one month that portion of his savings above \$14,400, he will be eligible resource-wise for free Medicaid homecare, day care,

prescription drugs, etc. on the first day of the following month. Note: There is no penalty period for transferring assets to become eligible for non-institutional Medicaid. With regard to your brother’s monthly income: Medicaid limit is \$800. In effect, your brother has \$1,200 in monthly income that Medicaid characterizes as “excess.” Medicaid will require him to contribute this amount to Medicaid to help cover his homecare expenses. However, if your brother joins a pooled-income trust he will be able to conserve almost all of the \$1,200 plus \$800 to pay his expenses.

What is A Pooled Income Trust?

Federal law allows disabled people to put their monthly income or assets — above the amounts Medicaid allows them to keep — into a special type of pooled trust. This trust contains the assets of a number of disabled individuals and is managed by a non-profit organization that maintains separate accounts for each individual. Money in the trust is used to pay basic expenses such as rent, mortgage payment or telephone service, food, utilities, clothing. Medicaid, meanwhile, pays for the home care. It is effectively a supplemental-needs trust that receives the beneficiary’s monthly income and redistributes it on his behalf as directed by the beneficiary or his representative. The trust pays the disabled person’s bills — as long as the expense is for the sole benefit of the participant and receives an administrative fee for this service.

Q: Would you please summarize the Medicaid rules under which it is possible to conserve approximately 50 percent of an individual’s assets should that individual require nursing-home care?

A. Under the Medicaid law in New York State an individual may be eligible for Medicaid nursing-home coverage if his savings do not exceed \$14,400 and all his income except for a personal-needs allowance of \$50 per month is paid to the facility to defray the cost of his care. If the individual has assets in excess of \$14,400 he may transfer (i.e., give away) his assets to an individual or trust. For example:

Assume the individual has \$114,400. If, in an attempt to become eligible for Medicaid-nursing-home coverage, he transfers away \$100,000, leaving him with \$14,400, he will incur a 10-month penalty period during which time Medicaid will not pay for his nursing-home care if he should require that care at any time during the next five years.

Medicaid arrives at the penalty period by dividing the amount of money transferred (\$100,000) by the average monthly cost of a nursing home in the county in which he lives. In New York City the average monthly cost is approximately \$10,000, resulting in a 10-month penalty period ($\$100,000 \div \$10,000 = 10$) during which time Medicaid will not pay for the Medicaid applicant’s care in the nursing home. In that case, the person who received the original \$100,000 returns 50 percent, that is, \$50,000, to the Medicaid applicant.

History now has been rewritten: The Medicaid applicant has only transferred \$50,000 and therefore incurred only a five-month penalty. With the \$50,000 returned to him, the applicant pays for his nursing-home care for five months. By the sixth month, he has lived through his five-month penalty, he is impoverished, and he is eligible for Medicaid. The process requires the utilization of a promissory note or annuity in conformity with Medicaid law.

Q: Will Medicaid take our home if my wife or I should ever need Medicaid nursing-home care or homecare?

A. In most instances a home, that is, a house, cooperative or condominium apartment, remains an exempt asset for purposes of determining initial Medicaid eligibility. However, ultimately, Medicaid may impose a lien on the sale proceeds of the property for all it spent on behalf of your wife. If your home is transferred to a non-exempt individual, a penalty period will be incurred during which time your wife will be ineligible for Medicaid nursing-home coverage.

Significantly, there is no penalty period

if the home is transferred to a spouse; to a “caretaker” child who resided there for at least two years before the parent required nursing-home placement and provided care to maintain the parent at home; to a child who is disabled, blind or under age 21; or to a brother or sister who has an equity interest in the home and resided there for at least one year before the individual entered a nursing home.



Q. If my father transfers \$14,000 each to me and my three children this year, will that transfer count if he should need to apply for Medicaid nursing home coverage?

A. The transfer you are proposing is counter-productive for Medicaid but may be a useful for a person wishing to reduce the size of his taxable estate. You are referring to a tax-planning option which permits an individual to make gifts of \$14,000 to any number of persons in any one year without filing a gift-tax return. Such gifts are exempt from gift and estate taxation, but they are not exempt under the Medicaid nursing-home rules. The transfer of \$56,000 (4 persons x \$14,000) will generate a five-month-plus penalty period during which time your father will not be eligible for Medicaid in a nursing home.

Q. I recently realized that I am eligible for Medicaid, but I already have Medicare. Can I have both at the same time?

A. Yes. As long as you meet Medicaid’s income and asset limits, you can have both Medicare and at nursing-home care or transportation to the doctor.

-By Martin Petroff, ESQ

MARTIN PETROFF is a member of the Executive Committee of the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association and a director of the Long Term Care Community Coalition of New York State. Former staff attorney for the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA), Mr. Petroff has spoken widely on radio and television and is editor of the Elder Law Report. Mr. Petroff’s office is located at 270 Madison Avenue, NYC, 212-679-5800.

Home or Facility Placement?

TESHUVOS V'HANHAGOS 446

If a parent is frail and sickly, must you maintain him in your home or may you place him in a nursing facility where your out-of-pocket cost would be much less?

The father's needs are such that nursing-home placement would be acceptable. However, he wishes to remain living at home with you and his wife. This will run up high-maintenance costs for nursing, feeding and other needs. What are the parameters of mitzvas kibbud av va'eim in this instance?

Where necessary, nursing-home placement would be acceptable. In this instance, the father wishes to remain home with his wife. Since your father requests to remain home, and by doing so it will give him nachas ruach, it is a mitzvah to satisfy this request.

Nursing home care, however, is beyond the capability of the son. [To the extent that he is physically capable, caring for a parent is a son's personal obligation. Contracting for a home aide, for example, for all intents and purposes is a convenience for the son, since he is obligated to assist his father at home.] He is not able to provide twenty-four-hour nursing care. It is therefore a parent's obligation to pay for it. As a result, the

additional expense incurred by keeping your father at home may be allocated from your tzedakah ma'aser money.

The halachah indicates that the son is responsible for caring for his parent so long as it does not place the son in poverty. [Interpreted to mean, for example, that he would have to use his vacation pay to stay home, but not to jeopardize the loss of a job.]

Bear in mind the following teaching of our Sages (*Kiddushin* 30b-31a.): There are three partners in the creation of man — HaKadosh Baruch Hu, his father, and his mother. In the instance that you honor and respect your parents, I [G-d] consider it a personal honor and extend My countenance on you. But if G-d forbid you cause your parents anguish, for example, you do not allow them to live with you, HaKadosh Baruch Hu removes His countenance from you, as if He were to remain and dwell with you, your behavior would be causing Him severe anguish as well!

— *By HaGaon HaRav Moshe Sternbuch, shlita*

*An excerpt from the recently released book **You Are Your Parents' Keeper: Hashkafic and Halachik Insights into Elder Care and Kibbud Av Va'Eim** by Rabbi Reuven G. Becker.*

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Making Home Safe for Seniors

One of every three seniors who live at home fall at least once every year. Seniors with vision loss are more than twice as likely as seniors without vision loss to fall, and are also more likely to injure themselves if they do fall. The cause? At home, most falls result from walking into protruding objects, tripping on uneven floor surfaces, or because of poor lighting.

Although seniors require an average of three to six times more light than younger adults, in a residential lighting study conducted in New York City, nearly ALL of the seniors had inadequate light levels in their homes! The darkest area was usually in the bathroom, and the majority of study participants did not use a nightlight or even turn on a light when getting out of bed at night.

The good news is that there are some very basic, easy and inexpensive things you can do in your home, or the home of an older loved one to make it safer and minimize risk of falls. The goal is to create a living space that the person can negotiate without threat or fear of bumping into things or tripping, or otherwise injuring themselves.

Here are some simple solutions that can help you create a safe home environment:

LIGHTING IN GENERAL

- Higher wattage fluorescent or LED bulbs (remember, seniors need more light!)
- A variety of lighting types, including natural light, overhead lighting, floor lamps and adjustable table lamps.
- Uniform lighting levels from room to

room – including hallways.

IN THE BATHROOM

- Extra lighting around the tub and shower area.
- Non-skid bath mats in contrasting colors to the tub and floor both inside and outside of the tub.
- Towels that contrast in color to the wall.
- Grab bars in the shower and around the toilet.
- Faucets with separate controls for hot and cold water, and/or anti-scald temperature controls.
- A shower chair.
- A toilet seat that contrasts in color to the commode (especially helpful at night!)

IN THE KITCHEN

- Remove obvious hazards such as flammable items near the stove.
- Organize cooking supplies so they are within easy reach.
- Under cabinet lighting to light up the counters.

