



Hineni Yom Kippur Journal

Or Zaruah La'Tzadik

5780/2019

Hineni would like to acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge them as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we hold all of our activities, meetings and camps, and that sovereignty was never ceded. We wish to pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. Hineni is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.



אֹר זָרַע לַצַּדִּיק

Or Zaruah La'Tzadik— A Light will be Sown for the Righteous

The 6th edition of Hineni's annual Yom Kippur Journal, a compilation of short essays from Madrichim and members of the community

What is Hineni?

Hineni Youth & Welfare is a Modern Orthodox, Politically & Social-ly Active and Zionist youth movement that educates within a political-ly non-partisan framework. Hineni strives to create well-educated, critically thinking, empathetic and worldly youth who possess strong and proud Jewish and Zionist identities. Hineni is an outreach movement welcoming participants of all Jewish backgrounds. Hineni espouses mutual respect for all Jews, nurtures each participant's unique sense of individuality and in doing so, strives to produce the future leaders of the Jewish people and wider community.

Hineni conducts youth leadership and developmental programs, securing the future of the Jewish community through creating strong and active leaders. We send a group of enthusiastic school-leaving youth to Israel each year on an educational, leadership year course. Many Hineni leaders have gone on to take significant roles within the community, whether in Synagogues, community organisations, governmental organisations and abroad.

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Editorial

By Jason Glass

Every year on the 9th of Tishrei, our voices cry out the hallowed melodies of Kol Nidrei. Melodies so beautiful, that the Jewish Romantic composer Max Bruch created an orchestral arrangement in a valiant (albeit insufficient) attempt to encapsulate its allure. Melodies so tormented, that my father — a Jewish philosopher of sorts — used to say that through its sounds, Kol Nidrei evoked the last 2000 years of Jewish persecution.

Melodies have always been my inspiration for introspection. When I close my eyes and concentrate solely on sound, my thoughts will inevitably drift inward. In is unsurprising then, that I find music to be the perfect mechanism to initiate and persevere through the journey of personal reflection needed to affect some level of atonement.

When it came time for me to sit down and get to work on this journal, there was one task that needed no labour. The theme. I had already decided a year ago what I wanted this edition's series of essays to ruminate on.

Last year on the 9th of Tishrei, the answer was given to me before I could even ask the question. I had barely opened my machzor, when it was delivered to my on a silver platter. Something so familiar, yet foreign. Recognisable, but different.

Because one Tuesday evening on the 9th of Tishrei, the Kol Nidrei service was inaugurated as it has been for many years:

אור זרוע לצדיק
וְלִישְׂרָיִל בְּשִׂמְחָה

Light is sown for the righteous and joy for the upright of heart.

Taken from psalm 97, this is a message we read every week during Kabbalat Shabbat. But instead of the uplifting and triumphant Karlebach melody I was used to, I heard the echoes of a minor tonality, each word dripping with the spiritual anguish invoked only by the anticipation of the incoming Day of Atonement.

This moment captured me in such a way, that much of the next 25 hours was spent with the perpetual echoing of this single sentence in my head. So after a day of meditation (and a year to second guess myself), I *knew* this was the right theme for this year's journal. I *knew* that if I were to approach others with this topic, they would return with reflections worthy of reading. I was not disappointed.

In this journal, you will find 14 short pieces, each exploring this theme in a unique and wonderful way. I was unbelievably fortunate to have the opportunity to work together with so many members of the extended Hineni community, and to be brought along on each individual's journey as they delivered their interpretations and explorations. With everyone who contributed to this journal, I would like to share with you my sincerest thanks. I hope you are proud of your work. It is an understatement to say that I am.

It would be impossible for me to give thanks without mentioning our Roshim: Charlotte, Jarrad & Steph and Eitan & Aria. We all know that without the head, the body will fall. However, I think it is safe to say that you are more than just the heads. You are the heads, hearts,

hands and pancreases of our movement. You think, feel and do everything to make this movement run as successfully as it does, and you always make sure our blood sugar is *just* right.

I would also like to specifically acknowledge (and praise) two groups that contributed to this journal.

The first is the ex-madrichim of Hineni. Thank you for all the invaluable contributions you have made on our movement and our lives. Every one of you is responsible for our successes. You will always have a place in our movement. We hope that Hineni is still as much in your hearts as we are in yours.

Finally, the chanichim. Everything we do, we do for you. Everything we are, we are for you. You are the reason we *choose* to have sleepless nights and to dedicate dozens of unpaid hours a week. Every stress we endure, we do it to make Hineni better. And that we, do for you. *You*, are the future of Hineni. *You*, are the future of this community. *You*, are the future of this world.

Gmar Chatima Tova.

Jason is a member of Shevet Barak. In his third year, he is currently the Federal Rosh Chinuch of Hineni. Though normally a medical student, he is currently on hiatus, instead thriving in the glamorous lifestyle afforded by casual retail work. There are no words that can adequately describe his love for his fellow Barak-ians.



Sydney State Update

By Jarrad Sapsford & Steph Bonan

In this self-reflective month of Elul, we look back on what Hineni Sydney has achieved this year. This year Hineni Sydney has reached incredible new heights, breaking records with our annual winter camp numbers. Our winter camp ‘Machane Kaleidoscope’ had over 90 juniors and over 100 seniors, a total of nearly 200 chanichim. Hineni camp is a place in which growth, education, and community flourish. It’s a welcoming environment for all, whether you’re keeping shabbat for the first time, or practicing the traditions you know and connect with regularly. Our camps provide a Modern Orthodox environment rooted in tradition that is accessible to everyone.

Our unique camp environment allows our chanichim from years 2-12 to delve into Hineni’s ideology and engage with education through programs about Israel, Judaism and activism. The chanichim had an incredible time singing and dancing their way through camp with ruach and making long lasting memories and lifelong friendships. This incredible achievement is a testament to the hard work of our dedicated and passionate madrichim who work tirelessly daily and weekly to create the Hineni experience. Additionally,

our incredible year 11 Madatzim had a great Hadracha experience being madrichim and leading the juniors on camp.

The Central Synagogue have provided us with foundations to what we do, to empower and inspire the youth. This relationship has flourished over the year together as we have worked alongside The Central Synagogue to organise events including the Purim Fair for the Jewish community, with many exciting activities such as a silent disco, jumping castles, face painting, arts and crafts, a photobooth and more. This community event saw hundreds of adults and children attending.

We are so honoured to be the official youth movement of the Central Synagogue. This year we have been blessed with the new youth campus. We are so excited to have a place in the synagogue to engage our chanichim and madrichim through our weekly meetings and events. We have already hosted a number of youth minyan Kabbalat Shabbat services for the Hineni community in this new space. We are actively drawing in children from Jewish and non-Jewish schools through the doors of the Central Synagogue, and now the exciting new youth campus.

Hineni Sydney has held a diverse number of successful events and programs this year. The first term included a Pesach party, tie dye activity and master chef competition for juniors. Prior to camp we hosted our pre-camp events of ice skating for juniors and a beautiful Kabbalat Shabbat youth minyan followed by a dinner for our senior movement.

Our Junior adventure camp sleepover facilitated a fun day of rock climbing and Little Dynamos gymnastics playscape. This adventure camp was a successful event and a great opportunity for our madrichim to engage with our junior movement on a fun day out.

Our year 10 chanichim have attended our Hadracha leadership seminar and have almost completed our yearlong leadership program. This program equips them with the leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills to be empowered future leaders of not only our movement, but overarchingly of the Jewish community.

More recently, Hineni Sydney have been privileged with our new incredible Shlichim, Bar and Dvir, who have come all the way from Israel. We welcome them with open arms and cannot wait to see all the brilliant ideas and guidance that they will bring to our movement. We are so grateful to the Central Synagogue for providing Hineni with this incredible opportunity.

