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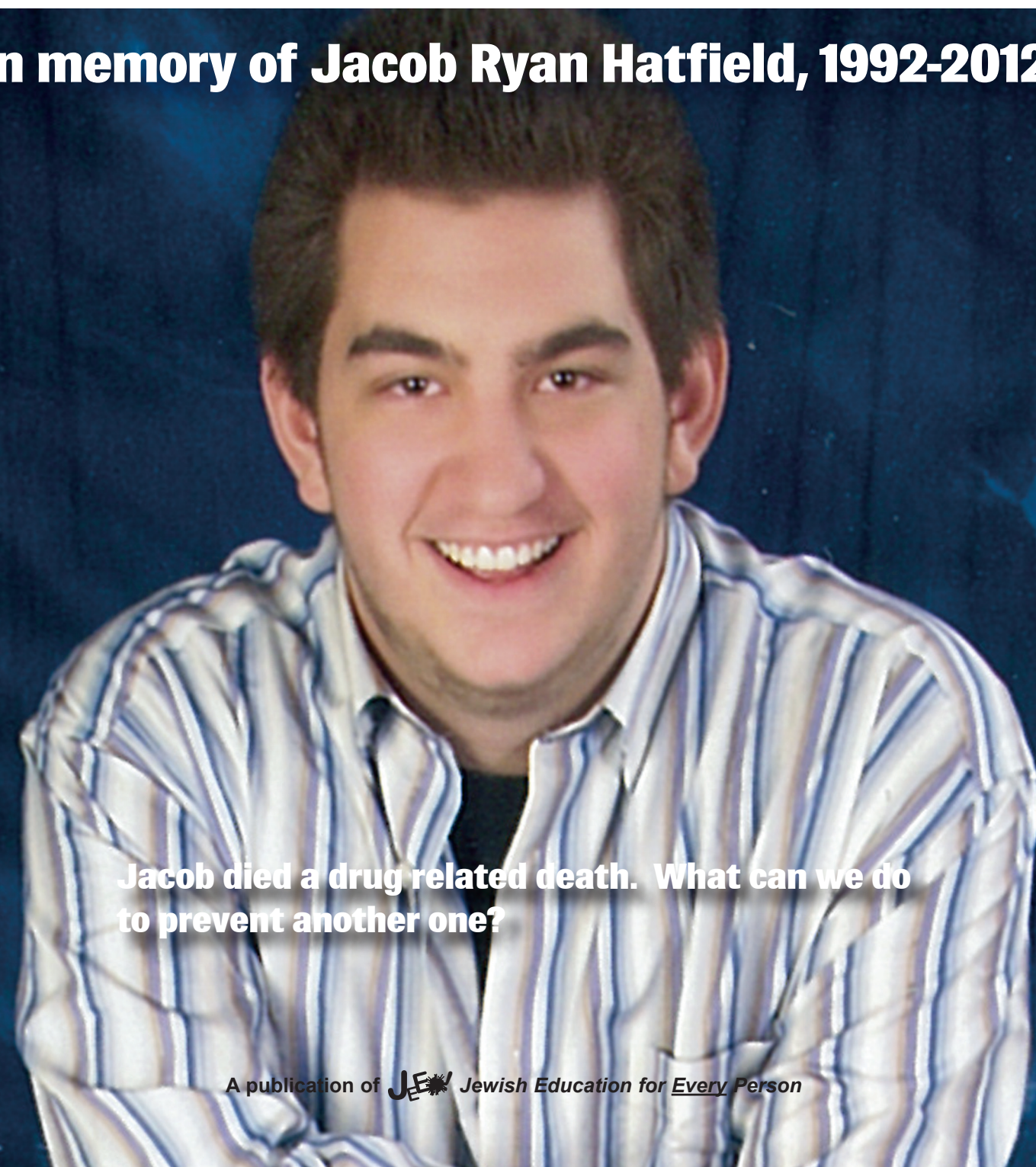
HEADLIGHTS

Shining lights: Jewish education for people with special challenges

Fall 2012

Vol. 4 • No. 2

In memory of Jacob Ryan Hatfield, 1992-2012



**Jacob died a drug related death. What can we do
to prevent another one?**

A publication of **JEEP!** Jewish Education for Every Person

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Jewish Optimism

ART BUCHWALD - A TOO SOON GOODBYE
By Suzette Martinez Standring



Art Buchwald died on January 17, 2007, and the number of condolences I received was surprising. In February 2006, I had spent two days in hospice with him back when he was expected to “die at any time” to present the lifetime achievement award on behalf of the National Society of Newspaper Columnists.

His recent death reminded me of those 48 hours, which profoundly changed my view of a final exit.

He was the master of Being Present. Only Art Buchwald could make hospice sound like a fun getaway. In one of his Washington Post columns, he wrote, “I’m having the time of my life.”