IN THE BEDROOM

- Beds at their lowest height possible
- Mattress firm enough to support the person getting out of bed
- Closed-toe slippers placed near the bed
- Nightlights lighting the way from bedroom to bathroom

IN ALL LIVING AREAS

- No uncovered radiators
- All rugs secured to the floor (duct tape works great!)
- No overloaded outlets or tangled cords
- Solid colored flooring and rugs (“busy” patterns can be disorienting)
- Low pile carpeting that isn’t worn out
- Non-skid, non-glare wax on linoleum floors
- Clutter free space, with nothing protruding from the walls
- No furniture in main traffic areas, chairs pushed under tables and desks
- Stair treads that are non-slip and in contrasting colors
- Doors, floor molding and handrails painted in distinct darker color than the walls

This is not an exhaustive list, but hopefully it gives you a sense of the types of safety hazards in many seniors’ homes and ways to mitigate those hazards.

—By *Gordon Rovins, MS, CEAC and Annemarie O’Hearn, MPA, Jewish Guild Healthcare*

Jewish Guild Healthcare (formerly The Jewish Guild for the Blind) is a non-profit, non-sectarian agency that has been providing healthcare, education and social services to blind and visually impaired people for nearly 100 years. For more information about our healthcare and low vision services, go to www.guildhealth.org or call us at 212-769-6263.

Avoiding Falls In Elders: Are Falls In Your Future?

The first step in avoiding a fall is by discovering if falls are in your future. To find out, answer the quick ‘Self-Assessment of Fall Risk’ checklist found below. A ‘Yes’ response to one or more of the questions may indicate that you are at risk for a fall.

A SELF-ASSESSMENT OF FALL RISK

The best way to evaluate whether you are at risk is to visit your doctor, show your checklist and talk about your concerns. The checklist will help start the conversation with your doctor, and result in recommended interventions or strategies aimed at helping you to prevent falls.

HAVE YOU FALLEN ONE OR MORE TIMES IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS?

Yes No Many falls just ‘don’t happen’ but are caused by underlying health conditions or problems.

HAVE YOU SLIPPED OR TRIPPED 2 OR MORE TIMES IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS?

Yes No Frequent slipping or tripping may indicate a problem with walking or seeing correctly.

DO YOU OFTEN FEEL UNSTEADY OR LOSE YOUR BALANCE?

Yes No Feeling unsteady or losing balance may be an early indication of a medical condition.

DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY WALKING?

DO YOU SOMETIMES HOLD ON TO FURNITURE OR WALLS FOR SUPPORT?

Yes No Difficulty with walking may indicate a problem with the nervous system or weak leg muscles.

DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY GETTING UP FROM A CHAIR OR SOFA?

Yes No Difficulty with getting up may be a sign of weak muscles or other medical conditions.

HAVE YOU NOTICED A CHANGE IN YOUR VISION?

Yes No Seeing correctly is important in avoiding trips and slips.

DO YOU TAKE 5 OR MORE MEDICATIONS DAILY?

Yes No Some medications can cause dizziness, drowsiness and balance problems.

HAVE YOU NOTICED A DECLINE IN YOUR MEMORY? DO YOU SOMETIMES BECOME EASILY CONFUSED?

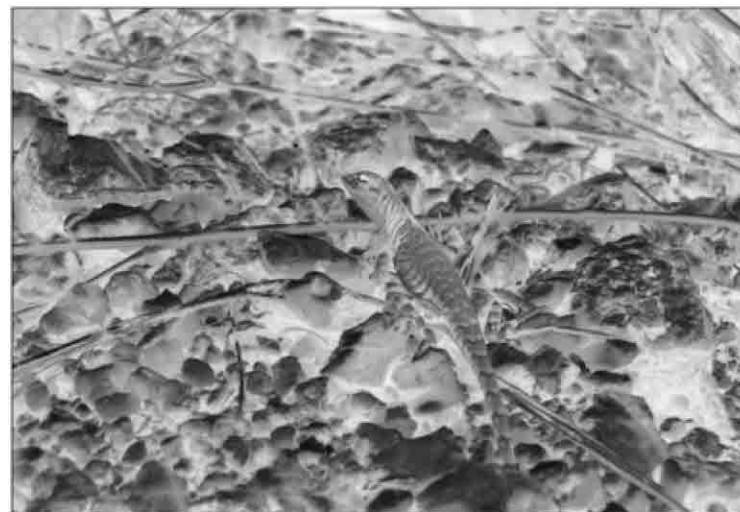
Yes No Difficulty with memory or thinking correctly can interfere with safe mobility.

— By *Rein Tideiksaar, PhD, PA-C*

Author of textbooks, professional training manuals and director of numerous research projects, Rein Tideiksaar, Ph.D., PA-C is the president of FallPrevent, LLC, Blackwood, NJ, a consulting company that provides educational, legal and marketing services related to fall prevention in the elderly. Dr Tideiksaar’s professional profile is on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/dr-rein/6/759/592>. Feel free to reach him at drrein@verizon.net.

THE GRANDKIDS

Hidden Image: What’s Hiding in the Desert



Send your best guess to editor@kolhakavodnews.com.

Hint: “Snapped on my trip to Tucson.” —MN

Mazinke Dance: Source Uncovered

(continued from Cover)

ing one aspect of our search.

Here is a hint, an excerpt from an article by Jordana Horn, "To Dance or Not To Dance." that appeared in the *Jewish Daily Forward*, December 14, 2007:

"At the time of my brother's wedding, I was in the end throes of a long-awaited divorce: still legally married, but trying very hard not to be. And so: To mezinke or not to mezinke. That was the question.

My parents and I had a sit-down and agreed: There would be no mezinke at my brother's wedding.

My brother's wedding was a joyous and raucous affair. After the ceremony, hundreds of guests flooded the dance floor to celebrate with our family. In the middle of the hora mega-dance, after my brother and new sister-in-law had descended from the wobbly chairs hoisted in the air, the music suddenly slowed. 'Ladies and gentlemen, I want you to hold hands with the person next to you and put your hands over your head,' the bandleader intoned. I'd only heard this music once before at a friend's wedding, but I immediately knew what it was: The

mezinke ... Like an electrical current, instructions were passed swiftly and surreptitiously to the bandleader, and the music swung up tempo again, back into the hora. It was as though nothing had happened. The mezinke remained undanced."

Correct. Based upon the information I had culled, I felt it reasonable to deduce that the Mazinke had become a staple due to the advocacy of band leaders. I shared my analysis with my wife and the rationale behind it. From the band leader's perspective, this is an animated traditional dance and song that adds a meaningful, joyous and memorable element to the Jewish wedding celebration. Yes, but ... she said "You've got to get the input of Ruth Wisse. She is the internationally respected and most knowledgeable expert on Jewish culture and customs."

I said, what for? I know the answer:

YIVO's Chana Mloteck had intimated as such when she had said that the famous bandleader Abe Schwartz had popularized the song in the 1920s. He was very active, making LP recordings and frequent radio and live appearances.

And Jewish Dance aficionados Judith Ingber and Helen Winkler introduced me to Hankus Netsky who also identifies it in his 2004 doctoral dissertation in ethnomusicology (Note: Hankus Netsky, is founder and director of the Klezmer Conservatory Band, holds the Contemporary Improvisation Chair at the New England Conservatory and served as music director of the acclaimed Sony CD recording *Eternal Echoes*, joining violinist Itzhak Perlman with Cantor Yitzchak Meir Helfgot):

"One of the most memorable and most intricately ritualized parts of any Philadelphia Jewish wedding celebration was the krinsl (crowning) or mezinke (youngest daughter) ceremony. Indeed, staged moments such as this formed a uniquely American counterpart to the religious rituals of the wedding ceremony. In Europe this dance had traditionally focused only on the mother of the bride when the bride was the last daughter in the family to be married. American bandleaders expanded it to include a large number of other family members. *Bandleader Bobby Block describes the krinsl ceremony he learned from older*

leaders [emphasis mine]: 'I put four chairs out in the center of the floor for the four parents, the two mothers in the center and their spouses on either side. If both mothers were being crowned (if the groom is also the youngest), we call that a double crowning, but even one is being crowned, we seat both sets of parents out of kuved (respect) and because this is now a brand-new family. If there are grandparents, I seat them as well. Then, I get all the guests to form a huge circle around these chairs, around the whole perimeter of the ballroom floor, and we start to play the Mezinke very slowly so that everyone can clap their hands on the backbeat ... The family stays in the middle, and everyone dances around them and congratulates them.'"

My wife nonetheless persisted and I finally acquiesced. I received a response in less than 24 hours of my inquiry.

Here is what Ruth R. Wisse, Professor of Yiddish Literature and Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University, whose—scholarship, teaching and insightful writings have enriched our understanding of Jewish culture in the modern world—had to say:

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“The spread of the custom in America is due to the music bands that perform at weddings, and organize this as part of their routines – without necessarily consulting the families (and occasionally to their great surprise).”