Hineni is an inclusive space in which all Jewish youth can feel at home. We pride ourselves on creating future leaders in and of the Jewish community. Hineni instills a strong sense of Jewish identity, which is cultivated through our education on Zionism, the impacts of Activism and embodiment of Modern Orthodoxy. Our movement works to strengthen the Jewish community through the youth. Hineni values each and every one of our chanichim. The movement strives to constantly better ourselves and aims to learn how to

further improve our impact on the Jewish community.

There is still much more to come for Hineni Sydney. We are very excited for our upcoming Junior camp on the 23rd-27th of December. Additionally, we are looking forward to our Senior Adventure camp on the 12th-13th of October. This senior adventure sleepover and fun day out involves trivia, kayaking, paddle boarding and bubble soccer.

We are constantly blown away by the support and love from the community, which we have an incredible amount of gratitude for. On behalf of Hineni Sydney we would like to thank The Central Synagogue for continually supporting us, Hineni parents for letting us shape future leaders, our madrichim for working so hard to create the Hineni experience. Most of all we would like to thank our chanichim for constantly teaching us new things and being part of our Hineni family. May we go from strength to strength and be inscribed in the book of life.

Shana Tova Umetuka,

Steph is a member of Shevet Barak and is Sgan Hineni NSW. This is her third year as a madricha in the movement. Jarrod is a member of Shevet Nesher and is Rosh Hineni NSW. Without their hard work and dedication, Hineni would not be thriving as it does today.



Melbourne State Update

By Eitan Meyerowitz & Aria Klein

This year, Hineni Melbourne learned the concept of ‘little wins.’ Little wins are small and unexpected moments that represent either a success or a breakthrough. Before we start our weekly madrich/a meeting, we go around the room and everyone shares a ‘little win’, something that might have gone unnoticed amidst the flow of a week, but can be appreciated when reflecting and scanning through the ‘little wins’ lens. Over the year, we have heard about assignments submitted seconds before their due time, free food, attractive French tutors and cute kids at canvassing. We have learned that with the power of gratitude, even the dullest of weeks are filled with hidden gems when we look for them.

This year at Hineni, we are grateful to have been blessed with many little wins. Our weekly programs are filled with tiny moments of joy, whether it be creating fresh chalk drawings during Sunday programs, or trying to beat our high score in the Good Weekend Quiz which we do all together at the end of senior ShabShack programs.

Beyond our weekly programs, our calendar this year

has been filled with many little wins. The essence of Hineni was captured in a comment from one chanicha who does not attend a Jewish school, who told us that without Hineni she would never have experienced or even known about the prayers or rituals which are central to our Jewish identity. As we have made our way through the Jewish calendar, Hineni has been a place for everyone to find their space to belong, between Sunday programs for our juniors, ShabShack for seniors, lunches, Onegs, seminars and camps.

We were very excited to host 100 chanichim to our welcome back dinner at the start of the year. Our highly anticipated Shavuot Tikkun Leil sparked many a conversation, but the little win of that night had to be the number and quality of shiurim given by our very own chanichim. It is always an honour to learn from those who we invest so much into teaching. Semester one culminated in our annual winter camp, Machane Yakum (Camp Universe), which welcomed space-explorers from grades 2-12 who delved into Hineni’s ideology, and experienced

the mad joy of days filled with immersive experiences, chanting, dancing and Ruach. A special thank you to Leah Hain and Hannah Moshinsky, the roshim of camp, who were instrumental in enshrining lifelong memories for our chanichim.

A cherished little win of this year's Winter camp was the success of our pilot integration project: Tzevet Chazak. Tzevet Chazak created the opportunity for eight new chanichim with special needs to experience the unique magic of a youth movement environment that cannot be replicated anywhere else. Tzevet Chazak was successful not only for the value gained by the chanichim of the tzevet but for all the other Hineni chanichim who learned important lessons of acceptance and friendship.

Our second semester has focused on growth and Hineni has been excited to welcome an influx of new chanichim, who have loved learning about age-old Hineni traditions and creating new ones. For the Juniors, many new chanichim attended our Junior Adventure Sleepover, and with enough giggling, exploring and singing they forgot that it was many of their first night away from home. For the seniors Hineni's active role within the local Zionist seminars helped us to spread Hineni's name amongst the 250 chanichim we were privileged to lead over 6 Scopus, Yavneh and Bialik camps.

On these seminars, everyone always asks us "what exactly is Hineni?" To this, we respond with pride, Hineni is Biderech Hamelech (our famous Ruach dance), meets a cafe dilemma (cafe where you are served dilemmas rather than meals), meets the Israeli Shuk. It is a place where you can be authentically yourself because we are run on the ideals of criti-

cal thinking rather than judgement. One of the only places where having a different opinion to someone else is better than having the same. A place where Judaism is valued but not forced and believes strongly that everyone has a place within it.

This year we have learned to celebrate minor milestones, that small achievements can bring joy if we stop to appreciate them. However, there is an undeniable joy to achieving long-term successes. For us, our long-term success is that we are part of the incredible voice that Hineni offers within our community. We are constantly blown away by the beauty and love that fills our programs and camps. Our madrichim and chanichim are engaged in an ideology which is radical and needs to be heard today more than ever.

We have an immeasurable amount of gratitude to our community; To Caulfield Shule for supporting us, to the parents for letting us help shape future Jewish leaders and to our madrichim for working tirelessly, daily and weekly to produce an experience that shapes our community. Most of all we would like to thank our chanichim for constantly teaching us new things and being a part of our Hineni family.

This year has been an amazing adventure. We look forward to the wins, both big and little that the coming year shall inevitably bring.

Gmar Chatima Tova!

Aria is a member of Shevet Barak and is Sgan Hineni Victoria. This is her fourth year as a madricha in the movement. Eitan is a member of Shevet Nachshon and is Rosh Hineni Victoria. They are colloquially known as Bubba and Abuela



A Reflection on Time

By Rabbi Levi Wolff

As we collectively unite during these High Holy Days, we invariably reflect on the year that was. I regularly hear words to the effect of: “Wow! How quickly this year has flown by!” And that sentiment is often accurate – or is it?

If the past twelve months has whizzed by in a gentle fashion without much drama, be grateful.

As a Rabbi, I have seen how this past year has not necessarily hurried by for all. For those who have suffered months of pain, it has been a long year. For those who lost someone dear, it has been a long year. For those who paced hospital corridors; for those who waited for a loved one to return or who looked in vain for employment – time played evil tricks – there was no flying... Instead it seemingly dragged by with heavy feet.

When you’re alone and lonely, and your heart is

aching from what you know will never be again, a single night could be an endless year.

Whether the last year flew by or crawled by, it has been our reality. Its very existence is now woven into the fabric of our being. It is part of our immortal record. With a new year about to dawn, how shall we greet it? Is time our friend or foe?

A congregant once told me, he believes “G-d invited time to keep all our bills from happening at once.” Time is indeed a great healer, but a poor beautician.

Time is a tailor specializing in alterations. Some changes are for the worst, yet some for the better. Actually, time is neither an ally nor an enemy for it is what we do with it that matters most. Time moves irreversibly – the ongoing sequence of events taking place. We can neither accelerate it nor halt it (and so many dream of both!).

Horace Mann, the great American educator, once put this announcement in the newspapers lost-and-found column: “Lost somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever.”

Time isn’t tangible, yet we can mould it in various ways: We can kill it. We can waste it. The speeding motorist can make time. The prisoner does time. The idler passes time.

There is something else we can do with time. We can *sanctify* it. Certain days have been set aside as holy days. How does time become holy? It becomes holy when we use it for holy purposes.

