

## Caring for the Spirit in Times of Crisis IV:

### On Resilience

## COVID 19 Community Connection Webinar Series Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services

### **Some Materials for Our Exploration**

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### Weakness and Strength

*A Teaching of the Koretzer*

“Oftentimes apparent weakness denotes strength that is to come. At the moment of birth, no living creature is as weak and helpless as man, yet man grows up to be master of all life.

“The horse secures his rest through sleep while standing; the cattle rest while kneeling; only man is so weak that he must lie down with his entire body. This also denotes his superiority, since he rests his mind and nerves in this fashion, and awakens with renewed strength.

“We thus behold that there is frequently weakness before strength. We fast on Yom Kippur and on other days: to create weakness in order to attain the strength which follows it. It is preferable to become weak through fasting than through controversies and illness. But in any case a man's troubles though they weaken him for the moment oftentimes cause him to be stronger, both physically and mentally, than before.

“The man who is popular and influential needs to fast at regular intervals. He cannot remain masterful of spirit for a very long time without weakening it at interludes.

“A man who was constantly cheerful and in happy mood became very ill. The Rabbi commanded him to fast and he was cured. Thus, fasting became a substitute for sickness by lowering his exorbitant good cheer at times.

“Sometimes a singer cannot reach the higher notes. Another man comes to his aid and sings in a loud tone. This gives to the first man, also, the ability to raise his voice. It is a result of the communion of two spirits, wherein each becomes a partner in the other's strength.

“Sometimes a man does not understand the theme of his study. But when he discusses it with a comrade, it suddenly becomes clear. This results, also, from the cleaving of two souls: it gives birth to new understanding and to new wisdom.”

*From Nofet Tzufim, by Pinchas ben Avraham Abba Shapira of Koretz (born 1728; died 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul, 1791), a disciple of the Ba'al Shem Tov. (Published in Warsaw, 1929, pp 5-7). This teaching is reproduced in Louis I. Newman's Hasidic Anthology (New York: Schocken pbk, 1963), pp 455-6.*

## Ten Spiritual Conflicts in Communal Disaster/Trauma

Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, LCSW/Rabbinic Director, The Jewish Board

*(Please note: The conflicts that are listed here are overlapping, not distinct, and in no order of experience or priority; and many people may not have/use these words for their challenge/s...)*

### 1...Trust vs. Distrust

*Can I depend on anything, anyone, the Cosmos, God...? Is there any real trust?*

### 2...Meaning/Role/Purpose vs. Emptiness/Void

*What can it all be about, what can really 'hold water'? What narrative, if any, works?*

### 3...Order vs. Chaos

*Is there really any system, any sequence, any causality in events?*

### 4...Security/Protection vs. Vulnerability/Exposure

*Is anyone safe, or are we all just targets, sitting ducks?*

### 5...Independence/Self-Determination vs. Powerlessness/Total Neediness

*What authentic choices do I have? Can my most considered, compliant behavior have any real of desired impact?*

### 6...Direction vs. Aimlessness

*What do I need to do now? How must I act, respond, change?*

### 7...Hope vs. Despair

*How can tomorrow be any better? What comfort, joy, wholeness, light, or inspiration can there really be?*

### 8...Concern /Omnipresence of the Ultimate vs. Abandonment/Hidden Countenance

*Precisely when so many needed or sought Salvation, where was the Almighty?*

### 9...Hessed v'Rahamim/Lovingkindness & Mercy vs. Din vaOnesh/Strict Limits & Punishment

*Where is the Compassion/Grace/Generous Spirit – all we have experienced is the Assault, the Destruction, the Noose?*

### 10... Familiar, At-Home, Normal vs. Alienated, Aberrant, Unmoored

*The whole equation seems to have changed; the Universe has shifted; the gap between myself and close ones is unbridgeable; I feel existentially isolated now....*

## Jewish Spiritual Treatment Plans: Seven Grids

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- “Who is the one who desires/is eager for life, who loves days, to see Good?  
Guard your tongue from evil, your lips from deceitful speech.  
Shun evil and do good,  
Seek out amity/integrity, and pursue it.” (*Psalms 34:13-15*)
  