While in hospice, Art savored the outpouring of love, attention, gifts and visits. It was like a cocktail party, but with nurses. Celebrity guests talked up dinner parties they wanted him to attend, and why not? That’s how well he seemed back then, holding court, making jokes.

And that meant eating his way to freedom. No diets in hospice. Cholesterol? Fahgetaboutit. I’m on my way out, gimme an éclair. I remembered a go-round with gourmet cannolis. “Go ‘head, have one,” he said, as he happily tucked into two.

Thousands of columns over five decades, generations of readers, Art is the Patron Saint of Political Satire. Yet he was so self-effacing about his comic genius.

I once asked him why he chose to write humor.

“It’s all I’ve ever done, what else am I qualified to do?” he said.

In his video obituary in The New York Times, recorded while he was still in hospice, Art said, “I was put on earth to make people laugh.”

During my two days with him, not once did he ever exhibit fear or voice regrets. Instead, he only focused on

the immense gratitude he had for having achieved his life purpose.

I never saw him again after February 2006, although we exchanged occasional emails. He was happy Jennifer and I had become good friends.

His miraculous recovery sent him home from hospice in July 2006. Granted a second act, he wrote about his experiences in his final book, Too Soon To Say Goodbye. His daughter loaned me the book’s galley proofs to read. It was hilarious at times, as well as searing and painfully intimate. If you’re going to die, it’s the book to read. There’s nobody better than Art Buchwald to hold your hand, and he wanted to offer that before he left. What a giver.

And now he’s gone for real.

When I heard the news of his passing, like millions of others, I felt bereft. Yet if his role modeling taught me anything, it’s that love can send you toward the light with a twinkle in your eye.

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Editorial
Jacob rests in peace but can we?
“Hatfield, Jacob Ryan, age 20, June 30, 2012
Drug-related death”

Substance abuse is a plague running wild among us. Either we end it or it will end us.

Jewish law* requires us to take a lesson from such a tragedy as Jacob Hatfield’s, as the verse in Ecclesiastes states, “And the living shall put it to his heart.”

How must Jacob’s death change us in a deep and permanent way? How can we change the world, beginning with our own Jewish world, to prevent such tragedies in the future?

Jacob could have been our child, grandchild, friend or neighbor (See the interview with Jacob’s mom on page 4). The dangers of substance abuse, addiction and self-destructive behaviors are everywhere. This is a war and the battlefield is in our own living rooms.

The world seems to be going in two opposite directions at the same time. On the one hand, we can clearly see the light at the end of the tunnel: miracle cures, communist countries choosing democracy, the entire Torah available and user friendly at the press of a button, tyrants being deposed, and incredible technology. Our sages say that “The time of your redemption has arrived.”**

On the other hand, among other tragedies, teen drug use has reached epidemic levels:

“In a new report on drug, alcohol and tobacco use among teens in the U.S., the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University finds that **75% of all high school students** have used alcohol, tobacco or either legal or illicit drugs and that **20% of these adolescents are addicted**.

The data also...links early substance use to addiction later in life: **90% of Americans who are currently addicted started smoking, drinking or using drugs before age 18**. A quarter of those who begin using addictive substances at these early ages become addicted as adults, while only one in 25 who start using these substances after age 21 does.” (healthland.time.com/2011/06/29/teens-and-drugs)

There’s a dangerous mindset out there, especially among young people, that says, “Get high now, don’t worry about possible consequences.”

What can we as individuals, families, community, laymen, professionals, and clergy do to change this mindset and halt the plague of substance abuse and deaths among our youth as well as adults ?

We can all start by learning what makes addiction, prevention and recovery tick. Please read this special issue thoroughly. Then get involved. In a world war, each individual’s efforts count.

With careful thought, meaningful talk, serious commitment and well-planned, coordinated actions, surely G-d will bless our efforts to turn the tide against substance abuse and save...our own children.

*Maimonides, Laws of mourning
**Yalkut Shimoni, B’suras Hageulah

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Jewish Education for Every Person

Our Vision: A Jewish community in which **every person** has access to our spiritual inheritance and can use it to reach his or her full potential.

Our Mission: To help local people with special needs access Jewish education and connections to empower them to better overcome their life challenges.

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- **Seniors** in nursing homes and those who are homebound
- **Adults** with disabilities
- **Patients** in hospitals
- **Alcoholics and addicts** wishing to obtain or maintain recovery using Jewish spiritual tools and support

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Feel free to contact us about Headlights or Jewish education: rabbi@jewisheducate.org
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Jake H: A vibrant life, a tragic death – what can we do?

By Miriam Karp

I didn't know Jacob Hatfield, may he rest in peace. But hearing about the tragic drug related death of this vibrant young man was shocking and painful. After talking with his mom, Sandy Hatfield, and learning about her gregarious, loving and giving son, through our intense laughter, tears, anger, pain and sighs, I feel the irreparable loss so much more.

Come learn a bit about a very special boy. Honor his memory by learning what you can do to help prevent such losses. Jacob was a cliché buster, in his life and in his death.