Our religion sets aside such holy days. For us Jews, the most important of these are the High Holy Days. It is a time to pause, evaluate and resolve to accomplish all that our hearts desire. A time to forgive

and seek forgiveness; a time to remember things forgotten and forget things too long remembered; a time to reclaim sacred things abandoned and to abandon unworthy things too highly cherished. It is a time to reconnect asking the age-old soul-searching question: “Are we using our time wisely as G-d intended?”

Yes, we know that the days are long but ultimately the years are short. Yet more important than counting time is making time count! There is an underlying urgency detected from the psalmist’s words beseeching G-d: “So teach us to count our days, so we may acquire a heart of wisdom.”

May Hashem bless you and yours with a *Shana Tova u’Metuka!*

Rabbi Wolff is the Chief Minister of Central Synagogue in Sydney. Originally from New Jersey, Rabbi Wolff joined Central Synagogue in 2001, bringing his kavanah to his congregation for nearly two decades.



The Equation of Righteousness

By Samuel Herz

Rosh Hashana is a time for reflection. Such is the way we are taught, again and again. We are to look at our actions, evaluate what we have done well and what we have not done well, so that we can decide how to act better in the next year. Logically, the process works – when I am studying for a maths test and I find myself multiplying 2 and 3 to make 5, I look back at what I’ve written, scrawl over it and rewrite it as 6 (I think that’s the right answer). If I ensure I am alert and conscious while making the correction, I will be very unlikely to make the same miscalculation again. Teshuva is as easy as 1 2 3. But do the laws of mathematics transmit to real life?

To quote Tommy Wiseau from the critically acclaimed *The Disaster Artist*, “life is not closed set.” Indeed, while $1 + 1$ is exactly 2 by definition, life provides no such clear answers. What is the equation for being a good person? What is honesty + respect + gratitude – greed? What even is the

definition of good? Our messy internal worlds are evidence enough that ambiguity and nuance reign.

Teshuva is therefore maybe not as easy as 1 2 3, 10 or even 613. ‘Goodness’ does not appear to be neatly divisible into a set of actions. And even if we did know precisely what it took to be good, a scary problem would still remain: *why* be good? The equivalent question (why answer correctly?) sounds silly for maths. The motivation is 100% and a gold sticker and maybe sincere satisfaction for some. For most, the consequence is analogous to the motivation. Unfortunately, not only does it intuitively feel impossible to attain a 3-digit percentage on our Rosh Hashana ‘be-good’ scorecards, there is not even a gold sticker to help us feel we’re on the right track.

Our only guide is experience – the outcome of my actions when I am good will decide whether I should behave similarly the next time. It would however, take an infinite amount of experience to completely develop the knowledge of what would happen in every scenario, and consequently how to act accordingly. Perhaps our ancient textual tradition can illuminate further on the consequences of being good and how they can help answer the question of why be good.

King Solomon's Book of Proverbs is a well of practical wisdom, with verses upon verses of advice and life observations. One particular idea reverberates throughout:

הטאים תרדף רעה ואת הצדיקים ישלם טוב
(יג:כא)

Evil pursues sinners, but the righteous will be rewarded with good (Proverbs 13:21).

Acting decently warrants good consequences. The whole book asserts differences between the righteous and the wicked, wise people and fools. The advice of Proverbs has on the issue of why be good is simple: be good because you will receive good in return.

We know however that this approach isn't quite accurate. Indeed, the very next book in the Tanakh, the Book of Job, seems to contradict Proverbs in this respect. Job is as righteous as can be:

האיש ההוא תם וישר וירא אלהים וסר מרע
(א:א)

That man was wholesome and upright, he feared God and shunned evil (Job 1:1).

However, everything is taken away from him. Stripped of his family and possessions, he is made to suffer. The story of Job highlights the futility of being good – it seems to say that whatever you do, you will suffer regardless.

So, come on Tanakh! Which is it? Will being good generate a reward or is everything futile? Are the two books for different kinds of people? Do both books exist in some balance for all people? Is there a flat-out contradiction between Proverbs and Job?

At the beginning of Kol Nidrei, we utter:

אור זרוע לצדיק (צ:יא)

Light is sown for the righteous (Psalms 97:11).

It would be great if we had control over what happens to us. If the way to good fortune was as clear as being good. We pray for it to be true; we pray for Proverbs to be right. Whether it is right however is not up to us. In the meantime, we can only remember Tommy Wiseau's saying that "life is not closed set," and that there are many more questions than answers when it comes to the question of why be good.

Samuel Herz is a 2017 Scopus graduate. He is a first year madrich in Melbourne and is currently studying Science Advanced - Global Challenges at Monash University.



The Justice of Yom Kippur

By Liat Grossman

Upon learning that the theme of this year's publication, 'Or Zaruah LaTzadik – a light will be shone onto the righteous,' I then did what any typical teenager in 2019 would do - searched up these exact words on Google. To be honest, none of the articles really seemed appealing to me, and none really struck out as thought-provoking themes that would make me take a step back and rethink my own values. I decided to then take a step back and truly try to understand these words. What does it mean by a 'light'? Who are these supposed 'righteous' people? Can anyone become righteous? And the ultimate question - if so, what is the correlation to Yom Kippur?

We all know the typical themes of Yom Kippur. Repentance, repentance, and more repentance. Understanding our sins, and then using this understanding to instill within ourselves a self-reflective nature that underpins the morals of Judaism. This is why Yom Kippur plays such a fundamental role within the Jewish religion. No matter how religious one may be, Yom Kippur has

some significance for all Jews, in whichever way they choose to interpret it. It links us all, surpassing all religious boundaries, and enabling us all to reflect upon ourselves and our actions over the past year. But why is this so important?

For me, the answer is a clear one word - justice. "Tsedek tsedek tirdof" is famously noted in Parashat Shoftim, "justice, justice you shall pursue". The shoresh (root) of the Hebrew word for righteous (צַדִּיק) stems from the letters tzedek , (צדק) translating to justice. Powerfully, this highlights the infallible link between justice and righteousness. In order to embody the righteousness, we all strive to achieve, we first need to understand the importance of justice – an understanding of what is right and what is wrong. Only then can we begin to become righteous because we truly comprehend the distinctions between how we should and should not act.

The 26,000 Righteous Among the Nations, non-Jewish people who have been recognised to have played a major role in saving the lives of Jewish people throughout the Holocaust, understood this distinction. They were identified as righteous, as they pervaded all the laws of their deplorably corrupt society, in pursuit of justice. In defying societal norms to enact justice, they earned the title of righteous. They understood the separation between good and evil and made an active choice to embody benevolence, in a society riddled with hatred.

Therefore, the importance of Yom Kippur – as the day of atonement – is made clear. Throughout the year, we strive to achieve justice and thwart all badness within ourselves, and on this one crucial day, we critically separate our noble and wicked actions to reflect on whether we have achieved justice for ourselves, and ensure we learn from our past mistakes.

"For there is not one good man on earth who does what is best and doesn't err." (Ecclesiastes, 7:20)

This message from the Tanach is abundantly obvious. We do not understand the human embodiment of righteousness. We as humans, can merely attempt to strive to be our best selves, and – while we abide by strict laws dictated by G-d – it is heavily apparent that we have no way of actually visualising this goodness, as we haven't fundamentally understood the justice that is necessary for a perfect world..

With our inability to understand true righteousness, it seems like G-d is sending us all a message. No one is perfect. No one is fully righteous, nor excluded from evils manifested within ourselves.

And yes, all people make mistakes. But how we act and reflect upon our mistakes highlights our sense of justice, and morality. While we may not be able to prevent our inner injustices, Yom Kippur allows us to acknowledge them and develop ourselves through this understanding. Reflection is ultimately the first step in the long path to righteous, as once a sense of justice is fundamental within one's inner psyche, it blossoms into an innate understanding of true virtue. Without reflection of our perceived justices – and how we want to act to both ourselves and others – we cannot understand our mistakes, much less how to improve upon them.