- “God has told you, O human, what is good, what is required of you: to do justice, to love goodness, and walk humbly with your God.” (*Micah 6:8*)
  
- “Simon the Just used to say: On three things does the world rest: on Torah, on *Avodah*/Divine service, and on *G'milut Hassadim*/Deeds of Lovingkindness (*Pirke Avot/Ethics of the Fathers 1:2*)
  
- *T'shuvah* (return/repentance/response), *T'filah* (prayer/self-examination), and *Tz'dakah* (Justice through active, generous realignment of the material and the spiritual) avert the severity of the decree” (High Holiday liturgy)
  
- Reb Nahman's *Tikkun HaKlali*””Complete Remedy”:: *Mikvah* (Nature/Blessings); *Tz'dakah* (Elevating the Material to the Spiritual; fixing the world one piece at a time); *Sh'mot Hatzaddikim* (learning from those who have gone before) and *Tehillim*/Psalms.
  
- Reaching Out, Reaching Up, Reaching In (= Relationship to Community, to God, to Self)
  
- Drawing on R. Mordecai Kaplan’s Ideas (*thanks to Rabbi Elisa Goldberg*):
  - Behaving*: *Mitzvot*, lifecycle moments, holiday celebrations, *tz'dakah* ...
  - Belonging*: Community, culture, history...
  - Believing*: Faith, meaning, theology...
  - Being*: Transcendence, mindfulness, gratitude, presence, embodying...

## (What you might call) “Ten Jewish Resilience Teachings”

### **One Parent, One Power, One Mold: The Unique and Beyond-Value Nature of All**

Human was created as a single individual  
to teach you that anyone who destroys a single soul is as though he destroyed an entire world,  
and anyone who preserves a single soul is as though he preserved an entire world;  
and to preserve peace/harmony among creatures,  
so that one person not say to the next, “my father is greater than your father,”  
or as some might say, “there are multiple powers in heaven.”  
And to show the greatness of the Holy Blessed One,  
for while a person stamps many coins from a single mold,  
and all that are produced come out alike,  
the King of Kings, the Holy Blessed One,  
has stamped every person with the mold of the first Adam,  
yet not one of them is like his fellow.  
And so, each and every individual is obligated to say,  
“For my sake was the world created....”

*Mishnah Sanhedrin, 4:5*

### **Repress and/or Express**

דאגה בלב איש ישחנה רבי אמי ורבי אסי, חד אמר: ישחנה מדעתו, וחד אמר: ישחנה לאחרים  
“Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs him down...” (*Proverbs 12:25*)

R. Ammi and R. Assi [explained it differently]:

One said: One should force it down;

the other said: One should talk about it with others.\*

*Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 75a*

\*One connects the word *yashenna* (bows/weights him down) with the Hebrew *nassah*, “to remove”; the other with the Hebrew *suh*, “to speak”. (Note: The verse from Proverbs 12 ends with: “but a good word makes him glad.”)

### **“And Suffering without Transgression....”**

In the *Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 55b*, at the conclusion of a theological discussion that goes on for about a half a page, it states:

ושמע מינה: יש מיתה בלא חטא, ויש יסורין בלא עון

"We see from this that there is death without sin ,and there is suffering without transgression."

### **Paths to Healing**

Anger bottled up inside can lead to an explosion

while acknowledging emotions and understanding pain leads to healing.

*Rabbi Moshe b. Adrianopolis Alshikh (b. 1508, d. Damascus 1600), on Numbers 32:7-9, when Moshe upbraids the tribes of Gad and Reuven for their selfish disregard of Israel's unity*

### **Hand-to-Hand**

As one hand washes the other, so must one person help another.

*Leon of Modena, in Tzemah Tzedek, 1600*

### **Shmutzik, A Bisseleh...**

If you want to help pull a friend out of the mire, don't hesitate to get a little dirty.