The cliché: Many of us might think--this couldn't happen to MY child because: they know they're loved, they have good self-esteem and are confident, they have warm and loving parents, siblings, family and friends, because they had a good Jewish education. Jacob had all that.

Cliché buster: It really happens. Good kids, great kids, can fall between the cracks. Growing up is hard and painful. The system doesn't always support teens and young adults well, even the mental health system. We've got to have our eyes wide open, look for signs of trouble in the kids we love, and help build better, stronger, wiser supports. More on that later.

But first, about Jacob, or as he was known around Indian Hills High School, Jake H., was a confident, warm, fun loving guy. He earned Rockwern Academy's first Fellowship Award, which was voted on by fellow students, given to the student who best embodied the true spirit of giving and caring.

In 2004, Jacob, then a junior high student, at an age notorious for self-absorption, spent 685 (!) hours volunteering within the Jewish community. He worked with Judy Seltzer, helping with the Meals on Wheels. Almost every day, Jacob was at the JCC, assembling food packages, then learning to help with the cooking. On Fridays, he helped deliver the packages, bringing food and a cheerful spirit to the seniors. During that summer, he helped the Rockwern maintenance team with school repairs. He also was an avid volunteer at Cedar Village, visiting residents and transporting them to their activities, and showing them how to use the computer.

This incredible dedication to others did not go unnoticed. The next year, at the Rockwern Board

meeting, he was presented with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award, and received a special pin and letter from President Bush, commending him for his community spirit and action.

Maybe he was a "goodie two shoes," kind, but shy or socially awkward? Not this guy. Sandy describes Jacob as having "more self confidence in one pinky that most had in their entire body."

From a young age, Jacob loved nothing more than to play guitar and sing, entertain and bring happiness to others. She remembers him "standing on a chair, singing, doing magic tricks, and just making kids happy." In Rockwern, and later at Indian Hill, "he was friends with everyone. If someone was sad, he'd be sure to go over and ask, "Why are you sad? How can I help you?" He cared about every person.

Even as a young child, in the JCC nursery, he was a busy little guy. Jacob would cheerfully wave, "Bye, Mom," and go off to start his day. When Sandy returned, the teachers invariably told her, "It was a wonderful day. Jacob led the whole class." They added, "We're going to be out of a job if Jacob keeps leading everything and taking charge."

Jacob truly loved Judaism, Sandy recalls." Sometimes when I came to pick him up at Rockwern, he'd be sitting

alone in the sanctuary, just quiet. After his Bar Mitzvah at Valley Temple, Rabbi Kopnick said that Jacob 'was one of most pleasurable kids to work with because he loved and believed in Judaism.'"

What changed? What happened? How did one so full of life and promise suffer a drug- related death?

Towards the end of high school, Jacob seemed depressed. As anyone who has grown up knows, it's hard. Many ups and downs. Grown up yearnings, childlike fears. Hormones. Intense social and societal pressures. Rough waters to navigate for many kids, especially extra sensitive ones with big hearts.

Sandy noticed, and took him for counseling. The therapist refused to work with Jacob unless he was on medication. They went to a psychiatrist, who did not even look him in the eye, just dispensed a prescription. The medication made him groggy, he stopped it, and therefore couldn't get counseling.

**Cincinnati Jewish Recovery Sober Shabbos Dinners and Holiday Gatherings**

Our Recipe for fun/ understanding/bonding/ support/ good eats/ recovery insights and Jewish learning

Ingredients:

2 dozen hot dogs

2 bowls of overflowing challah dough

20 sincere nice cool people in recovery spiced with assorted friends and family

1 large bowl rice

2 large bowls stir fried vegetables

Sharing recovery stories and questions

2 dozen hot dog buns

Games and conversation openers to get everyone thinking and sharing

2 watermelons

1 pot chicken soup

1 roaring bonfire and marshmallows

Sticky hands

Delicious fresh baked challah

Mix together. Divide in three portions, stir and serve, one batch at Lag B'Omer BBQ, one batch at July Sober Shabbos dinner and challah baking, one batch at August Sober Shabbos challah baking and Chinese dinner.

Yield: much satiation, new friendships and networking, Jewish recovery based inspiration, and stronger recovery. And a good time.

Cincinnati Jewish Recovery recently had three unique and well attended holiday recovery gatherings. For **Lag B'Omer** about 25 people gathered in the Karp yard for a tasty BBQ, followed by stories and marshmallows around a bonfire.

Many participants have been asking to learn to bake challah, so in **July** and **August**, the CJR Sober Shabbos dinners first had a challah baking session, before Shabbos. We did the mitzvah of "taking challah," braided, shaped and baked fragrant challahs, which were served fresh out of the oven for our Shabbos meals.

In addition, our Sober Shabbos of July had a new twist- Chinese themed! Featured dishes included rice, veggies, sesame green beans and noodles, Oriental chicken and marinated tofu to boot.