On Yom Kippur, we recognise our justices and injustices, all the while reflecting upon these in order to hopefully achieve righteousness for ourselves for the forthcoming year. We often forget our moral compasses throughout our bustling lives and seemingly have little time to reflect upon ourselves. Thus, the uniqueness of Yom Kippur as a day fully free of distractions, a day where we can understand our sins, is overwhelming. By understanding our sins, we – as both individuals and the collective Jewish people – can unite under the premise of a world full of justice and righteousness. Only then, will the lights truly be shone upon us.

Liat Grossman is in year 11 at Moriah College, and Shichvat Aviv at Hineni. She has been going to Hineni since year 6, and leads year 6 as a madatz (year 11 madricha)



Reconnection

By Mark Rapaport

About two years ago, I moved from Sydney to the UK, on what could be described as a journey of self-discovery; seeing what the world had to offer in order to contemplate what I truly valued, to discover what was supremely important to me, and by extension, how I wanted to shape the world.

Somewhere along the way, I lost that spark of exploration. It's hard to pinpoint exactly when it happened; maybe on the millionth cloudy London day, or during yet another superficial conversation about trivialities.

It took a friend to point this out to me. He had noticed weeks before – his remedy initially was to take me to a hilltop overlooking the city, and when that hadn't worked, he told me flat out, “you're not thriving, you're just not you”. His concern wasn't that I was depressed, or incapable of leaving the house to explore the city; neither of

those things were true. Instead, he made the point that I was alive, but I wasn't living. I'd compare this now to taking a frog out of a pond – its heart still beats, its brain still functions, but it's not thriving in the ways we know it can. In the same way, I had stopped learning new skills, reading challenging books and creating new things. Not only had I stopped growing, I had also forgotten the need for growth.

I gave myself a more thorough diagnosis reading the book ‘Lost Connections’, which explores the fundamental elements that humans need in order to truly thrive. The author, Johann Hari, argues that, whether intentionally or not, Western society has slowly stripped away the physical spaces and meaningful values that humans require, all through a prism of ‘progress’. Bigger cities, the convenience afforded by technology, and the ability

constantly consume do not automatically deliver our emotional, spiritual and social requirements, especially if we fail to carve out the time to pursue them. Living in an apartment in a concrete jungle and nodding occasionally at our neighbours is a vastly different existence to living in a small group reliant on intricate social connections and the contribution of the individual to the collective, which is how humans lived for thousands of years before us, yet our biology and psychology haven't changed.

Hari argues that beyond the basics of food, water and shelter, humans need 'connections' to avoid falling into a state of emotional flatlining. He outlines the following crucial elements, among others;

- Connection to meaningful work, where we feel empowered and have the freedom to shape our own paradigms
- Connection to meaningful values, rather than 'junk' values of consumerism and materialism
- Connection to others through deep and complex relationships
- Status and respect, where our dignity and achievements are recognised

None of these values should come as a shock; I think we all know deep

down that they're what will make us feel as if we're living meaningfully and intentionally, yet it's rare that we take concrete steps to pursue them. It's also possible to view the totality of Jewish life through Hari's filter; Judaism provides a constant reminder of meaningful values and reconnection through the cycle of Shabbat and festivals, regular meals with family and friends, and a community which offers a platform for fulfilment and self-actualisation.

At the core of my reflection this year on Yom Kippur will be the pursuing of the values that Hari identified, guiding my year ahead. I'll be regretting the time I wasted not living to the fullest, whilst simultaneously recognising that just as there is no day without night, it's almost impossible to recognise the elements we need to thrive until they're lacking. If we carve out the time and space to achieve these values, focus less on the rat race and more on the things we already know truly matter, then, as the title of this compilation suggests, 'Or Zaruah LaTzaddik' - 'the light will be sown on the righteous', and we will rediscover true connection to ourselves, our communities and our place in the world.

Mark currently lives in London, where he hikes, rock climbs, bikes, ferments, tends to his small garden and works in Public Relations. Mark was Rosh Chinuch of Hineni NSW and Australia in 2013 & 2014.



Kings and Priests and Prophets, oh my!

By Charlotte Eizenberg

In high school, I noticed that most of the religious speakers and leaders my teachers brought in were men. Not that these men weren't wondrously talented and insightful, but at that formative time I yearned for someone who understood my perspective. When I approached my teacher about my desire for a female speaker he told me that it was up to me. If I wanted to have more female Jewish thinkers and leaders then I had to become one.

This conversation sent my 16-year-old mind into a flurry. Me? A leader? A Jewish leader? What does that look like? What a silly thought!

As highschool continued I found other types of mentors. These leaders came in the form of teachers, friends, authors and Madrichim. They supported me through the toughest of journies and allowed me to question and

build my values and beliefs.

When I found myself at the end of Shnat (my year spent learning and volunteering in Israel), I was faced with a question. What kind of leader do I want to be? What *can* I achieve and what do I *want* to achieve? As I transitioned into the role of Madricha I started to add building blocks to my leadership repertoire. Firmly grounded in integrity and honesty, I created bonds with my chanichim and experienced first hand the kind of impact that we have the privilege of imparting.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks identifies 7 principles of Jewish leadership which beautifully embody Hineni's Hadracha (leadership) values. The following are two which I find notably significant.

Principle 1: No one can lead alone.

Leadership requires mateship and teamwork. One cannot achieve the task of change on their own. Rabbi Sacks writes how during the biblical era there were three different leadership roles: Kings, Priests and Prophets. The King was a political leader. The Priest was a religious leader. The Prophet was a visionary, a person of ideals and ideas. Hineni is built up of leaders akin to Kings, Priests and Prophets. Each Madrich is tasked with their role which informs the collective and allows Hineni to function as an intentional movement. No one person can lead the Jewish people, so too no one person can lead Hineni.

Principle 2: Leadership involves a sense of timing and pace.

Rabbi Sacks expresses that Leadership involves a delicate balance between impatience and patience. If you move too fast people might resist and rebel. Go too slow and they become complacent. In Hineni there are some transformations which our Madrichim do not get to see come to full fruition. The seeds of our leadership might only bloom long after we formally leave the movement. Moshe inevitably couldn't lead the Jewish people into the promised land, it was a new generation, new leaders who finished his mission. Hence the rab-

bis' great saying: "It is not for you to complete the task but neither are you free to desist from it." Every Hineni participant plants seeds which eventually bloom into flowers. Their impact embedded within the movement forever.

Hineni Hadracha (leadership) is a legacy each Hineni graduate embodies, no matter their role whether it is King, Priest or Prophet, Hineni graduates continue being leaders long after they formally leave the movement. We continue to sow the seeds of change and goodness.

Which role will you take this year?

גמר חתימה טובה

Charlotte is a member of shichvat Barak and is partaking in her 3rd year as a bogeret. Charlotte graduated from the Hineni shnat program in 2016 and is the current Federal Rosh of Hineni.







What If There Were No Reward?

By Sasha Fink

The beautiful words of Or Zaruah La'Tzadik, meaning 'Light is sown for the righteous' enchant the walls of synagogues around the world every Friday night, and also makes up the opening line of Kol Nidrei.

On Yom Kippur, we are encouraged to reflect and deeply consider the person we want to be in the coming year. We strive to be righteous in order to receive this heavenly 'light', this divine reward for our lives to be filled with positivity. Therefore, Or Zaruah La'Tzadik reveals the common notion, that if we act honourably and fill the world with our positivity, we are 'sowing our seeds for life to be filled with light'.

