



# Beth Emeth Early Childhood Center

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## FEEDING YOUR SOUL

You never know how people are going to impact you and the impact you are going to have on others. Sometimes it catches you out of the blue – like it happened to me today. The woman I encountered this morning was giving me my annual blood test. She was friendly, warm and smiley and instantly made me feel at ease for a routine procedure that is NOT fun for me! What a difference she made, as I was immediately able to feel relaxed in her presence. But the frosting on the cake came when we began sharing stories of our lives and she said to me “Everyone needs to have a lover . . . not a person, but a thing. Something that you love to do – something that feeds your soul – something that makes life happy for you – isn’t that what life’s for?” Without ever intending to, her actions and words fed my soul this morning.

This experience brings up two things for me: One is the conscious choice we can make to feed our souls – the choice to prioritize and do the things that bring us happiness.

The other is the awareness of how much our actions can have an effect on others – whether we are aware of it or not, we can make a difference for another person. If you take a moment to look at these two you can see how they are connected. The more we choose to feed our souls, the happier we will be, the more potential our actions have to positively affect others – and have the ability to feed their souls!

As I think about how this relates to the preschool, it supports our belief that we need to be mindful that everything we do sends a message to the children. From the words we choose to say, to the tone we choose to use, to the materials we choose to set out, to the experiences we choose to create, to the non-verbal expressions we use, we must always remember that our actions affect the children. At BEECC, by encouraging the children to discover and explore things that bring them joy and reflecting on this

process with them, we have the unique opportunity and privilege to help children develop an understanding of what it feels like to feed their souls and feed the souls of others.

That being said, the other piece that is equally as important is that as teachers and parents, we need to make sure to take care of ourselves, “feed our souls” as my phlebotomist wisely said, so that we can be our best selves. It reminds me of the oxygen mask on the airplane. We must first put a mask on ourselves, so that we have the ability and strength to take care of the others around us. Without intentionally making the choice and time to feed our own souls, we won’t have the capacity to take care of others.

I can’t think of something better to think about and reflect upon as the High Holidays are upon us and the school year is about to begin. While fasting on Yom Kippur this year, as you refrain from feeding your body, I hope you think about this idea of feeding your soul. Find what brings you happiness and make it a priority. By feeding your own soul, you never know how many other souls you will touch just by being your best self.

In the spirit of honoring the competency and ideas of children, I believe my 8-year-old daughter said it best. When I asked her “What do you think it means to feed your soul?” She responded, “Kindness . . . whenever I do a good deed, the “food” goes into my heart, my soul, and it goes up to a new level where I can be kinder.” Whether the good deed is to honor your own joy or to bring joy to another, being kind to yourself and being kind to others will elevate you to be the kind of people G-d wants us to be.

*L’shanah tovah tikatevu ve techatemu*, may you be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life for a good year.

-- Robin