But not to worry- more than the good and plentiful food is always the warmth, sharing and life- enhancing bonds that emerge as our own recovery community is created around the table is a wonderful thing to be part of. Join us. The Sober Shabbos and holiday dinners are open to all people seeking Jewish support in their efforts to deal with the impact which addictions have had on their lives, directly or indirectly.

October's event

Sober In-the-Sukkah Luncheon
Cincinnati Jewish Recovery-Friendship House



Sunday Oct 7, 1:00 pm

7325 Elbrook Ave, Amberley Village, 45237 (1/4 mile north of Section Rd)

Get together with friends in recovery and meet new people. Delicious home cooked meal in the sukkah. Relaxed, joyful and accepting atmosphere; enjoyable and useful conversation.

No alcohol served; Friends and family are welcome.

RSVP: 513-733-4400, Rabbi Yaakov Karp or RabbieJewishEducate.org.

Our next event will be the Sober Havdalah Dinner, Saturday night, Nov 3, 8:00 pm



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ISRAEL BONDS HIGH HOLIDAY APPEALS TO ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT IN
“A NATION OF HERITAGE, COURAGE AND INSPIRATION”

NEW YORK – The 2012 Israel Bonds High Holiday appeals, a cornerstone of the Bonds program since the organization’s founding in 1951, will be conducted in synagogues throughout the country on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

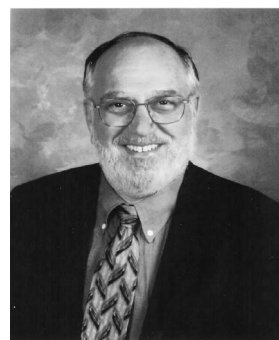
Bonds President and CEO Izzy Tapoohi said the theme of the appeals – *This is Israel* – “will encourage worshippers to invest in a nation of heritage, courage and inspiration. At the same time,” he added, “they will have the opportunity to acquire a dependable investment well-suited for these uncertain economic times.”

During High Holiday services, worshippers will be presented with tab cards enabling them to designate the type and amount of the Israel bond they intend to purchase. The Bonds organization currently offers a choice of fixed rate bonds or floating rate bonds. Available instruments provide a choice of maturities, as well as income-generating bonds or bonds paying interest upon maturity.

Individuals indicating they wish to purchase Israel bonds will have the opportunity to do so online. Since its launch in late September 2011, sales via the online site have exceeded \$12.3 million.

Further information about the High Holiday appeals can be obtained by calling your local Israel Bonds/Development Corporation for Israel office or visiting Israelbonds.com.

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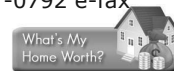


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Life went on. He started Raymond Walters College, where he earned a 3.125 average, and seemed to be doing better. “If he was upset”, Sandy says,” he kept it inside.”

In the spring of 2012, Jacob and a girlfriend broke up. He was depressed. Sandy called a prominent agency for help, but was turned away unless she could secure funding from her insurance or cash. She called several times, pleading for help or a reference. None was forthcoming. She was told, “Good luck.”

She knew he was smoking some marijuana, wasn’t thrilled, but tried to keep an eye on it, and was very proactive and involved, having Jacob and friends hang out at her home. As every parent knows, keeping the door and line of communication open is so important, even when, **especially when** young adults are too old to be kept on a short leash, and may not be doing exactly what the parents want.

“Come June,” she recalled,” something was different. All of a sudden, he was up. Happy. Energized. I didn’t know why, at first. ‘Great day, mom. No time to talk,’ he said as he bounded out the door. Then one day I found a cut off plastic casing from a pen. I touched the end with my moistened fingertip and put it to my lips. They went numb.”

Cocaine.

She confronted him. “Jacob, what in G-d’s name are you doing with the coke. Get off it,” she demanded, she pleaded. “It’s ok, mom, I’m not doing that much,” he kept saying.

Sandy suddenly interrupted her story to backtrack, twenty years. “The night that Jacob was born, I lay with him. I rubbed his back, kissed him and talked, telling him all my hopes and dreams for him.

The night before he left us, June 29th, mirrored that first night. We were hanging out on the couch, watching a TV show together. I rubbed his back a little, and remembered. ‘I remember when your back was so small, the size of my hand.’ I kissed his head. ‘Just stay home with me,’ I urged. His phone rang.

I think maybe G-d knew that was going to be my last night with him. The first night with him/ the last night with him. They were so similar. Just being with him. Just loving him.

He answered the phone and got up to go out. ‘Jacob, please don’t go,’ I asked once more. ‘No, mom,’ he replied, ‘I’m going tos.’

Later that night it was storming, so I sent him a text. ‘Come home now or sleep over and come home in the morning.’ He decided to sleep there.

He didn’t wake up.”

This brave mom, this broken mom, is trying to absorb the unthinkable, the unimaginable. We are sitting together and talking only one short month later. Yet she’s already found the strength within herself to take action, to see what she can do to make sure that the next kid out there isn’t a victim.