That in fact is Helen Winkler’s take as well:

“The point that Hankus makes in his thesis, that the mezinke and crowning/krinsl was a staged moment orchestrated by the musicians probably also has a lot to do with its popularity. I have noticed that the phenomenon of the musicians running the show continues at Jewish simchas even now. Exposure to these orchestrated moments results in people expecting them to happen at subsequent events, and I guess that also can lead to a tradition or custom being formed.”

— Helen

And then I got this email from Lubow Wolynetz:

“Dear Rabbi R. Becker,

After our conversation about wedding wreaths for the parents who marry off their last daughter I began to search in various publications and found the following:

When the wedding celebrations were coming to the end (after a few days) wedding guests would put the parents of the bride or groom on a wagon and take them to the village Inn (bar) for the so called “selling of the parents” which meant the parents had to buy everyone a drink. If the parents married off their last child (son or daughter), then the guests would make wreaths and place them on the heads of the parents and thus take them to the village inn. In this frolicking way the wedding celebrations would come to the end.

This information was published in a Ukrainian magazine NYVA in 1889 and an engraving illustrating this event was included. The article in this magazine was based on the works of a Ukrainian ethnographer and folklorist and scholar Pavlo Chubynskyi (1839-1884) who traveled through Ukrainian villages in the second half of the 19th century collecting folklore information which he later published in 7 volumes (1872-1879).”

Bingo! Which was followed by:

“One more thing I forgot to mention -- most village inns or taverns in Ukraine were owned or operated by Jewish families. Therefore, every time the parents of the newlyweds came in wearing wreaths to the tavern to treat everyone to a drink -- the Jewish tavern owners saw this and maybe this is how it came to be adapted in the Jewish traditions. It’s something to think about.”

— Lubow Wolynetz

Bingo Again!

In conclusion, we sought out to learn whether the mazinke dance at a Jewish wedding was “Tradition, Folklore, or Not.” How it came about.

We presented the results of our investigation and imparted new knowledge.

Now you can be the judge to answer the question:

Will the mazinke dance be performed at your wedding? Comments are welcome.

— RGB

PS. This is part three of our report. The prior two installments may be viewed at our website, www.kolhakovodnews.com, clicking on “Current Issue” tab.

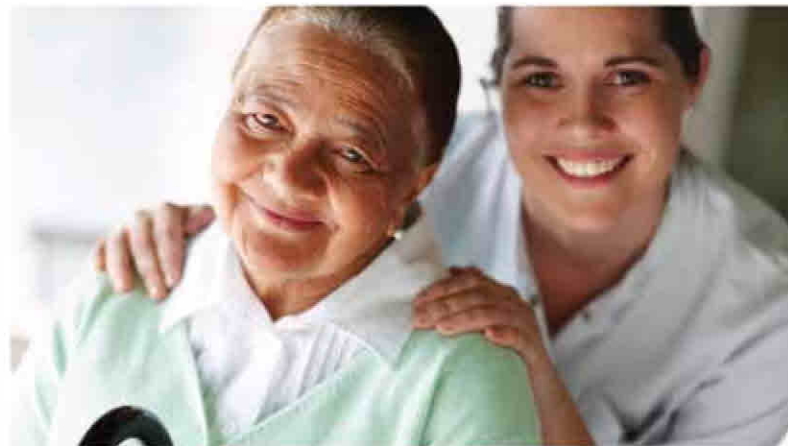
One of our readers had suggested the custom is “based on a Cajun tradition for older unmarried brothers and sisters of the bride or groom to dance with a broom at the wedding reception -- thus mocking their single status.”

The observation supports the notion that bandleaders indeed were the drivers of the custom. New Orleans, a center of Cajun culture, is also renowned to be a hub of musical talent. It is reasonable conjecture that band leaders and musicians from the region performed the mazinke at Jewish weddings. Upon learning the theme, they naturally added the broom to the repertoire, expecting that it belonged with the dance. The wedding party, not knowing differently, accepted the direction from the musicians and found it to be fun and entertaining.

Following is a noteworthy citation by Hankus Netsky I just came across in a chapter he authored for the compilation *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Offshoots* By Mark Slobin, p. 71, Note 35:

“The crowning of the bride, unknown to Lithuanian Jews, Lubavitch Hasidim, or informed observers of Jewish life in Chicago and other cities, is also observed by Ukrainian Christians.”

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SUDOKU!

By S. Malkah Cohen

Answers available at KolHakavodNews.com

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Mr. Henry Sherman: True Grit, Part 2

In our last issue we met our neighbor, Mr. Henry Sherman, holocaust survivor, tailor's tailor, a fiery personality.

Caught crossing the Poland-Russia border in 1939, the sixteen years old was sentenced by the Russians to three years in a guarded correctional facility. It housed "650 burglars, juvenile delinquents, bandits who would kill a person just like that." Upon entry, Mr. Sherman was advised to sign up as an activist, which he did. He recalls, "A few minutes later another group of thugs came up to me and said I should sign that I'm a member of the atheist movement. I said, "This I'm not signing." "Why aren't you signing?" they asked. I said to them, "If you can prove to me that there is no God I'll sign it." They naturally responded, "Can you prove that there is a God?" I said, "No, I can't. If you believe, you don't need proof, the belief is the proof. When I go out in the street and I see a tree and I see grass, and I see flowers and I see a mountain and I see a river - whoever created this is God. I did not create this." So the leader called off the boys and said "Get away from him, leave him alone." This brought me closer to *Yiddishkeit*.

"I cannot understand why Jews do not believe in *Yiddishkeit*; I can't understand it. Why do Jews have to be so dependent on secular culture?"

You were sentenced to three years with the understanding that you would be released after that? - Yes, but I was released before. Hitler and Russia agreed to release the Polish citizens from jail. At that time there were 600,000 Polish dissidents in jails. So in August of 1941 these Polish citizens were released and they created a new Polish Army. But I didn't go to the army at that time. I remained in Russia. Eventually I got a job as a tailor. I worked until about 1944. Then I was recruited to the Red Army. If it weren't for the fact that the country was one jail, I would never have left Russia. It's a very good country and the people are very nice people, much nicer than the *Polakin*, much nicer. But it's a jail. Whatever you do, you're guilty. Guilty, guilty, guilty. I was in the army for about a year and a half. I have three medals for taking three capitols. Our army took the capital

of Latvia, and then we took Warsaw and then we took Berlin. It was the 21st of April that I entered Berlin and the city was taken May 2. I was in the best army, under Zukoff's command.

Was there a group of Jewish soldiers you could relate to, or were you were totally isolated? - You were afraid to say anything because they would beat the "hell out of you!" There were three or four Jews, that's all.

When the war was over what happened? - I wiggled myself out, if you know what I mean. To live in Russia was impossible. They had a system. They would tell you - If you have a job, I'll give you a place to live; if you have a place to live, I'll give you a job. I couldn't stay in town because I had no place to sleep. If you slept in the park they would arrest you and place you in jail as a deserter. So I left for the village where it was safer. Eventually, I came to my major and asked - he was a very nice fellow - I had made him a lot of uniforms, some suits. So I asked him to write me a letter. I said to him, "You know that I love Russia, what I'm asking is that you allow me to go to Poland and search for my family. Then I will return to Russia." He said he couldn't do it. The papers have to be clean. But he advised me to go over to the secretary of the battalion and tell him that I (the major) said that he should write the release that you are getting off in Poland. The secretary said he would do it on one condition; that I report back to him what is going on in Poland. "Sure, I'll write you a letter," I told him. Three days later I boarded the train to Poland. Then, all of a sudden, a commissioned general burst in to take all soldiers off the train to go to Manchuria and fight the Japanese. There were about 50 people in the car. I told them that I just wanted to step out and say goodbye to my major. Instead I hid in the bushes until I saw the general pass by and leave. I then quickly ran back into the car and hid. A few minutes later the train began to move and left the station. We were about five or six Jews.