*Ba'al Shem Tov (Israel ben Eliezer, 1700-1760)*

### **Breaking the Power of the Evil Inclination and Refinding a Pathway to God**

Share all your negative thoughts and feeling  
-- those that oppose our holy Torah,  
and are brought forth by the evil inclination –  
with a spiritual mentor or trusted friend...  
Do not leave out anything from these conversations  
because of your shame or embarrassment.  
By speaking about such things, by bringing them into the open,  
you will break the power of the evil inclination,  
so that it will not rise up against you at other times.  
You will also retrieve the good counsel of your friend,  
which is itself a wondrous treasure,  
A pathway to God

*R. Elimeleh of Lizhensk (1717-1787) Tzetel HaKatan, # 13*

### **Interdependence and Mutual Bonds**

Every people draws sustenance from others, from the heritage of the generations, from the achievements of the human spirit in all eras and all countries. Mutual dependence is a cosmic and eternal law. There is nothing in the world, large or small, from the invisible electron to the most massive bodies in infinite space, which has not bonds with its fellows or with unlike bodies. The whole of existence is an infinite chain of mutual bonds, and applies to the world of the spirit as well as to the world of matter.

*David Ben Gurion, Atlantic Monthly, November 1961*

### **“Times for Transcendent Actions”**

People often perceive themselves in terms of their constraints as mortal beings.  
Yet there are times that call for transcendent actions.  
One must at times do more than one can possibly do,  
for each mortal is endowed with a G\*dly soul,  
and G\*d transcends mortal constraints.”

– *R. Menahem Mendel Schneerson (1902-1994),*

*known as “the Lubavitcher Rebbe” (or just “the Rebbe” among his followers),  
was a prominent Hasidic rabbi, the seventh and last Rebbe of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement.*

### **On Holding Hands**

I was sitting on a beach one summer day, watching two children, a boy and a girl, playing in the sand. They were hard at work building an elaborate sandcastle by the water’s edge, with gates and towers and moats and internal passages. Just when they had nearly finished their project, a big wave came and knocked it down, reducing it to a heap of wet sand. I expected the children to burst into tears, devastated by what had happened to all their hard work. But they surprised me. Instead, they ran up the shore away from the water, laughing and holding hands, and sat down to build another castle. I realized that they had taught me an important lesson. All the things in our lives, all the complicated structures we spend so much time and energy creating, are built on sand. Only our relationships to other people endure. Sooner or later, the wave will come along and knock down what we have worked so hard to build up. When that happens, only the person who has somebody’s hand to hold will be able to laugh.

*Harold Kushner, When All You’ve Ever Wanted Isn’t Enough*

## On Brokenness

### **Fusing the Torn Fragments of the Soul**

"Whoever said that my soul is torn, spoke well... We cannot imagine a person whose soul is not torn. Only an inanimate object can be whole. A human being, however, is filled with conflicting aspirations, and an inner war rages within him continuously. Man's true mission is to fuse the torn fragments of his soul by means of an all-inclusive concept, an idea whose magnitude and eminence encompasses everything else, bringing it to complete harmony." *From An Angel Among Men (English translation, by Rabbi Moshe Lichtman, of Simcha Raz's biography of Rav Kook called Adam c'Vnei Malachim), page 11*

### **Fragments in the Ark**

Rav Yehudah says: "...Be careful [to respect] an old man who has forgotten his knowledge through no fault of his own,\* for it was said: 'Both the whole tables and the fragments of the tables were placed in the Ark.'\*\*"

\* i.e., as a result of illness or struggle for a livelihood.

\*\*See Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 14b.

*Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 8b*

### **In Spite of Illness and Sorrow**

In spite of illness, in spite even of the archenemy sorrow, one can remain alive long past the usual date of disintegration if one is unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things, and happy in small ways.

*Edith Wharton, US novelist (1862 - 1937) in A Backward Glance: An Autobiography, page xix*

### **A Flute, A Cymbal, A Mortar**

*from Babylonian Talmud, Arakhin 10b*

The rabbis taught in a b'raita: There was a flute and it was smooth, thin, and made of a reed. It was from the days of Moses. The king gave a command and they overlaid it with gold. Then its sound was no longer pleasing. They removed the gold overlay and its voice became pleasing like it was before (the overlay).