However, what happens if we believe we are in fact acting righteously but we fail to see our lives being

filled with light, as the prayer discloses? Potentially, our perception of what this 'light' is might be wrong and misunderstood. Despite this, a reality of life is that bad things happen to righteous people and this challenges this beautiful line that we repeat throughout our Jewish lives.

Judaism provides many different answers to this question that has been grappled with for centuries. C.S Lewis presents a possible answer by examining that God has given us free will and this free will allows evil to occur. As he explains, "if a thing is free to be good, it's also free to be bad", and states that God gives free will in order for pure love, goodness and joy to occur. Another answer that is provided, is the notion that the righteous will be rewarded in Olam Haba, in

the world to come. This looks at our life as not only physically but also spiritually.

Rabbi Kushner addresses this challenge to belief in his book, 'When Bad Things Happen to Good People', however he looks at this with a completely different perspective and raises the idea that our response to this challenge should "no longer [be] asking why something happened, but asking how will we respond, what we intend to do now that it has happened". He continues to explain that our inability to ever understand our suffering is not as much as an issue as we may think. This because we learn a lot from what suffering may do to us, making some of us bitter and others more compassionate. Kushner highlights that it is the result, and not the cause that makes experiences of pain meaningful and others damaging.

This raises an important idea. That potentially we should be disregarding this question all together. While this is a question that has gone through many people's mind throughout time, our focus could be potentially wrong.

The immediate interpretation of the words Or Zaruah LaTzadik, is that if we are righteous - we will receive divine reward. This assumes that people will only be moral in order for gain some reward. After looking at Kushner's interpretation, we should be interpreting this line differently. I would not want to live in a world where humans are only act-

ing righteously because of some incentive. I believe we should want to act righteously in order for the people around us to be happy. We should care about the environment not get some divine reward but because we want to live healthy lives and want those lives for our children.

I propose this Yom Kippur we look at this sentence differently, instead of looking at the words 'Light is sown for the righteous', meaning if we are good, we will be rewarded with good in our life. Instead we should interpret this, that if we strive for righteousness, we aim to fill the world with positivity, our lives will be full of light. This light does not come from some divine and not given to us, but comes from our actions and within us.

Sasha is currently studying International Studies but moving to Arts Education next year. She is apart of Shichvat Neshet and a Madricha for Yonah and Or in Melbourne.



A Baby is Born...

By Ariel Golvan

Kol Nidrei, 1995. It is a cool, early, spring evening, a normal day by any usual standards. A young family of 4 walk home from shule, meandering through the hilly streets of Kew, unaware of the unexpected events that are about to take place. Later that night, there is a surprise. The mother feels that her waters have broken. Suddenly the kids are woken and driven to the grandparents. That night, during Kol Nidrei, a child is born. That child was me.

A new baby is a great motivator and an excellent tool for introspection. 24 years later, my family has swelled with 3 new children in the last 3 years with a 4th due once again on Yom Kippur. Having a young nephew and two little nieces has certainly highlighted the challenge of parenting and whilst simultaneously serving as a reminder of the simplicity of childhood. As a two-

year-old, life is simple. Wake up, have someone else dress you, have someone else feed you, play for a bit and then go to bed. The crazy part is that's only half the day. You get to wake up from a nap and do it all again in the afternoon. Even when you graduate from nappies, you still get to go to school, which might introduce some difficulties. But on paper you basically just get to hang out with your friends for 9 hours every day. The pressure builds as you get older and things become more serious. The pace of life quickens, and future life choices must be made. Life becomes self-curated. With responsibilities come tough decisions, as we navigate the maze of endless pathways (and hopefully opportunities) that lie in front of us.

As it's my birthday, Yom Kippur has always been a special time. I feel particularly close with my family and a peculiar spirituality I can't quite explain, as well as an opportunity to reassess and reevaluate my life. I always expected that after graduating from a Jewish school that I would lose this connection. However, being a madrich at Hineni helped me to maintain and extended my love for Yom Kippur. And since then, I would argue that my connection has not waned. As I ruminate in the weeks leading to my second Yom Kippur disassociated from a Jewish school or a youth movement, I wonder what it is exactly that keeps me coming back with the same passion and verve every year.

One possible reason for this may be that Yom Kippur is a fixed point in our lives, year after year, without fail, whether we are ready for it or not. For me, it is a certainty that is written in my calendar at the start of each year. I know what to expect, yet in some ways, I have no idea what it will hold or what will be going on in my life at the time. This regularity provides structure to our lives and enforces introspection. The same way that your body requires consistent physical stimulus to maintain muscle, so too does your mind and soul require mental and emotional stimulus to maintain direction and

purpose. Yom Kippur this year, as in every year, acts as an anchor for us. A gym membership for our mind and soul that we cannot cancel. Shana tova and gmar chatima tova to the Hineni community.

Ariel Golvan was a madrich at Hineni from 2015 to 2017. While in the movement, Ariel held the positions of Rosh Machane, State Rosh and Federal Rosh of Hineni. He is currently completing his double degree in Mechanical Engineering and Science.



Humanity vs Technology

By Jaime Taitz

The modern world seems to be consumed by technology and social media.

Walking down the street, my eyes do not meet others anymore because heads are down. Googly eyes are instead mesmerised by Facebook, Fortnite, TikTok. It seems that our phones are replacing communication and human interaction. It's true, sometimes FaceTime is an easier option than meeting face to face, but it's not the same. Not only is humanity suffering from social media technologies, but also new technologies that may cause job loss and reduction in employment rates. Even my job at Coles has practically been made redundant; overtaken by self-scanning technologies. So, the big question is: Has technology replaced humans?

The world of artificial intelligence and technology is driven by logic and science and maths. Sounds fun, doesn't it? Its sole purpose is to make our lives easier by performing tasks in a more efficient way. So yes, technology is a great

human invention that has the capacity to help to improve and innovate our world. I mean, could you imagine a world without cars? You would have to schlep everywhere by foot. And could you imagine a world without aeroplanes? You would have to travel around the world by boat, for not just a few hours, but weeks and weeks (and I don't think that floats everybody's boat). So, wow, these modern technologies can be seen as a saviour.

What about social media? It is also a form of technology that has been created for humans by humans. It has the incredible power to connect us with people around the world and has contributed to the boom in worldwide communication and globalisation. Social media platforms, such as Whatsapp, have made communication the most efficient it has ever been. It is incredible how fast and easy it is to call a family member or message a friend.

But what about the other forms of social media that do not involve as much direct interaction and personal connection, like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat? We upload photos to update friends and family about our lives, especially joyous milestones such as weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs and birthdays. Although, the themes of these posts do not seem to capture the full picture. Don't people only post photos of themselves when they're looking their best, most tanned, perfect version of themselves? Well, I don't know about you, but I don't see any pictures when people have bad hair days. Struggles, hardships and losses that people experience are less commonly shared because we all have an ingrained mindset that we must paint a picture of a perfect world for everyone to see. The parts of life that are not 'perfect' seem to be eliminated from the online world so that when we look up from our phones at reality, we see a blemished world. The truth is, these platforms manipulate our mindsets and make us strive for perfection.

Perfection. What an interesting concept. It always seems so close, yet so far. Reachable, yet unachievable. Just like there is no such thing as a 100 Atar, there is no such thing as a 100% perfect human. Every person in this whole world is unique, every person in this world has strengths, and every person in this world has weaknesses. Nobody is perfect. Life would be boring if everything was perfect because there would be no space for creativity, no room for improvement and no motivation to innovate these technolo-

gies in the first place. In fact, it is these very weaknesses in humanity that make life interesting. A story of success is far less captivating than a story about growth from failure. From these failures or mistakes, we are able to learn from past experience to make a better future.