Were you in uniform? - Yes, of course I was in uniform. I was a soldier. I met

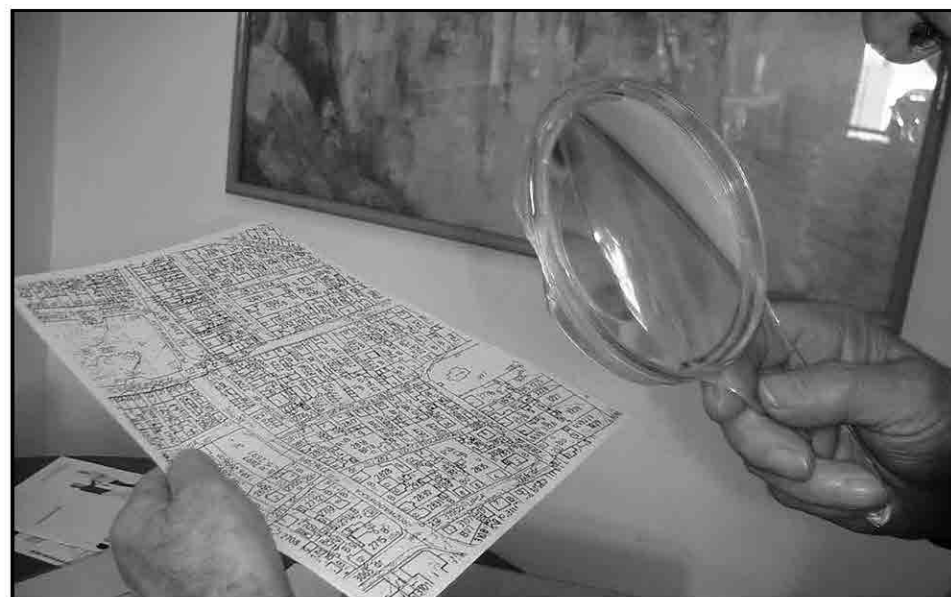


Mr. Henry Sherman

another Jew who had an address in Lodz. I really had no place to go, so I said I would go with him to Lodz. When we were already in Bydgoszcz which is right at the other end of Germany crossing into Poland, I said to him, "Yuziek, I'm going to ask when we should get off." He said, "No, no, no, no! We'll get in trouble." I said, "I have no problem to go right to the general and ask." So I went and said, "I'm supposed to get off in Poland. When would be the right time to get off the train?" He said, "Get off where ever you want." He then asked me if I have documents. I was about to take out the documents, but he said, "No you don't have to show to me, that's okay." But I became alarmed. I returned and said to Yuziek, "Let's get off, we have to get off." I needed to go with him because I had no other place to go. We jumped off the train and we took another train and came in to Lodz. We went straight to the Brecha, the Zionist organization, the central processing agency for Aliyah Bet, and I remember the address navaricha 25. I had never been in such a big city; I remember that on Saturday, I was told that on another street Zavatskinis 22 they were giving out Jewish food, chulent. We found it. We came in; they gave us food, gitta chulent. It was the first time I had eaten chulent in I don't know how many, for 6 years. That night I decided to go to Lublin, from there to my hometown and

try to locate some of my family. Can you imagine that my father was in that place just a half hour earlier before me and we couldn't meet, I missed him!

I got dressed in the morning in uniform and went to the train station. Standing somewhere behind me was an agent, and suddenly he arrests me! He said I spoke Polish and he took me into a Russian officer and he asked me if I had any documents. So I threw them on the table; he saw the letter, the three medals and three letters of thank you from Stalin. I said these are the best documents there are! You fool, let me go! So I slept in the train station overnight and I finally came in to Lublin. As I'm walking on the street, a street called Dan Teretza, it's a very, very wide street, maybe wider than both Queens Boulevard and Ocean Parkway combined. As I'm on the street, I see five boys whom I recognize as Jews. So, as I am crossing I am thinking how should I talk to them, should I talk to them in Russian, I am a Russian soldier, maybe Polish is safer. No, I decided I will talk to them in Yiddish. So I say to them, "*Ir zent yiddin?*" Are you Jews? "*Zicher meir zenen yidden, of course, we are Jews!*" "*Un fun vonent, ver bist di?* Where are you from?" they ask me. "*Ich bin fin Zaklikov. I'm from Zaklikov.*" Suddenly, one of them screams out, "Are you by chance Sherman?" "Yes," I replied. "I have your father's address!" "Where is my father?"



Presenting the Zaklikow, Poland landsmanschaft book

He is living in Lodz." I almost fainted. Before returning to Lodz, I sought the young man who gave me the information leading to my father's address to thank him. He showed me all the beautiful sites, Maidanek, the treasure, dem oitzer, with all the crematoria. I travelled back to Lodz and found it. I was told my father was in the vegetable market. I got to the market and it was a huge enterprise, maybe 50,000 to 100,000 people were there. I'm searching and searching and searching, walking, walking, walking - I can't believe it, I found him! I approached him, gave him the nod and then he asked me in Polish, as people were afraid to speaking Yiddish, "Who are you?" So I couldn't take it any longer, this charade, so I started speaking in Yiddish and I said "Tatte! Dee deken-stmich nisht? Father, don't you recognize me?" He recognized my voice, he didn't recognize me. He fainted. There was a whole tumult there. We got back to his apartment.

Let's fast forward for a minute, the next 10 years where did you live? - I was living in Germany 3-4 years, and then Canada and the United States.

So how long have you been in the US? - I came in 1960.

And the seforim here. I see the Aruch Hashulchon. These are not just general books, but they are of a scholar.

- Yes, especially my Rambam L'Am, this is my favorite. I bought it because the Lubavitcher Rebbe said that everybody should learn the Rambam L'Am.

How did you decide to connect to the

Lubavitcher Rebbe? - I accept everybody that is Jewish. I don't discriminate. I don't have any Rebbes. I am a centrist Jew. I stay in the center anything that is positive Jewish I accept be it Zionism, Chasidism - anything that is positive for the Jewish people- if it's extreme I don't go for it.

So that basically would be your hashkafas bachaim, outlook on life? - Yes. I took it. I learned it from the *Neviyim*. I am in the center of the Jewish people. And not the extreme.

As an aside, do you use computers? - No. Don't forget I'm not an American.

What does that have to do with anything? - Well, an American has machinery for everything. In America to buy a newspaper you need a car for \$20,000 to go for a block. You need a nice car to show off to your neighbors - the neighbors *zol fardreisen - szol eim krenken* - and that is the American life.

A yeshiva boy asked me to teach him in Yiddish. So we opened the *Tanach* and I said if you don't know a word just ask me and I'll translate. Then I asked him, "Do you know who Jabotinsky was?"

So I laughed - You laugh? To me *schnat isz* - it cuts into my heart. Then I asked do you know who Trumpledor was? Who Achad Ha'Am was? Finished - Do you know who Acher was? Yaa yaa yaa hooray! He knew Elisha ben Avuyah - So I said, "You know an Acher of 2000 years ago - why don't you know an Acher from your own times?!" Another yeshiva boy came in and I asked, "Do you know what it means *gezairas tach vtat*?" He had no idea.

And how old were these kids? - About 20. *Ribono shel Olum!* How is it feasible that somebody should learn in the *yeshiva* and not know what *gezairas tach vtat* are? 650,000 Jews were slaughtered by Chmielnicki - entire towns were totally wiped out -and a young man should not know about this? And as far as Zionistic interest - forget about it. Ask any passerby on the street-who was the second President of Israel -they won't be able to tell you! Why shouldn't he know his history?

This incident occurred when I was in Israel. I was with my daughter, and we went to the museum *Beit Hatfutzot*. In came a group of Israeli women soldiers, *chayalot*, about 15 of them. And I was so curious about them so I went over to see what they were doing. It was an exhibit entitled *Safrut am yisroel* and they had a lecturer discussing Moshe Rabainu, the Rambam, all of a sudden one of them interjected loudly "Ani lo tzarich et harambam - we don't need the Rambam." "Az ma at tzaricha?" (What do you need?) "Shakespeare *ani tzricha*." So I answered her, "Shakespeare lo shelach; HaRambam hu shelach!!"

We show a Jewish girl the greatest *talmid chochom*, the greatest writer and philosopher, and she says that non-Jewish writer is better! The same with the yeshiva boy - *vus bistee a yid, far vus, der ganze zach is sezan ongelainkf fim de yidishe folk as dee bist a chailek fun dim yidishe folk!* So why would you call yourself Jew?

But perhaps it is correct not to be exposed to these personalities and their thoughts? - But they are a part of you!

You have a right hand and you have a left hand, but it is one body!

You mean it's important to know why an Achad HaAm was an Achad HaAm and a Chaim Grade was a Chaim Grade? - Yes and why Chaim Nachman Bialik was a Chaim Nachman Bialik.

And of course, you'll probably think that he was an *apikores* - yes? Well, my son has an extensive library of Rav Kook's works and he states that Bialik was a *ba'al tshuva*. If you don't want to know, then you are rejecting your existence.

What do you mean, rejecting your existence? - Rejecting your existence as a Jewish people. The Jewish people are not made up of only one kind. This goes back to their original designation, from the time we left Egypt. We are going out to build a nation - why do we need 12 flags - why do we need the 12 tribes, everyone with its separate flag and territory, why not have one flag?

You have a right hand and you have a left hand, but it is one body.