She’s working with the Hamilton County Sherriff’s Department, to track his calls and identify the fatal substance; maybe cocaine, maybe pills, and their source. Ironically, Jacob wanted to go into law enforcement, perhaps become an FBI crime scene analyst.

Sandy was a hands-on mom. Even when she knew her son was partying, she had him and his friends come to her house, so she knew where they were, and could keep an eye on things. She’d take away keys, have them sleep it off there. Jacob’s friends called her one of the coolest moms.

All those friends are now in shock. Texting and calling her from the cemetery, where they are hanging out. Instead of partying, they’re thinking, maybe praying.

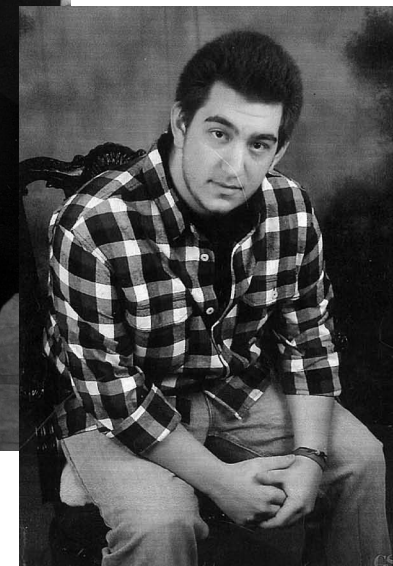
Sandy somehow had the presence of mind to choose Jacob’s eight closest friends and cousins to be his pallbearers, instead of family and her friends. “I needed them to feel they were carrying their friend and their leader. I did it hoping they would stop the drugs. They had to be a part of this

and feel this.”

Sandy is working to develop a nonprofit foundation to help kids in that vulnerable and overwhelming age of 17-25 to have a safe place to get support. Plans are still in formation. If you would like more information, contact Mrs. Sandy Hatfield at sandylee1960@gmail.com.

May Jacob’s memory be for a blessing. May his family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

In the aftermath of Jacob’s tragic and untimely death, JEEP- Cincinnati Jewish Recovery is working together with Sandy to organize a round table steering committee to explore if we as a Jewish community doing all we can to educate and support our youth and families about the dangers and realities of drug and alcohol abuse and addiction.



It is well documented that culturally specific and faith based support is highly effective, and the lack of it can hamper the success of recovery efforts. Therefore, it is highly important that we continue to develop and make available specific Jewish community tools and support for education, for youth dabbling with abusive substances, for those in the throes of addiction, and for the brave souls struggling to stay in recovery.

A select group of experts in recovery, addictions counselors, addicts in long term recovery, social workers, Mrs. Hatfield, educators, Rabbi Karp are meeting to share and brainstorm. Working together and sharing resources can only strengthen our collective efforts in this critical battle.

What can we do?

Parents (or relatives and friends of other kids):

1. Watch your kids. Watch their highs and lows, if it's a bell curve, too much up and down, too many and too quick highs and lows, that's an indicator. Know who their friends are.
2. Look around your house and yard. Straws, empty pens, weird substances and tissues could be red flags. Go on the web and know the basics of the drug scene. Know the paraphernalia.
3. Kids have to have support, love and attention from both parents. Dads especially. Make sure you hug your children and tell them you love them. Daily.
4. If you see your child is depressed, don't wait for it to work itself out. Get help. Work the system. Don't take no for an answer. If one agency can't help you, insist on referrals.

Crisis Lines:

- Children's Hospital Psychiatry 513-636-4124
- Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) 513-792-1272
- Talbert House 513-321-8286
- Suicide Hotline 513-281-2273
- Mobile Crisis of Hamilton County (will come to your home) 513-584-5098

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Happy New Year

Story

Letters from the Heart

It was Yom Kippur Eve, back in a little shtetl, a Jewish town in Poland. The congregation stood hushed, waiting for their rabbi to start the awesome Kol Nidre prayer, and usher in the holiest day of the year, a day of special closeness to G-d, atonement and forgiveness.

The rabbi stood quietly, his creamy white tallis prayer shawl covering his head. He had a serious and tense expression. Everyone sensed his distress, and they sung the prayers with a special intensity and underlying fear. Was the rabbi sensing some impending danger or trouble for the Jewish people, at this special time of heavenly judgment, G-d forbid?

The rabbi seemed lost in thought. Suddenly, a gentle smile lit up his face. He asked the cantor to start the evening prayers. Everyone felt a sense of relief. They knew something important was happening.

At the end of Yom Kippur, the rabbi explained. "I saw above that the fate of the Jewish people did not look rosy. Accusing forces spoke against us, severe decrees hovered. Things looked grim.

But then, a simple young man appeared in my vision. Baruch was an orphan, raised by a kind hearted Polish nobleman. The boy never knew he was Jewish, until one day neighborhood bullies taunted him. He came home crying and asked his adopted father why they called him a dirty Jew.