There was a cymbal in the Temple and it was made of copper. Its sound was pleasing. It became damaged. The sages sent for and brought craftsmen from Alexandria in Egypt. They repaired it, but its sound was not pleasing. (So) they removed the repair. (After they removed the repair) its sound was pleasing as it had been before.

There was a mortar in the Temple and the mortar was made of copper. It had been around since the days of Moses. It was used to prepare/grind the spices. {According to Rashi, when you prepared the spices on it, it gave off a beautiful sound} It became damaged. The sages brought craftsmen from Alexandria in Egypt and they repaired it. However, it did not prepare the spices like it used to (prepare the spices). They removed the repair and then it prepared the spices like it used to (prepare the spices).

## On Humility

### **Each in Our Own Place**

Rabbi Abraham Yaakov of Sadagora (died 1883) was asked: According to our sages in *Pirkei Avot*, “There is not a thing that has not its place.” So humanity, too, has its own place. Why then do people sometimes feel so crowded? He replied: Because each wants to occupy the place of the other.

### **Small Enough...**

After an evening of talk, perhaps about the fringes of knowledge, or some new possibility of climbing into the minds and senses of animals, we would go out on the lawn, where we took turns at an amusing little astronomical rite. We searched until we found, with or without glasses, the faint, heavenly spot of light-mist beyond the lower left-hand corner of the Great Square of Pegasus, when one or the other of us would then recite:

“That is the Spiral Galaxy in Andromeda.

“It is as large as our Milky Way.

“It is one of a hundred million galaxies.

“It is 750,000 light-years away.

“It consists of one hundred billion suns,  
each larger than our sun.”

After an interval, Colonel Roosevelt would grin at me and say: “Now I think we are small enough! Let’s go to bed.”

We must have repeated this salutary ceremony forty or fifty times in the course of years, and it never palled.

From *The Book of Naturalists* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944, p. 234); quoted in *The Interpreter’s Bible* (NY: Abingdon Press, 1956) vol. V, p. 436, in connection with Isaiah 40:12-17

## On Forgetting and Forgoing

A day's happiness makes misfortune to be forgotten,  
and a day's misfortune makes happiness to be forgotten.  
*Apocrypha of Ben Sira, 11:25*

Were it not for the ability to forget, a man would never be free from melancholy.  
*Bahya, Hovot HaLvavot, 1040 (2:5)*

It is the lot of man to suffer, it is also his fortune to forget.  
*Benjamin Disraeli, Vivian Grey, 1827*

### **Forgoing "Exacting One's Measure" for A New Lease on Life**

Raba said: He who forgoes his right [to exact punishment]<sup>1</sup> is forgiven all his iniquities, as it says, "Forgiving iniquity and passing by transgression." (*Micah 7:18*) Who is forgiven iniquity? One who passes by transgression [against himself].

R. Huna the son of R. Joshua was once ill. R. Papa went to inquire about him. He saw that he was very ill<sup>2</sup> and said to those present, "Prepare provisions for his everlasting journey."<sup>3</sup>

Eventually, however, R. Huna recovered, and R. Papa felt ashamed to see him. He said to him, "What did you see (in your illness)?"

R. Huna replied, "It was indeed as you thought, but the Holy Blessed One said to the angels: 'Because he does not insist upon his rights, do not be particular with him, as it says, *Forgiving iniquity and passing by transgression*. (Micha 7:18.) Who is forgiven iniquity? He who passes by transgression.'"

Notes:

- (1) Lit., 'passes by his measures' or 'does not exact his measure.'
- (2) Lit. 'the world (life) was getting weak for him'.
- (3) I.e., prepare shrouds.