-RGB

Mr. Sherman is a 20 year resident of Kew Gardens Hills, davens at Yeshiva Ohr HaChaim, and religiously attends the YIKGH morning Kollel for retirees. He has 2 children, 4 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren. The painting of Jerusalem hanging in his home was done by his granddaughter-in-law, Miriam, who comes from Bnai Brak.

Mr. Sherman would be happy to hear from you. Contact editor@kolhakavodnews.com.

Those Unused Medicines In Your Cabinet

The US Government's Food and Drug Administration advises:

If no instructions are given on the drug label and no take-back program is available in your area, throw unused drugs in the household trash, but first:

- Take them out of their original containers and mix them with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter. The medication will be less appealing to children and pets, and unrecognizable to people who may intentionally go through your trash.
- Put them in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container to prevent the medication from leaking or breaking out of a garbage bag.
- Before throwing out a medicine container, scratch out all identifying information on the prescription label to make it unreadable. This will help protect your identity and the privacy of your personal health information.
- Do not give medications to friends. Doctors prescribe drugs based on a person's specific symptoms and medical history. A drug that works for you could be dangerous for someone else.
- When in doubt about proper disposal, talk to your pharmacist.

Imagine you are at your favorite restaurant. You finished a sumptuous meal and, before long, the waiter comes by, removes your dishes and eventually begins the cleaning process by scraping any remnants and leftovers into the garbage. This is a natural procedure and we hardly give it any thought.

When it comes to disposing of our left-over or unused prescription and over-the-counter medications, things are not the same. We do need to give it some serious thought. In the past, people were actually advised to flush unused drugs down the toilet. Many of these discarded chemicals eventually end up in our water and the consequences could be serious.

A recent study found that more than half of the over 300 respondents

got rid of their old medications by either flushing them down the toilet or pouring down the sink. Present day water treatment systems are not designed to remove many pharmaceuticals from the drinking water. As an example, the medicine Coumadin (generic- warfarin) a frequently prescribed anti-coagulant, can have possibly lethal effects on fish and animals. Even small amounts, when ingested, block the synthesis of vitamin K, an essential component for normal blood clotting. The result could be spontaneous and uncontrolled bleeding. This could become an unfortunate reality due to an innocent flushing of Coumadin down the toilet.

Most patients believe that the pharmacy in which they purchased

the medications can take them back. Ironically, state laws prohibit such a practice. A new way to dispose of many medications has to be found, and indeed, alternate methods are now available. Incineration is the preferred method of drug disposal. Being that most patients and readers hopefully do not own a medication incinerator (check your local state laws), procedures to transport the medications to an approved incinerator system are emerging around the country. There are two such examples. Many pharmacies now sell products which allow the consumer to mail their unwanted medications to a safe disposal area. One such item is the TakeAway Environmental Return system by sharps.com. The retail value of this particular system is \$3.99. It is a no hassle mail back program. But it does come with a small fee to purchase the empty envelope.

There are also community and federally sponsored take-back programs. These events allow the public to anonymously return unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. It is usually carried out at no charge to the consumer. Federally sponsored event times are posted on the DEA website.

Besides the consumers, manufacturers and retailers, as well, must conform

to the correct disposal procedures of medications. Those who do not do so face the harshest enforcement actions that the industry has ever seen related to the proper management of hazardous waste.

There are many reasons why patients may be in possession of unused or expired medications. Side effect intolerance, dosage changes, and expired medications are a few examples. In addition, as our population ages, more and more medications are being dispensed and, consequently, the problem of safe disposal can only grow increasingly imperative. The public must be made aware of the safe options available to help them to properly get rid of unwanted medications.

— *By Yechiel (Joseph) Benari, RPh*

Yechiel (Joseph) Benari, RPh, is a full-time staff Pharmacist at a national chain drug store and the founder and President of Plain and Simple Health, an innovative Pharmacy consulting service with its primary goal that the patient and their family understand and feel comfortable with their medication regimen. He can be reached with any questions, comments or to set up a consulting appointment at Jbapharm@gmail.com or 917-600-2486



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The Jewish Orthodox Caregiving Study – The Untold Story

(continued from Cover)

feel guilty and wish there were more services to help seniors with health problems. - For me as caregiver, this generation is not prepared. - For all memorials for Holocaust survivors not adequate and not funneled to the living. - I have started to feel the physical effects of the stress on my body--both the physical stress of not sleeping etc. and the emotional turmoil and the effects on my own family. I have a difficult time making sure everyone has what they need from me. There are times when I'm so distracted. I have become clumsy, forgetful and depressed.

And in "aspects of caregiving most difficult for me":

Resentment of unshared burden • Lack of privacy due to paid help in the home • Day/night confusion (not sleeping between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.) • Dementia • Dealing with the patient's emotional up/downs • Trying to help and love my parent who is terminal • Dealing with "sundowning" (strong fear and anxiety and confusion that sets-in at evening) • Emotional drain of seeing my mother debilitation and depression at her deteriorated mental condition • Lack of time for my large family-balancing caring for my grandmother and doing things for my husband and children • Getting support from family when needed • Availability of an advisor when needed • How to feel when father doesn't want to shower and have to encourage and push for him to do. I end up feeling that I'm not giving my father proper respect when having to take care of his needs • I wish I could convince Aunt Frieda to utilize Jewish communal services in our area • Better time management for myself and my family • Making decisions as far as treatments and medical procedures • Difficult mother in law • Needing to perform tasks which hurt or cause discomfort to my mother • Dealing with constant ill-humor • Worrying • How to deal with with father when he doesn't want to get up to eat dinner. I'm not sure where my *kibud av* comes in: Wake up or let sleep • Scheduling outside activities • Respecting mother's independence and assuring her good judgment, especially regarding safety and health.

THE LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE

In addition to determining what they are, an essential element for addressing these caregiver needs is the attitude and perception of our community leaders. Below is a sample of questions contained in the brief survey instrument we designed to assess their knowledge and sensitivity towards Orthodox Jewish caregiver needs. These include executives at Jewish community centers, providers of care, *bikur cholim*, as well as hospital chaplains and clergy. If they become aware of the needs they will place them on their agency's agenda.

Our very preliminary findings suggest that additional efforts in educating community leaders may be helpful. We encourage consumer groups, rabbinical organizations and community-based organizations to adapt and administer the questionnaire, and give it the full test. It is available at the publication tab, www.lorechyomim.org. The process, we believe, will foster a greater awareness of the caregiver needs as well as the design and delivery of new services.

ORTHODOX JEWISH CAREGIVING LEADERSHIP SURVEY: A SAMPLER

- Do you or your organization provide services to seniors? If so, Can you describe them?
- Is serving the needs of the caregivers part of your organization's mission?
- Do you provide any specific services or programs for caregivers? What are they?
- Are there additional services you might initiate if you have the resources? Which ones?
- Do you think it is appropriate to provide special accommodation for the needs of religious Jewish Practice? Why or why not?
- Is there in your opinion, a particular role for clergy to facilitate accessing services? Is local clergy fulfilling this role?

SUMMARY

Through these pages and our cross-national study, disseminating results to public health professionals we have raised awareness to the additional burden of the Orthodox Jewish caregivers.

A fundamental principle in organizational development is that quality leadership impacts on service delivery. Educating community leaders should be a focus. The open-ended survey tool, the JOC Leadership Survey will facilitate the process.

The 1998 US Government report, *Informal Caregiving: Compassion in Action* observes:

"In our society, informal caregivers often go unnoticed except by those who depend on their care. The recipients of informal caregiving understand how important their caregivers' efforts are to their personal well-being. We would like the leaders of all segments of society -- including policymakers, educators, the clergy

and the media --to acknowledge and celebrate informal caregiving as one of the notable strengths of our Nation's families and communities.

In the years to come, it will become increasingly important to formulate policies that support and sustain informal caregiving. These policies must recognize that families and communities cannot always meet the needs of their ill and disabled members by themselves. Moreover, individual caregivers cannot be expected or required to do so much that their own health and well being is placed in jeopardy. A great deal of debate may need to go into determining what are reasonable expectations for informal caregivers and how much is "too much." In order to accommodate the needs of informal caregivers, society may also need to adjust expectations in other areas of life, such as in the workplace. Some "family-friendly" policies have been put in place, but much more thought and effort needs to be given to developing additional ways of enabling -- but also, when necessary, providing relief to -- informal caregivers."

Public programming and funding have since been expanded. The Orthodox Jewish community should not fall behind.

In conclusion, we beg the question. How is the Jewish community faring? Were we to conduct organizational and individual self-assessments, what would we determine? Have we made adequate progress? Is there a service delivery model in place? Is it effective?

It is insufficient and unrealistic to expect family caregivers to seek out help on their own. It is our responsibility, under the moral banner of *vahavta leracha komacho*, love thy neighbor as thyself, to reach out to them and provide our neighbors, friends, relatives with support. The JOCS and other studies have identified the levels of assistance most needed. The information should be utilized to garner the resources for providing the interventions identified such as transportation, respite, guidance and emotional support.