As we enter the mindset of Yom Kippur, we are given the opportunity to reflect on our past year and examine our behaviour. This is a time to think about our sins and wrongdoings and ask for forgiveness in order to grow into a better person. We can also look at our shortcomings and imperfections and try to set goals to correct them. But these flaws are what makes us human. As well as trying to improve for the new year, also think about the qualities that you possess that makes you human. Find the beauty in humanity that G-d sees. See the interesting and quirky traits of humanity in a new light, because they are ultimately what sets us apart from the mundane mechanics of artificial intelligence. Technology may strive for perfection and ease, but as we know, most of the time the easy way out is less rewarding. We, as humanity, strive for meaning in life no matter how tricky it may be, and we are rewarded with the greatest gift of all - life. So, make the most of it.

Jaime Taitz is currently in Year 11 at Moriah College. She has been a Hineni chanichah for many years and has become a Madatz this year, leading Year 3's on winter camp earlier this year.



Ending the Glass Half-full debate

By Jonathan Serebro

Is the glass half empty or half full? Personally, I think this question can highlight people's outlook on life. Optimists will say that the glass is half full, alluding to some sort of greater potential - a full cup. On the other hand, a pessimist will say that the glass is half empty, focusing on the lack of substance in the cup instead - no potential for a full cup. There is no right way to answer this question, however this little experiment does allow us to begin to discuss one of the most powerful human traits - perception.

Perception is an attribute that allows us to think differently, be creative and problem solve, but it also has this terrible ability to paralyse us with fear and anxiety. Let's look at the famous story of the twelve spies to explore this idea further. Twelve spies were sent to investigate the land that the Jew-

ish people were about to enter. When they get back their reports contradict themselves. Some of them say that the land flows with milk and honey, while others speak of danger and murderous giants.

Here we have the great juxtaposition of pessimism and optimism. We have 10 pessimistic spies who think that there is no conceivable way for the Jewish people to settle the land. Conversely, the spies Caleb and Joshua explain that despite the danger, there is a land full of potential, waiting to be settled by the Jewish people. We know in hindsight that if the Jewish people had listened to those who were pessimistic then we might not have settled in the land. Since the Jewish people listened to Caleb and Joshua, the two optimistic spies, we as a people entered the land of Israel and the rest is history

There is a mighty lesson here for all of us, especially during the introspective month of Elul. In the following year we need to be a little more optimistic. When problems occur, we need to not dwell on the negative and get paralysed by doubting our future. Instead, we must be hopeful and seek positive solutions. We need to heed the lessons from Caleb and Joshua and see the glass half full, take risks and understand that passion and self-belief can help drive us to that bright future we look at.

This year I challenge you. When you see the glass half empty, I urge you to try seeing it half full. Or, just stop wasting time staring at cups.

Shana Tova.

Jonathan is in his third and final year at Hineni. Currently his is the Gizbar (treasurer) of the Sydney movement. Jonathan is a university student and about to finish his Bachelor of Business degree.

Katie's Kef

Horoscopes

* Hineni Youth and Welfare does not encourage the practice of fortune telling, and as much as she doesn't like to admit it Kate Lustig does not claim to be a prophet in any way shape or form.



Aquarius (Jan 20- Feb 18)

While the Aquarius is good natured at heart, their tendency to seek intellectual discourse can get them into trouble. They arrive to shule armoured with 10 different books on topics ranging from climate change to the Jewish perception on circumcision to the link between ancient China, the Clinton scandal and the great depression. The problem is that the Yom Kippur machzor seems to always find its way to the bottom of the pile....



Pisces (Feb 19- Mar 20)

Pisces love music, although they hate being criticised. If you are a pisces, this Yom Kippur, you may be faced with the internal struggle of singing along during the service but, encountering the turmoil of having to reflect and criticise yourself. Remember to take your shmooze breaks to refocus during the service. Pisces are also always forgiving, a topical characteristic for this occasion.



Aries (Mar 21-Apr 19)

Aries are known for always being the first at everything and seeking out competition. You might find an Aries trying to fast for 25 hours and 10 minutes just to show they can go the longest without food and water. The one competition that Aries won't win is best dressed at shule. Aries love comfortable clothes so don't be surprised if you see an Aries rocking their white tracksuit pants.



Taurus (Apr 20- May 20)

Taurus is one of the more grounded and reliable signs. You can guarantee the Taurus will wait to walk to shule with you and save you a seat at your family lunch/ dinner. They are the cousin you haven't seen in a while but whenever you see them at family function you have a good laugh about Aunt Maggie. But remember, Loshen Hora isn't highly regarded in the *cough* heavenly court, so maybe save that story about how good old Maggie fell asleep during Uncle Chaim's drasha for Succot, or better yet, don't tell it at all.



Gemini (May 21- June 20)

Expressive and quick witted, Gemini's often have a case of split personality syndrome. They're the first person in line for Grandma's cholent made with three different types of meat one day, and are declaring they are a proud vegetarian the next. But don't get too frustrated with poor Geminis, they are in enough trouble with the man upstairs who can't decide if they should be the next Mashiah or go to the same place as the Kardashians, Trump and people who talk in shule.



Cancer (Jun 21- Jul 22)

Cancers are a one hit wonder. After giving one good dvar Torah, they always seem to slip it back into conversation. Quoting Rabbi Sacks does not count as being revolutionary Barry!



Leo (Jul 22- Aug 22)

"Hi God, I bet you're really proud to have me on this earth" is a typical sentence you might hear a Leo muttering during shule. They are the type of people the shule is creating 'committees' for, just so they have somewhere to be heard. They may tell you they are invited out for every meal, but an unexpected invitation to a random chag lunch may be more beneficial to the Leo than they realise.



Virgo (Aug 23- Sep 22)

If you are a virgo, you have meticulously planned your yontaf, from your outfit that will please God the most, show incredible amounts of purity and still be fashionable; to the first thing you will eat when you break the fast. You have marked each section of the machzor to time-keep, and you spent 45 minutes deciding which would be the best seat in shule so you aren't distracted, can hear the prayers, can see your friends, and can still overhear some good gossip.



Libra (Sep 23- Oct 22)

Tone deaf and proud, the Libra always chooses the Adon Olam tune. It sounds something along the lines of the Adams Family theme song but around the Grand final time, it also vaguely sounds like a football team song. We are talking to you Collingwood fans.



Scorpio (Oct 23- Nov 21)

Let's be honest, the Scorpio didn't make it to shule this year. In fact the only evidence they exist at all is their name on the seat sticker. Scorpio is the fabled fifth son of the Hagadah, the one who didn't come to the seder at all.



Sagittarius (Nov 22- Dec 21)

While the kids club has a strictly below bar/t-mitzvah age policy, the Sagittarius seems to find themselves back amongst the children's service every year. Despite multiple complaints from Michi the nebish 16 year old girl who runs the program, verbal warnings from Daniel, the shules youth director and a formal letter signed by both the president and the rabbi, the Sagittarius is still stealing copious amounts of honey cake and zahas. But Sagittarius, your days of winning footy cards are numbered, the CSG has raised your threat level to 'high'



Capricorn (Dec 22- Jan 19)

Empathetic and peace oriented, Capricorn is hell bent on saving this world from the destructive forces of hate and discrimination. There is only one prayer in the Capricorn's siddur, or at least it is highlighted in their white leather bound artscroll - Ose Shalom Bimromav, the prayer for eternal peace. The rest of the congregation might be hitting their chests for vidui but the Capricorn is in the back shaking her tambourine singing "Ya'se Shalom" at the top of her lungs. Never far from a pair of low dangly earrings and purple sunglasses, the Capricorn is looking forward to shule ending and returning to her Israeli dance lessons where she knows none of the dances except the one to 'Salaam'



Love, Forgiveness and the Beatles. Are the Hippies onto Something?