From *Babylonian Talmud, Rosh HaShannah 17a*

### **L'khaf Z'khut: Giving the Benefit of the Doubt**

The Ba'al Shem Tov (1700-1760) said: We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves (*Leviticus 19:18*), and the Talmud commands (*Pirkei Avot 1:6*) us to give everyone the benefit of the doubt. Just as we always find excuses for our own misdeeds, so make excuses also for your neighbor.

Once, when Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (1740-1810) was in the bathhouse, his coat was stolen. He returned home and his wife noticed he was without his coat and asked him where it was. The Rebbe replied that someone had taken the coat, doubtless mistaking it for his own. His wife then asked, In that case, where is his coat? Levi Yitzchak replied, He must have forgotten to leave it!

**Preface:** In our fragmented, heavily diagnosis-oriented systems, we often neglect to assess individuals' and families' innate or historical resources – and to help them name and access these as tools or supports in their healing. (Please note: It doesn't really matter *how* you classify these – what matters most is that we notice and identify them.) Someone may be very limited in one area and rich in another, and many people may never have considered/named their diverse resources, especially some more intangible ones. The questions noted below are simply suggestions – not a fixed formula!

## **Seven Dimensions of Resilience/Resources\***

*Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, LCSW © 2008-9*

### **1. Physical/Material:**

*What bodily diseases or difficulties have you met/overcome before, and how?*

*Where/how are you currently able, strong and/or whole? Physically open and growing?*

*In the past, what physical blessings have served you well?*

*Is there an object or place that helps you feel grounded, serene, joyous, and/or peaceful?*

### **2. Emotional:**

*What are your emotional gifts – which emotions are you 'good at' or experienced with?*

*What emotional struggling have you done, with some success and growth?*

*To what positive emotions do you default (self-soothing, humor, self-assertion...)?*

*Right now, what emotional 'muscles' are highly developed, accessible, active – such as impatience, fear, relief, anger, curiosity, anxiety, gratitude, etc., etc.?*

### **3. Cultural**

*What characteristics of your culture – from your community of origin and/or current identifications – could serve you now, or as you move ahead?*

*Whether you like these or not, how might they be part of your useful 'toolkit'?*

### **4. Social/Familial**

*What relationships do you have in your life that can be nurturing/helpful, in any way?*

*In the past, which relationships (family, friends, work, etc.) truly supported you when you needed help/support?*

*Which blessings did you inherit from your family or friendship circle?*

*Which relationships gave you lasting gifts – and what are these?*

*Which relationships could you nurture?*

### **5. Cognitive**

*What cognitive strengths do you bring to problem-solving in relation to your health?*

*In what academic subjects did you, or would you like to, shine?*

*When did a 'different approach' to thinking/learning contribute to your progress?*

*Can you recall an experience of reframing or 're-thinking' that helped you?*

### **6. Sensual**

*Which of your senses have been particularly available, strong, impactful?*

*Are you oriented more to: Sight? Smell? Sound? Movement? Touch? Taste?*

*What have been your most sustaining experiences in Nature?*

### **7. Spiritual**

*How do you see yourself in this life, on this planet, in terms of purpose and identity?*

*Do you identify with certain spiritual images, stories, sayings, rituals?*

*How/Do you connect with a Higher Power, or The Big Picture, or Transcendence?*

*Have you dealt with something difficult and found meaning in it or through it?*

*\*Many thanks to Michael Harrison, Rechel Schoenfeld, Amy Berenson, and other colleagues who helped with this.*

## Required Helpfulness

Individuals having to contend with stressful and dangerous situations may sometimes experience enduring positive changes in their lives when they are required to perform actions that significantly help others in their personal times of need. Rachman (1979\*) refers to this phenomenon as “required helpfulness.” It was originally observed among the citizens of war-torn Britain during World War II. Doctors found that after aerial bombardments, citizens who served the immediate needs of others, to essentially protect the safety and well-being of others, experienced fewer than anticipated adverse psychological reactions from the trauma of the aerial assaults. One observer even noted that individuals who were of poor mental health prior to the air raids were actually faring much better following the raids if they had a personally satisfying job to perform that others saw as socially necessary....