The nobleman told him the whole truth about his fine parents. He gave him a small velvet bag, which the young man opened with trembling hands. Inside were a tallis,

tefillin, and a High holiday prayer book, or machzor; his entire inheritance.

Baruch wanted to connect with his fellow Jews. He soon saw some traveling to the nearest Jewish village to celebrate Yom Kippur. Baruch went along with them. They got to the synagogue just as the haunting melody of Kol Nidre was beginning. He slipped inside and took a place near the back. He saw all the Jews praying and wanted desperately to join in. He took out his machzor, but couldn't read a word.

Tears streamed down his cheeks. He thrust the machzor to the heavens and cried, 'G-d! You know I can't read. I don't know what to say. But I love you! Please take the letters and words and form the right prayers for me!'"

The rabbi looked around at his spellbound congregants. "And the utter sincerity of Baruch broke the decree, which hung over us all. His loving simple prayer burst through the Heavenly Gates and carried our prayers aloft with his. Because of Baruch, we will all be sealed for a truly sweet and good year."

We naturally tend to think that we are doing the more simple, perhaps delayed or disabled members of our community, a favor by caring for them. But up there, in the Word of Truth, things aren't always what they seem to us. The wholehearted sincerity, the simple faith and joy of someone less sophisticated, might be just what's needed to bring G-ds bountiful blessings down for us all. Adapted from The Complete Story of Tishrei, by Nissan Mindel

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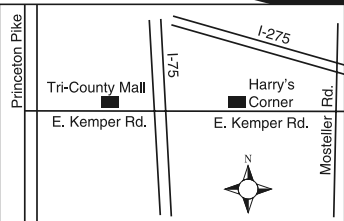
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Special Children

From the Moon and Back

by Sheva Givre

Editor’s note: Sheva Givre is the mother of three lovely children. Her youngest, Rozie, now three, has, as Sheva puts it, “something extra, that little extra chromosome,” also known as Down Syndrome. Sheva blogs and shares delicious photos of her family life and warm and honest insights at myshtub.blogspot.com. This entry is from 10.18.10.

When my Rozie was born, I did not struggle with her diagnosis as much as others struggled in those first days. One of the things that kept me grounded was the Jewish concept about neshamas (souls) like my Rozie. She is considered in many Jewish texts, including the Tanya (where i found my solace), to be a very special neshama/soul without flaws, and because this soul is so holy and pure a typical body cannot handle such a being (I’m sure I butchered that explanation, but you get the idea). I found joy in this concept and felt no sadness or remorse for this special neshama. But time has passed and the idea of raising someone so lofty can be a bit tiresome on my soul. It’s a big weight to bear.



I know a family in my community here with a beautiful teenage daughter who also has Down syndrome. She is the dream child we all hope our designer babies grow up to be like. She goes to typical high school with tons of friends, she dresses so cute and trendy (by her own accord), and is social with phenomenal speech, as clear as day. I ask her mother often for secrets and tricks, and one thought stuck with me. She told me to treat my daughter just like the rest of my kids. She told me in so many words, “I know she is ‘holy’ and all that, and it is a strong belief in our religion, but I think my daughter’s success has a lot more to do with being treated just like I treat the rest of my kids.”

With that I took on a new attitude. I also try to give Rozie equal treatment as I do my other peanuts; same expectation, same hopes, same wishes.

Sometimes though, it’s impossible to escape this “special neshama”...

Recently some medical issues have been lurking my way, and me, the under-worrier that I am likes to ignore things, but my doctors do not and have been concerned. Obviously, I am feeling a bit worried, scared and apprehensive. I try my best to keep a sense of normalcy in our home. When things are not quite right, kids need normal.

My Rozie though has a little something about her (see above) that doesn’t let anything slide. On my way to the doctor the other morning I was sitting on the floor getting things ready for the day, feeling pretty down inside, but with a smile on my face for the kids, on the outside. My Rozie crawled over to me, climbed into my lap and hugged me. A full blown arms stretched and squeezing me kind of hug, and she stayed there forever, just hugging me.

Why is this so strange?

- 1. Rozie has never climbed into my lap before, she just hasn’t learned to climb yet.
- 2. Rozie has never hugged me before, never; she just wasn’t at that milestone of understanding yet.
- 3. For Rozie, my wild girl, who likes to be on the move, never ever sits on my lap, little head on my chest, just to hug. This girl is usually fighting with every bit of strength she has to be put down on the floor so she can find the nearest choking hazard to put in her mouth.

Does this mean I need to dress her in robes and schlep her around in a mini throne like a prophetess or something? No. I still will scold this little pickle that thinks my glasses are meant to be ripped of my face, and

yes Rozie, naps are required, not optional.

But I do find joy in getting little glimpses of what a special little girl G-d has sent me, even when she is yanking her father’s beard for the 400th time that day.