The genuine voices of Orthodox Jewish caregivers in our community are telling and should be heard.

-RGB

This is the third and final installment of this series. Visit us at kolhakavodnews.org for the previous feature articles and lorechyomim.org for a host of additional caregiver resources.

¹ Note: Jewish Action Magazine (Summer 2013) reports that Woodmere Health and Rehabilitation Center in New York, which serves many Orthodox clients, approached Portal Logics to develop a "kosher door," an electronic door that would comply with all federal and state safety standards, yet enable its use on Shabbat and Jewish Holidays. It is OU certified and is available for installation by hospitals and nursing homes.

On the Road Again

We often hear that retirement is difficult. The active breadwinner feels a loss of self worth, doesn't know how to fill the day constructively with his newly available leisure time. This is especially the case when only one spouse has taken the leap. Here is a healthy creative option.

Having traveled frequently while working, I determined that, after I retired six years ago, one of the goals I wanted to achieve was to set foot in all fifty states. America is truly a beautiful place that Hashem has blessed with fertile plains, imposing mountain ranges and magnificent waterways.

My travelling for business and vacations had taken me to Asia, Central America, and Israel (more than twenty-five times) so I considered myself a seasoned traveler who could plan how to travel to places where an observant Jew might encounter difficulties. The key to a good trip is to plan meticulously and research availability of Jewish communities who are most often hospitable, willing to help answer any question and provide Shabbos hospitality when required.

With these principles in mind I set out to visit the 11 remaining states I had not yet set foot in.

In October/November of 2011 I decided to visit Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas (I had already been to Houston), Oklahoma and Arkansas. I set out using the internet to arrange a flight and rental car in New Orleans and contacted the AAA for maps and tour books. Using the internet to check out local Jewish communities and Kosher food establishments and the AAA tour books to determine what sights I was interested in seeing, I mapped out the trip on a day to day basis calculating how long the drives would be between the different states.

I also purchased and downloaded the latest version of maps and points of interest from my GPS provider to be sure that this key piece of equipment was up to date regarding new/closed roads and points of interest. A good portable GPS with real time traffic information is invaluable and eliminates the anxiety about getting directions, making last minute changes in plans and not being able to see street names/roads at night

when one finds oneself in the middle of nowhere. I loaded all my hotel, points of interest, Kosher restaurant information, etc. into my GPS device before I left. I also prepare a folder and spreadsheets with the information for each state.

On my trip South I flew to New Orleans and went directly to a Walmart to purchase a small cooler, tuna fish, vegetables, paper goods, etc. I checked into my hotel in Metairie (close to the Kosher Restaurants and Chabad shul) and drove to the French Quarter (not recommended for frum people), and the Riverwalk (there is a Holocaust Memorial designed by noted Israeli artist Agam). In the evening I davened at the small Chabad shul in Metairie and had dinner at Kosher Cajun.

The next day I drove to Mobile, Alabama and toured the USS Alabama, a de-commissioned battleship as well as the USS Drum, a WWII submarine. I enjoy military history, aeronautical displays and found these exhibits fascinating. I also enjoy baseball and was amazed to see that Bob Feller, a Hall of Fame pitcher, served on the Alabama during WWII. His bunk was marked with a signed baseball and glove. Also of note were the huge shells that were fired from the ships main large guns that could be accurately fired up to 21 miles. I had lunch at a picnic area adjoining the USS Alabama exhibit on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico.

I drove through the beautiful town of Mobile and saw some of the typical well kept Southern homes before driving on to Biloxi, Mississippi. In Biloxi, I walked along the beach and drove around town before heading back to New Orleans.

The experience of driving on the many causeways in and around New Orleans is also memorable. Imagine driving on a 26 mile long bridge where, for almost all of the time, the water is only a few feet below the bridge.

The next day I visited the World War II Museum and took the city trolley lines to the Garden District (an upscale neighborhood with unbelievably beautiful homes and the Touro synagogue -- one of the oldest continuously functioning synagogues in the United States) and the French

Market. I was disappointed that there were no public tours of the Superdome available.

On day four I drove to Dallas, Texas (about 500 miles) and picked up some Kosher supplies at an Albertson's supermarket. The next day I toured Cowboy Stadium, a 1.3 Billion dollar amazing edifice. Although I am a New York Jets fan, my son-in-law and grandchildren are avid Cowboy fans and were so jealous that Zaidy was actually on the field and in the locker room. I did, however, purchase an array of souvenirs to maintain Shalom Bayis.

My next stop was Dealey Plaza and the Texas School Book Depository from where Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated John F Kennedy. I remember exactly where I was on Nov. 22, 1963 when President Kennedy was assassinated. The excellent Sixth Floor Museum that details the events of that day is a must see.

After the museum I walked around the west side of downtown Dallas (there is also a Holocaust Museum in the area) and took the relatively new DART light rail system around various parts of the city. (I hope Yerushlayim's new light rail system works as well as the Dallas system.) A Senior Citizen all day pass is only two dollars and you can hop on and hop off at any point along the system; a great value.

The next day was Erev Shabbos and I spent a few hours and the Frontiers of Flight museum at Love Field (the old Dallas airport). One of the volunteers who flew in WWII gave me a personal tour of the exhibition that included the Apollo Seven space capsule.

Shabbos Hospitality was arranged through a contact I made in NYC who had been to Dallas. I thoroughly enjoyed Shabbos at Cong. Ohr Torah and the meals at the Rav's home Friday night and one of the mispalilim on Shabbos afternoon. The community is wonderfully warm and inviting.

It's a wonderful experience to see how frum families live outside the NYC metropolitan area. One must, of course, engage in Jewish geography, and I was amazed that one of the other local guests at lunch (a young Rebbe at the

yeshiva) knew my son-in-law who lives in Detroit. The young Rebbe's father, it turns out, is also best friends with my first cousin (who established the first Jewish day School in Dallas in the early 1960's).

Sunday morning I went to the first minyan and then directly to the nearby Tom Thumb Supermarket that has a strictly Kosher bakery and glatt Kosher takeout store. I purchased salads, sliced Turkey and some pareve pastries for the rest of my trip. I drove to Oklahoma City, checked into the hotel and walked to the National Monument commemorating the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in 1995. The Federal Park Rangers did an excellent job describing the memorial.

Monday the weather was projected to be stormy so an extra unplanned trip to Kansas was not in the cards. I spent the day visiting the Science Museum and the Crystal Bridge flora and cacti exhibition. That evening the hotel was jolted with a magnitude 4.7 after-shock, attributed to a larger earthquake that hit Oklahoma the prior week, and caused some serious damage in outlying areas. In addition there were several tornadoes that touched down about twenty miles from Oklahoma City, but there was, Baruch Hashem, no significant damage from this earthquake or the tornadoes.

Tuesday, I drove to Little Rock, Arkansas and in the afternoon drove to the State Capitol building, the Clinton Library and a scenic overview of the Arkansas River. I was astounded to see a full aisle of Kosher products in the local supermarket. Not having checked because I was only going to be in Little Rock overnight, I can only presume that there is a local frum community.

Wednesday I drove to New Orleans passing through beautiful parts of Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana where the highways were lined with beautiful trees whose leaves conveyed a wide spectrum of fall colors. I stopped at the visitor's center at historic Vicksburg overlooking the mighty Mississippi River.

Thursday I flew home concluding a wonderful trip driving 2018 miles and

(continues on Page 18)

Why Say “YES” To Gardening

In addition to simply being “fun” gardening has many health and therapeutic benefits for adults of all ages. It is a favorite activity for many seniors. If you have an older parent, you should encourage them to remain active in a hobby like gardening. It is

- An enjoyable form of exercise
- Increases levels of physical activity and helps mobility and flexibility
- Encourages use of all motor skills
- Improves endurance and strength
- Helps prevent diseases like osteoporosis
- Reduces stress levels and promotes relaxation
- Provides stimulation and interest in nature and the outdoors
- Improves wellbeing as a result of social interaction
- Can provide nutritious, home-grown produce.

Garden spaces, tools and equipment can be modified or adapted for all levels of mobility and strength, such as indoor gardens, using vertical planting to make garden beds accessible for planting and harvesting, raising beds to avoid bending and stooping, and finding light, adaptive tools and equipment.

Activities associated with cultivating a garden that seniors enjoy include:

- Digging
- Planting
- Watering
- Harvesting food and flowers
- Sensory enjoyment – smelling, touching, looking, listening, remembering
- Crafts and hobbies associated with plants
- Food preparation and eating own grown produce.