By Nathan Orenstein

In the face of what seems like a dauntingly difficult balance task even for the most conditioned of gymnasts or yogis, Rabbi Hillel famously used wit and cunning to state that “*love your neighbour as yourself*” is the essence of Judaism, everything else is just commentary. I can see him standing there quite proud of himself after sweating bullets thinking about how poor his single leg balance had gotten and how long the Torah is.

The actual idea that he coined then has always been something we can revert back to when it all gets a bit much. And as such, I think it became a bit of a throw-away line for me, never really pausing to understand the significance.

I started thinking, what is this love thing really? I thought inquisitively back to holiday car rides and wondered what the Beatles were saying when they

sung so youthfully that “all you need is love”. Is this the same love as is in the Bible? It sounds very rose-coloured glasses and Mala beads (prayer beads commonly seen around the neck of someone saying namaste to everyone they meet with loose fitting hemp clothes on) to me. So, I delved even deeper.

First of all, what does it mean to love yourself? And is that love transferable to others? It isn't to love others more than yourself or as well but *like* yourself.

This love can't then be love that is selfless or of pure service to the other as this by definition removes yourself from the equation. Neither can it be egotistical self-love as it is difficult to be arrogant for someone else. It must be something different.

So back to Judaism we go for answers! The holiest 10 days of the year culminate in us spending a day grovelling for forgiveness.

Not just from our neighbours, or God, but really ourselves. We say a version of the Confession prayer (*Vidui*) 10 times over the course of 26 hours (if you say Mincha pretty quick before the fast). Aristotle once said “we are what we repeatedly do”. So, we must be pretty forgiving by the time the fast day ends. And this for me is where the love comes back.

In Proverbs (*Mishlei 17:9*) it says something that I feel is pivotal to our understanding. “*He who forgives a wrong doing seeks love, but he who holds onto a matter can distance even a close friend.*” What this sentence is talking about is unconditional love. Loving someone with no account of wrong doing. Like a parent who still loves a child despite them painting the new white wall with tomato soup. Or Moses, who even after the Jews worshipped the golden calf still turned to God and pleaded for forgiveness for his people. Or God himself who loves the people of Nineveh enough to send Yonah to them to save them, even if they strayed. That is baseless love. Loving the person so much to see through any wrong doing, forgiving them and at the same time loving them and seeing them as perfect and whole.

The Confession prayer is one of collective forgiveness, yet it is deeply personal at the same time. It is said silently and usually attracts some

standout *shockelling* from the star performers at the front of the shul. If we can truly forgive and therefore love ourselves as if we were our own children, we would be able to then love our neighbour and our communities with a love that is not only achievable and accessible, but powerful and transcendent. We may just start see some small change in the world around us. The trees will become alive, looking down on us with wise knowing, the grass will start to feel as soft as a plush carpet under our feet, flowers will start turning towards us to shower us with their beauty and scent. The world will start having more colour, less grey; more communal connection, less global division; more love, less hatred.

Maybe in a very tangible way, the hippies, the Beatles, Rabbi Hillel and the bible were all saying the same thing. Maybe for us to live in a better world, love might really be all we need.

Nathan is a full time physiotherapist who loves philosophy, psychology and adventure. He is a member of Shichvat Nir (shnat 2012) and was federal Rosh chinuch in 2015. If you see him on his travels around the globe, give him a big hug.



The Good We Can Sow

By Jordan Oosthuizen

Repentance.
Atonement.
Judgement.

With Yom Kippur approaching, and these words – as well as the ideas that they conjure – diffusing throughout the communal vocabulary and collective mind, it becomes easy to find our vision clouded by negative filters as we embark on the journey of self-examination. We must remember, that these are simply the prongs of the fork that untangle the actions we have performed, and the impacts we have made over the last year; the hand that guides the fork is the most important element.

To this end it is more productive to separate two concepts that are often married (for better or worse) in our everyday lives: *Recognition* and *Judgement*. For in our self-examination, and our striving for improvement, the recognition must be our own. The judgement of most significance on Yom Kippur, however, does not belong to us. In line with this year's publica-

tion theme, let's remind ourselves that as we cast this recognition onto the past year, we must apply it to more than simply our bad deeds. A broader, more productive picture may be gained by examining this alongside at least three other elements: The good deeds we failed to do when we could have, the good deeds we succeeded in doing, and the bad deeds we succeeded in avoiding where we might have failed in previous years.

We begin Kol Nidrei with **אֹר זָרַע לְצַדִּיק** (Or Zarua LaTzadik) which translates to "A light is sown for the righteous," and continues with "And for the upright of heart, joy." Among the many things it conjures, 'light' brings to mind images of illumination, and thoughts of warmth. Under the light sown for us, our path is illuminated, and under this light we may find a comforting, pleasant warmth. Though it is sown *for* us (not *by* us), like the seed that 'sowing' calls to mind, it will not thrive without our attention.

Like a plant, as we reflect, we should tend this light – recall the good deeds that we have engaged in over the last year and their effects. Did you feel good performing these good deeds? Did others feel good because of these good deeds? In the coming year, are these deeds ones that you want to do more often, or less. Reflect then, of the good deeds you could have done, but didn't.

What can we do then, on days in the coming year where we do not feel this natural order of positive return on good deeds in the world around us – or even worse, when we feel punished by the world around us for our good deeds? Perhaps it may be useful to emphasize the words that follow: “And for the upright of heart, joy.” In this passage, we see some kind of self-support – the upright heart may stand on its own, without external assistance. If we know we have done a good deed, and we struggle to search for a resulting external validation or reward, we may better off following in the footsteps of Isaiah, who heard G-d's call for a volunteer and responded with “הִנְנִי” (Hineni) – or in English, “Here I am.” On those days, turning our attention to inner sources of positive return – particularly to the intrinsic sense of morality we are gifted at birth – will prevent us from becoming disheartened in our attempts to be a better person in the coming year.

In turn, just as it is important to apologise to those we feel we have wronged over the past year, we should look to thank

those who have actively tried to make our lives better, or our existence happier, and acknowledge the good deeds of those around us. Doing this, we not only balance our outlook by focusing on our collective and individual potential for good alongside our shortcomings. We look to the oncoming year intending to help those around us on their journeys of self-improvement as well as our own. Resisting the temptation to narrow our focus to our own path in isolation allows us to look more kindly upon the stumbles and struggles of ourselves and those around us, allowing for recognition without judgement of our actions and their consequences.

This Yom Kippur, take some time to tend to the seeds sown for righteous actions in the past year (both yours and others'). Aiming to walk your path in the coming year without stumbling means much less if it is not among the garden of light cast by what grows from the good deeds we do.

Jordan is a second-year madrich currently in the middle of his medical studies at university. He became a madrich with no prior chanich experience at Hineni after volunteering as camp medic in 2017



Positive Reflections

By Tyla Aronson

Yom Kippur is often thought of as the Jewish people's ultimate 'Judgement Day'. It may induce feelings of fear, forcing us to consider how our actions over the past year will be considered and then judged. In turn, we spend the day asking for forgiveness and atoning for our past mistakes. Connected to this idea of looking back at our past misdeeds and contemplating how we could have been better versions of ourselves in each situation over the past year. However, Yom Kippur is also a time of reflection.

Reflection is a critical aspect of Yom Kippur as it is a pinnacle point that leads to forgiveness and atonement – our traditional, ultimate goals of the day. Be that as it may, during Yom Kippur reflecting is often connected solely with our faults. People become fixated on this alone, focusing only

on what we did wrong and how we could have done things better. But reflection implies more than just deliberating over our mistakes. It involves looking back at **all** our actions of the past year. Our years are not solely negative. Every person can think of an example of positivity they experienced in the past year, and whether that positivity was a big or small moment, it should not be forgotten. Our positive actions are valid considerations to give weight to on Yom Kippur. If we are to truly reflect (and ultimately, atone), then we need to be able to consider both the aspects of ourselves we want to improve, but also the aspects of ourselves we are proud over and want to maintain. Our deeds – in addition to our learned experiences – should not be discounted.