The phenomenon of required helpfulness has also been tested experimentally. Researchers asked a group of individuals who were very fearful of snakes to help other individuals with similar fears. By modeling effective coping strategies, the helpers actually experienced a reduction in their own fear responses...

From Mark Katz, *On Playing a Poor Hand Well* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997)

\*S. Rachman, “The concept of required helpfulness,” *Behavior Research and Therapy*, 17 (1979), pp 1-6.



**Helping One Another**

None of us has solid ground under his feet; each of us is only held up by the neighborly hands holding him by the scruff, with the result that we are each held up by the next man, and often, indeed most of the time, hold each other up mutually.

*Franz Rosenzweig, in a letter written to his future sister-in-law*

Judaism is less about believing and more about belonging. It is less about what we owe God and more about what we owe each other, because we believe God cares more about how we treat each other than He does about our theology.

*Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, To Life!*

### Meeting at Peter's Bench/October 28, 2004

Better to lease one garden and cultivate it, than to lease many and neglect them.

*Midrash Ecclesiastes Rabbah, 4:6*

The Holy Blessed One led Adam through the Garden of Eden, and said:

“I created all My beautiful and glorious works for your sake.

Take heed not to corrupt and destroy My world!”

*Midrash Ecclesiastes Rabbah, 7:13*

Because of the thorns, uproot not a garden! *Al-Harizi, Tahkemoni, 13<sup>th</sup> century, Chapter 1*

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. As long as this exists, and it certainly always will, I know that then there will always be comfort for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances may be. And I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles. -- *Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl, 1947*

I know that God loves beauty, for He allows it to flourish everywhere, even in unexpected places. In the woods He has scattered all kinds of wild flowers. In a ruin wrought by men, who have cut down beautiful trees and left the brush in disorder, the Creator has caused the ungainly sight to be covered over with a verdant growth: raspberry bushes have come up and new trees are growing. It is He who made the sunrise and the sunset, the towering mountains, and the sharp drop of the lowlands. He made the birds with the infinite variety of their plumage, and He wrought a child's smile.

I know, too, that God loves beauty, because He placed the love of beauty in the human heart. He inspired the vision of artists, from whose soul the beauty of the world evokes the resonance of a new beauty, of their own creating. And even those who are not so deeply inspired know instinctively how to choose the beautiful and shun the ugly. *Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser (1907-1984)*

We know ourselves to be made from this earth. We know this earth is made from our bodies. For we see ourselves. And we are nature. We are nature seeing nature. We are nature with a concept of nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature. *Susan Griffin, Women and Nature, 1980*

As I kneel to put the seeds in  
careful as stitching, I am in love.

You are the bed we all sleep on.

You are the food we eat, the food  
we ate, the food we will become.

We are walking trees rooted in you.

*Marge Piercy, "The Common Living Dirt," in Stone, Paper, Knife, 1983*

When you see a beautiful plant, pronounce the blessing:

”Praised be the One who creates beautiful things.”

*Tosefta B'rakhot*

## 10 Healing Activities in Nature, with Lines from Psalms/Tehillim as Kavvanot

With candle-lighting: *Ki Ata ta'ir neiri, Adonai, Elohai, ya-giah hosh-ki.*

It is You who lights my candle; Adonai, my God, illumines the darkness. (*Psalms 18:29*)

With planting seeds or nurturing plants:

*V'haya k'etz sha-tul al pal-gei mayyim,  
Asher piryo yi-ten b'ito, V'a-leihu lo yi-bol,  
V'khol a-sherr ya'aseh yatz-liah.*

Like a tree planted alongside streams of water,  
which will yield its fruit in season, whose foliage will not fade,  
and all it undertakes succeeds. (*Psalms 1:3*)

With stroking a pet: *Tov Adonai lakol, v'rahamav al kol ma'asav*

Adonai extends Goodness to all; Adonai's Compassion reaches all creatures. (*Psalms 145:9*)

With breathing slowly: *Kol ha-n'shama t'hallel Yah; Kol ha-n'shama t'hallel Yah;*