The column below was prepared for KHN by Jack Carman, a nationally recognized expert in designing Therapeutic Gardens for senior residences to meet older adults’ physical, psychological and social needs.

Raised Planter Gardens

As we age, we sometimes experience physical limitations in our daily activities. Simple bending, reaching and pulling can for some require the assistance of a cane, wheel chair or walker. Imagine how frus-

trating it is when an older adult is unable to enjoy a hobby they have participated in throughout their lives. Elevating the planting surface makes it possible for people to continue to enjoy gardening. And, for some, this is a passion. The size, shape and style of raised planters currently available are extensive limitless. You can also make your own, which can help to increase the fun of gardening.

The act of gardening extends past the physical act itself. There is evidence that maintaining our connection with nature is good for our health and well-being. A research study of patients recovering from gall bladder surgery has shown that the patients who had a view of nature were released from the hospital a day earlier than



those patients who did not have a view of the trees (“View Through a Window May Influence Recovery from Surgery”, Science, 1994). Studies have validated what we know to be true, which is that people are more comfortable in gardens as opposed to more urban settings. Access to nature has been shown to reduce stress and lower blood pressure. There is a natural absorption of Vitamin D when exposed to the sun for a short period of time. These and other health benefits are derived from participating in gardening activities, such as the use of raised planters.

It is important to look at who will be using the elevated garden, as well as where the containers will be used. Residents will benefit from the access raised planters can bring. The first step is to assess the needs of the people who will be using this special garden. The ability to work in the soil at an elevated height will enable them to

garden. Locating the raised planters near a door or patio area makes it easier to get to the containers, especially for someone using a wheelchair or assertive device. One of the many benefits of utilizing containers is that they are usually movable and can be easily relocated.

The fun begins with choosing the many raised planters. Leafing through magazines and visiting garden centers will reveal many of the options available today, while old-fashioned terra cotta pots are very familiar to avid gardeners and can bring back great memories, they are heavier and need to be protected in the colder climates during the winter. Composite stone or plastic pots are more durable. Plastic pots are often lighter and are made to resemble terra

the fun decisions on what to plant. This choice is only limited as a gardener’s own imagination. Most importantly, an essential part is to involve seniors in the planning. There may be some plants that they have grown that can be used. Annuals, perennials, bulbs, herbs and vegetables are a good consideration. Some of the better annuals to include are Marigolds, Dusty Miller, Sunflowers and Zinnias. If shade is a consideration, you may want to use Begonias, Coleus and Impatiens. Interesting perennials that will return each year, to the delight of every gardener, are Scarlet Sage, Black Eyed Susan, Blanket Flower, Carnations, Echinacea and Lobelia. A few of these will also attract to butterflies and/or hummingbirds. The containers should be a minimum of 15 inches deep for plants to survive in the northern regions.

The thoughtful selection of tools can help make gardening easier. Helen McConnell is a life long educator who has, in recent years, specialized in teaching others ways to make gardening easier. Helen has been challenged by scoliosis and arthritis and has developed ways to continue to pursue her avocation – gardening. At 70, Helen teaches classes on evaluating tools to meet the needs of gardeners with special needs.

One final note, before you start planting in raised planters, be sure to remember to provide easy access to water. Some containers, especially shallow pots and window boxes, dry out quickly in high temperatures. Check daily for signs of wilting in the summer months, as this is a good indication that the soil is drying out. One of the best moisture indicators is the human finger. Watering, checking the plants, weeding, tilling the soil and other gardening “chores” can become the residents’ daily activities. Emphasis should be placed on the need to survive. Very shortly, older participants will cherish their new job and plants will not just grow, but thrive under their care.

— **By Jack Carman, FASLA**

Jack Carman, FASLA, President of Design for Generations, is an acclaimed Landscape Architect Consultant, specializing in the development of the exterior environment of senior residences nationwide, and may be reached at 609-953-5881 or by e-mail jack@designforgenerations.com.

Leadership In Community Service

Below are outstanding contributions by individuals and organizations that are deserving of recognition and deemed as valuable community resources.

PRIDE OF JUDEA COMMUNITY SERVICES: RECHEL SCHOENFELD, LMSW, JBFCS Queens Regional Coordinator for Partners in Caring

RB: I was first introduced to you through a member of L'Orech Yomim's Advisory Board to assist in a particular case referral. Can you describe the problem and what you were able to do for the family?

I received a call after a tragic incident (in Queens) involving an elderly gentleman who was in a car accident, and his wife sadly, was killed. The husband was beside himself. The children, aside from mourning the tragic loss of their mother were very concerned for their father who appeared to be very depressed and becoming increasingly so. The community liaison from LOY called me seeking resources for this family. After speaking with you and then speaking with the son and doing a phone assessment it was clear that Pride of Judea had services which could support the bereaved father, who had been withdrawn, shown decreased appetite, lack of motivation and loss of interest in things. Because of the direct connection between LOY and Pride I was able to monitor the referral and ensure that it was a smooth process from intake onward.

RB: I had followed up with the family, and they were very much relieved to have the support of Pride of Judea. If I may ask, on a personal level, how did

you get involved in this field?

I went into social work to serve the community. We have a responsibility to help others and I enjoy doing so whether through direct intervention or in linking people with the resources which could help them. Kol Yisrael areivim zeh bazeh. I started out working at The New Homestead, an assisted living facility in Queens. Ultimately, I became the director of social work there and was very involved in marketing and admissions as well. It was an incredible experience! I loved working with the seniors and felt it was a very precious responsibility to care for people's loved ones. I became very close with many of the residents and collaborated with the activities director to create a dementia unit. Many years later, I'm very gratified working for JBFCS and being able to service a broad population of the Jewish community in a wide variety of ways.

RB: What is the scope of elder care service available at the Pride of Judea Counseling Center?

Under the aegis of JBFCS, we offer counseling services for all ages. Our hours here are Monday-Thursday 9-9, Friday 9-5. We are staffed by social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists and are sensitive to the special needs of the Orthodox Jewish community. The lead psychiatrist is Sabbath Observant.

Pride of Judea is located at 24302 Northern Boulevard, Douglaston,

NY 11362, and is accessible by mass transportation and by car. Our phone number is (718) 423-6200. Intake is extension 230, and my extension is 233. We are very attentive to maintaining the confidentiality of our clients.

JCC OF CONEY ISLAND SENIOR CENTER: RABBI MOSHE WIENER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island, under the leadership of Rabbi Wiener, was recently given recognition for its outstanding community service and ability to develop an innovative senior center, only one of two to receive such an award in the borough of Brooklyn. This award required support from Congressmen, Senators, the Mayor's Office, the Commissioner of the Department for the Aging, the Borough President, and a host of additional community leaders. This honor was bestowed based on the Center's prior performance and confidence level regarding its competency to deliver a new core set of services for

older New Yorkers. It will also serve as an active partner with the Mayor's plan for the revitalization of Coney Island.

Renamed the Coney Island Seaside Innovative Senior Center (ISC), it promises to "go well beyond the boundaries of providing traditional services to our borough's Baby Boomers, young seniors, as well as our 'super' seniors," states Marty Markowitz, Borough President.

On the operational side, the program is being administered by Ms. Grace Brandi, JCCGI's Supervising Senior Center Director. She was instrumental in developing the structure and outreach efforts to assure a successful project. It includes breakfast, lunch, transportation and a menu of innovative programming, such as use of fitness equipment and the swimming pool at a local gym.

For additional information, feel free to contact Ms. Brandi directly on her cell, (917) 250-6147, or call the general JCCGI office at (718) 449-5000, and ask for Rabbi Wiener's office.

LEISURE

On the Road Again (continued from Page 16)

costing about \$2500.

In November, 2012 I spent five days visiting Kansas and Nebraska (and Iowa and Missouri where I had been previously). I stayed in Overland Park, KS, davened at Cong BIAV and found a wonderful Kosher supermarket with prepared take-out less than a mile from my hotel.

I visited the Harry Truman Library and saw the Sefer Torah and Menorah that Chaim Weitzman gave President Truman when he recognized Israel as a new State. The World War I Museum is also a wonderful place to visit as is the Hallmark Card Corporate Headquarters where one can see how greeting cards are made.

I was also able to arrange a private tour of Kaufman Stadium (home of the Kansa City Royals) and got to go onto the field, into the dugout, clubhouse, press room and VIP boxes. For a sports fan this was an awesome tour.

I drove to Omaha and back in one day (about 300 miles) and toured the city by car. The "Bob" a pedestrian bridge named after Senator Bob Kerry that crosses the Missouri River – the boundary between Iowa and Nebraska.

Total driving during this trip was about 750 miles and the cost was about \$1,500.

I am now planning to visit the four remaining states on my list: North Dakota, Montana, Oregon and New Mexico.