I love you my Rozie from the moon and back 100 million trillion times over.

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Stages and Warning Signs of Substance Abuse

Behaviors parents might notice if their teen or preteen is using drugs.

from The Complete Guide to Family Health, Nutrition & Fitness

Experts in adolescent substance problems have identified a common progression of alcohol- and drug-related behaviors that moves from bad to worse. While it is not a foregone conclusion that everyone who experiments with drugs will progress to the worst stages of involvement, a child can incur a lot of damage before parents or others notice that something is wrong. Secretive adolescent behavior and skillful lying, combined with parental denial ("No one in our family could have a drug problem!"), may delay identification of the problem. While paranoia and daily inquisitions around the breakfast table are counterproductive, wise parents will keep their eyes and ears open and promptly take action if they see any signs that a problem may be developing.

Stage one: Experimentation — entering the drug gateway

Characteristics:

- Use is occasional, sporadic, often unplanned — weekends, summer nights, unsupervised parties.
- Use is precipitated by peer pressure, curiosity, thrill-seeking, desire to look and feel grown-up.
- Gateway drugs are usually used — cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, possibly inhalants.
- A drug high is easier to experience because tolerance has not been developed.

Parents may notice:

- Tobacco or alcohol on the breath or intoxicated behavior.
- Little change in normal behavior between episodes of drug use.

Stage two: More regular drug use — leaving the land of the living

Characteristics:

- Alcohol and other drugs are used not only on weekends but also on weekdays, and not only with friends but when alone.
- Quantities of alcohol and drugs increase as tolerance develops; hangovers become more common.
- Blackouts — periods of time in which drugs or alcohol prevent normal memories from forming — may occur. "What happened last night?" becomes a frequent question.
- More time and attention are focused on when the next drug experience will occur.
- Fellow drinkers/drug users become preferred companions.

Parents may notice:

- A son or daughter will be out of the house later at night, overnight or all weekend.
- Unexplained school absences and deteriorating school performance.
- Outside activities such as sports are dropped.
- Decreased contact with friends who don't use drugs.
- Disappearance of money or other valuables.
- Withdrawal from the family, and an increasingly sullen and hostile attitude.
- The user is caught in one or many lies.

Stage three: Waist deep in the mire of addiction — and sinking

Characteristics:

- Alcohol and drugs become the primary focus of attention.
- Becoming high is a daily event.
- A willingness to try more dangerous drugs or combinations of drugs.
- More money is spent each week on drugs. Theft or dealing may become part of drug-seeking behavior.

- Increasing social isolation and loss of contact with non-drug-using friends. More drug use in isolation, rather than at parties or with other users.

Parents may notice the behaviors listed earlier, plus:

- Escalation of conflicts at home.
- Loss of nearly all control of the adolescent.
- Possible discovery of a stash of drugs at home.
- Arrest(s) for possession of and/or dealing drugs or for driving while intoxicated.



Stage four: Drowning in addiction

Characteristics:

- Constant state of intoxication. Being high or stoned is routine, even at school or a job (if the user even bothers to attend).
- Blackouts increase in frequency.
- Physical appearance deteriorates, with noticeable weight loss, infection, and overall poor self-care.
- Injectable drugs may be part of the user's routine.
- Involvement in casual sexual relationships, at times in exchange for drugs.
- User will likely be involved with theft, dealing and other criminal activity.
- Guilt, self-hatred and thoughts of suicide increase.

Parents are likely to deal with:

- Complete loss of control of adolescent's behavior and escalation of conflict, possibly to the point of violence.
- Ongoing denial by the user that drugs are a problem.
- Increasing problems with the law and time spent with police, attorneys, hearings, court officials, etc.
- Other siblings negatively affected because the family is preoccupied or overwhelmed by consequences of the drug user's behavior.

This descent into drug hell is a nightmare that no parent envisions while rocking a newborn baby or escorting an eager 5-year-old to kindergarten. But it can happen in any neighborhood, any church, any family, even when parents have provided a stable and loving home environment. In fact, it is often in such homes that a drug problem goes undetected until it's reached an advanced and dangerous stage. *This can't be happening; not in my house!* But if it does, parental guilt, anger and depression can undermine the responses necessary to restore order.