Let every breath praise Yah/God, Let every breath praise Yah/God! (*Psalms 150:6, twice*)

With walking:

*Horeini Adonai darkeh-kha, A'halekh ba'amitehkha  
Ya-heid l'va-vi l'yir-ah sh'meh-kha.*

Teach me, Adonai, Your Way, I will walk in Your truth;  
Make my heart one/whole, in awe of Your Name. (*Psalms 86:11*)

With walking through the woods:

*Ya'aloz saddai v'khol asher bo, Az y'ra-n-nu kol atzei ya'ar!*

Let the fields and everything in them exult; All the trees of the forest will shout for joy!  
(*Psalms 96:12*)

With watching clouds roll by:

*Ha-sha-mayim sha-mayim la-donai -- V'ha-aretz na-than liv-nei a-dahm.*

The heavens belong to Adonai -- but the earth Adonai gave to humankind. (*Psalms 115: 16*)

With enjoying bodies of water

*Asherr lo ha-yam v'Hu a-sa-hu,*

*V'ya-beh-shet yadav yatzaru.*

God's is the sea, God made it;

The land – God's Hands fashioned. (*Psalms 95:5*)

With joining in sunrises or sunsets:

*Mi-mizrah sheh-mesh ahd m'vo-o*

*M'hu-lal shem Adonai!*

From the east, where the sun rises, to where it sets

Adonai's Name is praised! (*Psalms 113: 3*)

When handling or exploring rocks:

*Even ma'asu ha-bonim ha-y'ta l'rosh pinah.*

The stone rejected by the builders became the chief cornerstone! (*Psalms 118:22*)

**Eight Possible Ways in Which Prayer May “Work”**  
compiled by Rabbi Amy Eilberg  
(borrowed from  
*Acts of Lovingkindness: A Training Manual for Bikkur Holim*  
by Rabbi Nancy Flam, Janet Offel, and Rabbi Amy Eilberg)

A. Prayer may “work” in that one may have asked God for something which indeed came about.

B. Prayer may “work” by invoking a greater sense of God’s presence.

C. Prayer may “work” by way of distraction, momentarily pulling the one who is ill out of his or her pain and suffering into a place of beauty or transcendence.

D. Prayer may “work” by way of focusing more deeply on the pain or discomfort in the suffering person’s life; in this way, prayer can be deeply grounding and clarifying.

(These last two examples may be compared to different techniques in childbirth preparation: one technique, Lamaze, uses distraction, while the Bradley method helps women to enter the pain more deeply and wholly.)

E. Prayer may “work” by quieting or centering the self.

F. Prayer may “work” by significantly connecting the one praying or being prayed for with Jewish community and tradition.

G. Prayer may “work” by helping the one praying or being prayed for to connect to a deep level of the self which is already healed and whole, reminding the person of his or her essential wholeness. Music, for instance, often has the capacity to put us in touch with that deep place of essential wholeness.

H. Prayer may “work” in focusing the pray-er on the blessings in his or her life, enabling him or her to magnify his or her sense of gratitude.

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A quote attributed to Miles Davis, which may reflect the matter of *keva/kavannah*:  
"I spent 20 years learning how to play the trumpet right,  
and 20 more learning how to play it wrong."

**The Three-Fold Blessing of the Ancient *Kohanim*/Priests**  
(Numbers 6: 24-26)

**A Three-Part Blessing/Meditation**

*Y'va-reh-kh-kha A-donai v'yish-m'reh-kha;*

May A-donai bless you and protect you.

*Safety*

*Integrity*

*Trust*

*Ya-air A-donai panav ey-leh-kha vi'hu-neh-ka;*

May A-donai illumine the Divine Presence for you, extending *hen*/grace to you.

*Light*

*Memory*

*Insight*

*Yi-sa A-donai panav ey-leh-kha v'ya-seim l'kha shalom.*

May A-donai lift you up with the Divine Presence, granting you *shalom*/peace.

*Reintegration*

*Reconnection*

*Wholeness*