I want to thank Hashem for the beautiful country He has blessed us with and my Aishes Chayil for allowing me to continue my journey through the states.

— **By Joe Farbowitz**

Between trips Mr. Farbowitz spreads his residence between the Jewish communities of Kew Gardens Hills and Staten Island.

A LESSON FROM A YESHIVA IN ISRAEL

Yeshivat HaKotel in cooperation with the **Israel Center** offers men - seniors in the Old City or in walking distance (or further if cab fare is covered) a Yeshiva bocher for an hour or two a week (in your home, at the Center, or elsewhere) to learn b'chavruta, talk, walk, play chess, checkers, Scrabble... If you are interested, call 560-9125

OU Israel Center TT 1043 55 B'har-B'chukotal 5773 issue

L'Orech Yomim receives inquiries from families regarding such assistance. We would be happy to coordinate with one yeshiva, or many, in providing a similar service for the community.

Info@lorechyomim.org.

Greetings From Tuscon

by MN, Flatbush, Brooklyn (continued from Letters, page 2)



World's largest solar telescope, the McMath-Pierce at Kitt Peak National Observatory, Arizona



On a Tucson trail

Caring for an Elder?

VISIT WWW.LORECHYOMIM.ORG
For timeless information and professional advice from renowned rabbonim and experts in the field.

Learn About:

- Kibud Av V'Eim: Meeting the Challenges and Opportunities of Fulfilling the Mitzva
- How to Choose a Nursing Home
- Hospice and End of Life
- Memory Loss, Aging, and Alzheimer's Disease
- Advocating for Yourself and Family Members
- Halachic Issues of Care at Home
- Home Safety Solutions
- Estate Planning K'Halacha

Rabbinic Presenters: Rabbi Yisroel Belsky, Rabbi Moshe Faskowitz, Rabbi Manfred Gans, Rabbi Joseph Grunblatt, Rabbi Avrohom Kelman,z"l, Rabbi Lowell Kronick, Rabbi Shloime Mandel, Rabbi Yehuda L. Oppenheimer, Rabbi Yaakov Pollak, Rabbi Yona Reiss, Rabbi Solomon Shapiro,z"l, Rabbi Aryeh Sokoloff, Rabbi Yosef Stern, Rabbi Hershel Schachter, Rabbi Dr. Moshe Noson Schreier, Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld, Rabbi Richard B. Weiss, MD, Rabbi Herschel Welcher, Rabbi Mordechai Willig.

Professional Presenters: Judy Brickman, CLSW, Allen Bennett, MD, Evelyn Baron, PT, MPA, Chaskel Bennett, Jacqueline Case, EMT, Hillel Flamer, MD, Cynthia Rosen, CSW, Reuven Becker, MBA, MS., Micheline Dugue, MD, Elizabeth Fine, MSW, LCSW, Gail Kuslansky, PhD.

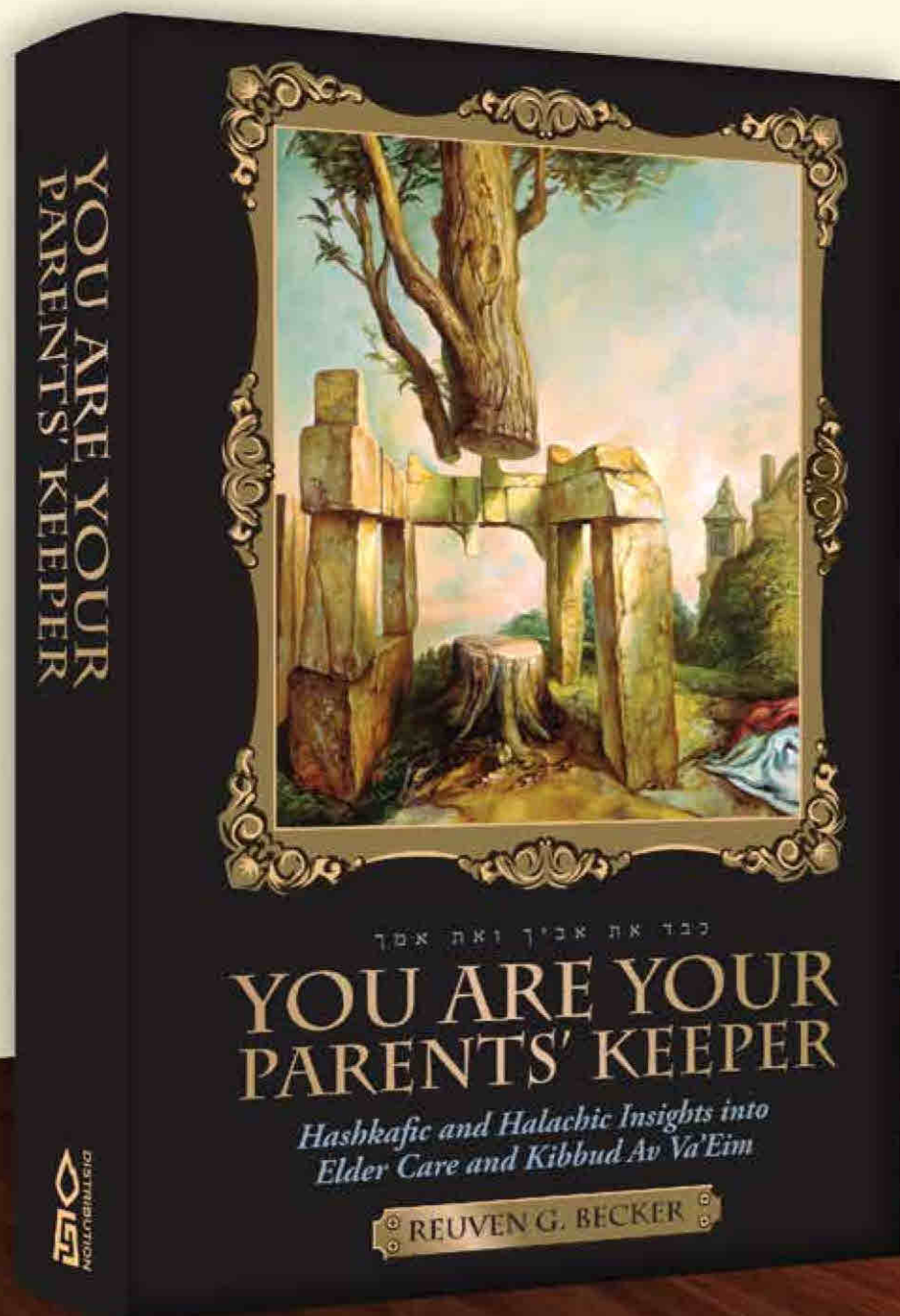
ESSENTIAL READING FOR EVERY JEWISH FAMILY!

This indispensable guide relating to elder care and Kibbud Av V'eim is pertinent to those whose parents are still living, as well as to those whose parents have passed on.

Among the topics addressed: Caring for a frail and sick parent, end of life issues, aveilus, honoring parents after their petirah, confronting the challenges of life, death, and illness, preparing a last will and testament according to halachic guidelines.

The sefer is filled with halachic and hashkafic material, essential Responsa from Sages past and present, along with important messages from Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch, Rabbi Shlomo Brevda, and Rabbi Yisroel Reisman.

With extensive references and footnotes, this authoritative text is an essential learning, resource, and reference work for Jewish households, counselors, Rabbis, educators, physicians, and related health care professionals.



Finally! The Complete Caregiver's Manual for the Orthodox Jewish Community!

RABBI ZEV GOLDBERG, PhD
Former President, Bikur Cholim of Queens- Retired (35 years)



A very good book. I recommend it.

RABBI MORDECHAI WILLIG
Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary
Young Israel of Riverdale, Beth Din of America



A beautiful job of compiling the requirements of honoring one's parents into a valuable single volume, especially with the inclusion of important new concerns resulting from contemporary advances.

RABBI HERSHEL SCHACHTER
Rosh Kollel, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary



I find it very worthy. It is well-organized, well-written, and presented in easy-to-understand language.

RABBI NOACH ISAAC OELBAUM
Minchas Chein, Khal Nachlas Yitzchok



I do not know of any other work available today that includes the halachic, hashkafic, and practical information about caring for the elderly as this book does.

RABBI MORDECHAI BISER, ESQ.
General Council, Agudath Israel of America



A wealth of information that can serve as a source book for rabbis. I was particularly impressed with the inclusion of the role of grandchildren and grandparents.

RABBI FABIAN SCHONFELD
Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills



I found it very useful. I just wish I had read it earlier when I was caring for my father. -NL



I recently got up from shiva and have been reading every book available. Nothing compares to the information and chizuk I received from reading Rabbi Becker's sefer. I learned important lessons on kibud av I was totally unaware of. -REBBITZIN N