

May 3, 2019 /28 Nissan 5779

"The Universe is made of stories, not of atoms."

-Muriel Rukeyser

Dear chevreh,

Yesterday was Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. This past Sunday twelve KHN members were privileged to witness the stories of millions as presented artfully and sensitively at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. We read the stories of the historical events leading up to the murders, including international newspapers' accountings as it was unfolding. We got to see the Tower of Faces, the chronicling of images by Dr. Yaffa Eliach of the shtetl of Eishyshok which was decimated and whose inhabitants were almost wholly murdered during the Shoah. We read about righteous gentiles like Chiune Sugihara and Sister Marta Wolowska who risked their lives to save Jews. We read and heard accounts and testimonies from survivors in written words and in videos.

Then on Monday evening many KHN members and friends were fortunate to hear a survivor tell his story publicly for the first time. As he spoke, you could hear a pin drop. The quality of listening in the group was intense, respectful, engaged. Peoples' stories are sacred. How we listen to them shapes a particular encounter, and can touch lives for both the speakers and the listeners.

As we know, we are closing in on the period where people can hear live testimony from survivors. I was thrilled to see the teenagers present at KHN to hear the survivor's story, ensuring some of the next generation's first-hand knowledge.

Just this week a project was revealed which takes a story of a real girl named Eva Heyman – one who actually wrote a journal about her experiences as a Jew in Hungary after the Nazis took over and who went to Auschwitz- and describes what it would be like if she had an Instagram account. There have been mixed responses to this medium. As survivors won't be around much longer, and many Americans don't even know about the Holocaust, could it be that this is how the next generation will come to understand these stories? Perhaps this is indeed an innovative, potentially transformative idea. What do you think?

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/teens-journal-inspires-instagram-account-about-the-holocaust/2019/05/01/d4faa186-6b61-11e9-8f44->