Or Zaruah LaTzadik is the opening line of Kol Nidrei. The psalm perfectly encapsulates the idea of reflection. One interpretation of these words is that a divine reward will be given to those who are righteous, and that they will have their lives filled with positivity. However, it can also be interpreted as if you act righteously, then you are creating positivity and in turn that kindness will come back to you. It encourages you to take stock and to look back on one's year, but also not to gloss over our good deeds. Taking them into consideration on Yom Kippur is essential and helps shape the version of ourselves we want to bring into the New Year.

Or Zaruah LaTzadik means that just as we strive to fix our mistakes, we can also aim to create more positivity in the world. The acts of good you were able to do last year may have made a huge difference in someone's day, week or even their year. Hopefully, this same kindness would also have been returned to you. Endeavouring to generate more kindness is a goal that should be set for the New Year. As a people that have suffered through so much, being able to show good unto others has and should always be a point of pride for the Jewish people. It shows that no matter what we have been through and no matter the darkness, be it personal or collective, we will still continue to spread light to those around us.

So yes, make sure to ask for forgiveness, find peace in atonement and ask G-d for the strength you seek, to do better. However, make sure to give yourself credit and reflect on all your deeds of the past year as well. Think about all the good you have done and all the good that has come to you. By being altruistic, you are showing that you are worthy of forgiveness and have atoned for your mistakes. By using our time of reflection as inspiration for more kindness in the world, we create a place where positivity breeds positivity. Using this, we as a people can make the world a better place.

Tyla is a 17 year old Masada College student transitioning from Year 11 to Year 12. She has been involved with Hineni since in Year 3 and has always loved going. She is also currently part of the Hineni Madatzim team!



The Meaning of Life

By Amy Kaplinski

One of the great Rabbinical thinkers of the 21st century, Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, writes that there are two major forces in the world which work in opposite directions, giving and taking. As a result we find two kinds of people in the world – givers and takers. He says that the goal of life is to become a giver

Here we stand, on the threshold of another Jewish year, with its awe-inspiring prospects of how Hashem might judge our future and – according to the prayer *Unetane Tokef* – with divine judgements of all existence. At this time of year, I often ask myself, what is the real meaning of life? Given that life is a temporary gift, why are we here? What is our purpose for the fraction of history that we are on this planet? Albert Einstein famously said, “only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.” In doing so, he implies that the act of giv-

ing to others is the primary answer to these existential questions. The meaning of life can perhaps be found in our unique contributions to the world and the lives of those around us.

A life lived in service of those around us is what truly brings meaning and happiness to others and ourselves. When we truly add value to the lives of others, we receive value ourselves and live a meaningful life.

Each year, we evoke this sentiment in the opening words of Kol Nidrei, “*Or Zarua latzadik ul’yishrei leiv simcha*.” “Light is sown for the righteous and joy for the upright”. Immediately it is suggested that our very purpose is to serve as a light to others through our behaviours. In the Or Zarua prayer, it is made clear that in order to be judged favourably by Hashem, we are required to serve as beacons of light into the world around us.

This of course, is an essential tenet of Tikkun Olam, the idea that we can contribute to repairing our damaged world by bringing light to others, ensuring that we maintain a sense of positivity in all our interactions.

Practically, there are countless things we can do to bring light into the lives of others. A simple smile and acknowledgement of those around us, helping the less fortunate, standing up for justice, being forgiving and not holding grudges, visiting the sick, attending a shiva house of mourning, a friendly how are you – these are indeed simple every day actions that are easily within our reach.

Indeed, this is perhaps exemplified in the last line of the Unetane Tokef prayer recited during Musaf on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur where it says “But repentance, prayer and charity remove the evil of the decree!”, which implies that acts of kindness can influence hashaem to judge us more favourably in the new year.

According to Rabbi Warren Goldstein, the chief Rabbi of South Africa “Acts of kindness have a cosmic power, the simple act of reaching out to others providing them with help, support, comfort and strength in their time of need, can rewire the spiritual universe in much the same way as the ancient sacred temple services. Ultimately when you ele-

vate another person’s pain, ease another person’s burden, put another’s troubled mind at rest, meet someone else’s basic emotional, psychological or physical needs, it transforms not just the recipient of your kindness, but it also transforms the giver”

The meaning of life? To quote Steve Jobs in a speech he gave in 2005 “Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do for others what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do for others. If you haven’t found this yet, keep looking. Let us all play a part in trying to add value to lives of others by giving of ourselves in order to become better people in the year ahead by engaging in an effort to do better in the future.

As the great Rabbi Hillel once said when asked if he could recite the whole of the Torah standing on one leg, he replied “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” implying the importance of giving, serving and showing respect and compassion towards others.

Perhaps this is the very essence of what it means to be a mensch.

Amy Kaplinski is currently studying Nursing at university. She has been in Hineni for over a decade and was one of Sydney’s 2019 Winter Camp Roshim.



If you can't say something nice...

By Leah Hain

Right now, we live in a world where people are using the word righteous to describe someone who is worthy. Meanwhile, worthiness seems to be determined by your status in society. A billionaire, a philanthropist, high grades/scores in any initiative and someone as worthy as, say, Captain America and Thor... You know... Hammer worthiness and all that.

Let us however, put aside these societal notions of 'worth,' and instead reflect on the qualities that *do* make us righteous.

Bruno Mars' famous lyrics "you can count on me" perfectly embody the first quality: selflessness and generosity. A big problem arising from our very techy culture is that we miss opportunities to help those right in front of us. If every person helped even just one person get on and off a tram or even just help someone lift

something heavy, our interpersonal connections will grow and so will our love of one another. Treating people like you want to be treated includes not having to ask for the help but having it there for you anyway... Just in case you need it.

The next quality that deserves mention is leadership. I have always been told that a good leader can step back and allow others to step forward, and I can honestly say that at times it may be harder than it sounds. True strength is allowing those around you to express themselves, even if you make mistakes you try, try and try again.

Many other qualities can be included in this list I started, yet the only list that matters is the one that you follow. The simple question we need to ask ourselves at this time in our lives is:

"Am I happy?"

If there is any hesitation in the answer or if you answer no, then reassess the qualities you hold yourself and everyone around you to in order to create a happier life for you and your neighbours.

In my life I know I have people to atone to and people to forgive. But that is a part of life. In life we make mistakes. No this doesn't mean apologising to my parents for not getting a ten out of ten on a test. It does however mean realising that sometimes cynicism is not the correct response and to quote the movie Bambi "if you can't say something nice don't say nothin' at all". I will admit that it is hard at times to contain what I think is a witty comment; forgiveness isn't being able to stop all comments but rather showing others that you are making an effort to stop or at least change your comments to be less hurtful.

I think, as a collective and as a resolution for this Jewish new year, we should all work on taking an extra second to just think through our words before letting them tumble out of our mouths. By taking this extra second to think things through, hopefully we can share more happiness than pain in our world that is so deprived from it.

In order to have kindness you must first show forgiveness. Everyone likes having friends – myself included – but without forgiving them even

for things done by accident, you will find that less people want to stay friends with you. This is the key to life, and may we all have a long one.

Where I am in my life right now I can truly say that I am happy. Having run a successful Hineni Winter Camp this year while also staying on top of uni assignments has me feeling like I can do anything I set my mind to. I have a great support network of friends and family and find true happiness in making the people around me smile. So now that you understand my happiness, it is time to take a look within and find your own.

Leah is a Year 2 + 3 mad at Hineni and recently ran the Melbourne winter camp for Hineni. She is currently completing a bachelor of arts.

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