Adapted from the *Complete Guide to Family Health, Nutrition & Fitness*, a Focus on the Family book published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Copyright © 2006, Focus on the Family. All rights reserved. International copyright secured. Used by permission.

an asset checklist

Many people find it helpful to use a simple checklist to reflect on the assets young people experience. This checklist simplifies the asset list to help prompt conversation in families, organizations, and communities. *NOTE: This checklist is not intended nor appropriate as a scientific or accurate measurement of developmental assets.*

- 
- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. I receive high levels of love and support from family members. | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. I go out with friends with nothing special to do two or fewer nights each week. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. I can go to my parent(s) or guardian(s) for advice and support and have frequent, in-depth conversations with them. | <input type="checkbox"/> 21. I want to do well in school. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. I know some nonparent adults I can go to for advice and support. | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. I am actively engaged in learning. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. My neighbors encourage and support me. | <input type="checkbox"/> 23. I do an hour or more of homework each school day. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. My school provides a caring, encouraging environment. | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. I care about my school. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. My parent(s) or guardian(s) help me succeed in school. | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. I read for pleasure three or more hours each week. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. I feel valued by adults in my community. | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. I believe it is really important to help other people. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. I am given useful roles in my community. | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. I want to help promote equality and reduce world poverty and hunger. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. I serve in the community one hour or more each week. | <input type="checkbox"/> 28. I can stand up for what I believe. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. I feel safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood. | <input type="checkbox"/> 29. I tell the truth even when it's not easy. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. My family sets standards for appropriate conduct and monitors my whereabouts. | <input type="checkbox"/> 30. I can accept and take personal responsibility. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. My school has clear rules and consequences for behavior. | <input type="checkbox"/> 31. I believe it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring my behavior. | <input type="checkbox"/> 32. I am good at planning ahead and making decisions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. | <input type="checkbox"/> 33. I am good at making and keeping friends. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15. My best friends model responsible behavior. | <input type="checkbox"/> 34. I know and am comfortable with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16. My parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers encourage me to do well. | <input type="checkbox"/> 35. I can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17. I spend three hours or more each week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. | <input type="checkbox"/> 36. I try to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18. I spend three hours or more each week in school or community sports, clubs, or organizations. | <input type="checkbox"/> 37. I believe I have control over many things that happen to me. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19. I spend one hour or more each week in religious services or participating in spiritual activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> 38. I feel good about myself. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 39. I believe my life has a purpose. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 40. I am optimistic about my future. |

Healing

Poetry & Medicine

One of the foundations of Judaism is being sincere and in touch with our inner self. Modern medicine has discovered that expressing our inner self in words is not only spiritually healthy but can promote our physical health as well.

The following is a review of a PBS documentary, premiered 2008.

Healing Words: Poetry & Medicine tells the stories of patients whose lives have been dramatically changed by the incorporation of poetry into their recovery process. This film affirms that poetry and art can build understanding and compassion between doctor and patient and help facilitate healing among the most critically ill.

Healing Words reminds viewers that the best medicine involves a doctor at the bedside listening sincerely to a patient. The film follows Dr. John Graham-Pole and poet John Fox as they enter hospital rooms and help patients write poems as part of the healing process. The film shows how compassion can flourish in the unlikely of places: a sterile hospital room.

Since 1990, the Arts in Medicine (AIM) program at Shands Hospital at the University of Florida has used arts therapy to help patients and their families deal with the sorrows, losses and unexpected joys that accompany illness and recovery. As part of the worldwide arts therapy movement, AIM supports therapy in the form of dance, music, drama, visual arts and creative writing.

Healing Words highlights the poetry component of this remarkable program by following the journey of poetry therapist John Fox from room to room as he gently coaxes words from patients, many of whom have never written poetry before.

The program's results are touching, poignant and always surprising. Every patient has a different story. For Bertis, a teenager who suffers from sickle-cell anemia, dance therapy helps relieve her pain when conventional drugs no longer work. Together with John Fox and dance therapist Jill Sonke, she composes a poem that describes how dancing—even while confined to her bed—is a transcendent experience. Jack, a Vietnam veteran awaiting a heart transplant, struggles with feelings of unworthiness. For Jack and many other patients, writing poems releases private feelings. For some, poetry captures an essential truth about themselves—a memory from childhood or a moment of insight—and deepens their understanding of their lives and their illnesses. This understanding, the film shows, is the key to healing.

The doctors who work at Shands also write and share their poetry. Doctors John Graham-Pole,

Michael Okun and Robert Lawrence write candidly and compassionately about the many patients they have cared for over the years. They draw connections between the science of their medical profession and the healing arts—connections that are essential to their work as physicians.

“The practice of medicine is an interface between art and medicine,” says neurologist Dr. Michael Okun, “if you leave one or the other out, then you ultimately fail with your patients.” With nearly twenty years of seeing the beneficial results of arts therapy, AIM has extended its program to the University of Florida medical students, who describe in the film how writing keeps their spirit of humanity alive.

Healing Words: Poetry & Medicine remind us of the healing power inherent in words— words to God, words of self-expression leading to greater self-understanding and growth, and words of compassion between the patient, visitors, medical staff and loved ones. The Torah reminds us that healing is ultimately spiritual; by teaching that Raphael, the angel of healing stands by the doctor's side. Healing Words reaffirms the sacredness of the doctor-patient relationship. Viewers will be touched by the compassion shown in this powerful and poignant documentary.

Can poetry heal? This documentary gives a resounding yes!

Adapted and reprinted from <http://www.pbs.org/programs/healing-words/>

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