

Mourning begins long before death. The idea of using the Mikvah as a medium of transition for end of life concerns came to me recently while expecting two losses in the coming months: First and foremost, the congregation is losing a dear member to cancer. Second -- the congregation is losing their Mikvah due to the sale of the building and lack of interest in maintaining it in any way. Most of the congregants have never even been in the Mikvah themselves; the president of the congregation didn't even know where it was located in the building. Hoping to enable at least some of the members to experience the transformative moment of immersion -- and also because Taharah is not possible given Covid-19 issues -- I asked my gravely ill congregant if he might want to use the Mikvah in this context. He was initially very interested. Thus I searched in the Taharah liturgy for appropriate texts; expanded them with some of my own words -- and hoped that this might meet his needs and support his situation in his last months of life. The challenge was to address the dying process as a continuum, instead of a portal that had already been passed through. In the meantime, he seems to have lost both energy and interest.