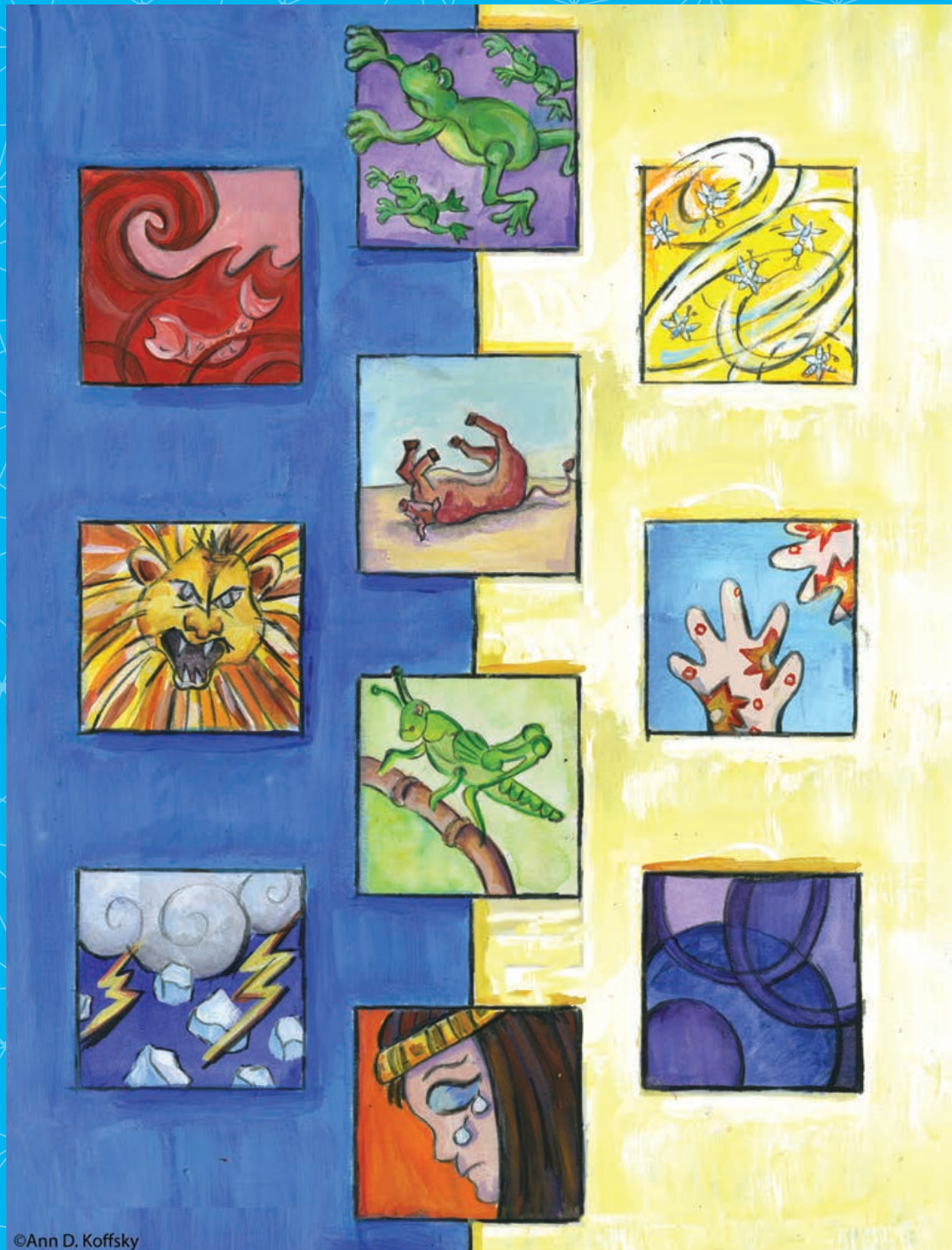


ON THIS NIGHT WE ARE ALL TEACHERS

Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education

HAGGADAH COMPANION / ISSUE II / PASSOVER 5781



In This Unusual Year: Pesach 5781

Our gratitude to Sharon and David Rauch
for sponsoring this edition of
On This Night We Are All Teachers

In honor of our children
and grandchildren
SHARON AND DAVID RAUCH

It is so familiar—the chanting of the plagues as we dip fingers or tilt glasses to empty a bit of wine, symbolically decreasing our joy as we recount the suffering visited on the Egyptians when Pharaoh refused Moshe’s request to let the Jews leave. This year, we sit at our seder table with the echo of the Covid-19 plague reverberating. The loss and pain so many have confronted is with us, coloring our understanding as the seder instructs us to experience the exodus from the horrors of *Mizrayim* as if we ourselves experienced it.

In times of great challenge, rituals remind and ground us, connecting us to calmer, better days. The seder provides us well-remembered words and actions to help us transition from slavery to freedom, from tragedy to redemption. Wondering which seder component to unpack for the 2021 Hagaddah companion it seemed obvious—this year we should explore the lessons of the ten plagues. It seemed especially important to provide teaching tips, activities and prompts to move our conversations and learning from a focus on the negative of plagues to the positive power of resilience. As will be the case in each year’s Hagaddah companion, developmentally prepared material for preschoolers, elementary school learners, tweens and teens and adults supports discussions where teaching and learning is accessible to all.

On This Night We Are All Teachers seems a particularly apt title in a year when so many did so much to ensure continued

Jewish learning, even as the world faced chaos. Learning relocated from classrooms to kitchen tables to park benches—but it happened, supported by parents and grandparents and of course by dedicated Jewish educators. We offer our admiration and our *Hakarat Hatov* for all the teaching and teachers that enriched Jewish learning. We hope this year’s Hagaddah companion provides you opportunities to go beyond plagues, to find a deeper understanding of suffering and healing, of faith and strength.

On behalf of the Azrieli Graduate School we offer our wish that your seder table, and the days ahead, are filled with joyous, meaningful learning, enjoyed with the blessing of good health for all.

Rona Milch Novick, PhD

Dean, Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education
and Administration

TEACHABLE MOMENT/TEACHING TIP

Resilience is defined as the ability to cope with stress or a crisis, and to adapt or grow despite difficulty. It is not an innate trait, but rather a learned and therefore teachable skill. When we help learners build a mindset and worldview that sees change as an opportunity and mistakes or roadblocks as a reason to try again, we build resilience. The seder is a story of resilience and growth, and invites us to consider what we have learned this year, how we developed our resilience and how we can help build it in others.

Preschool Learners: What's Plaguing You

AVIVA GOLDSTEIN | ROMA MILCH NOVICK

Many preschoolers learn songs and stories about the plagues, and many can easily rattle off *dam, tzifardeyah, kinnim*, etc. While adults may struggle with and enjoy discussing the deeper questions of why *Hashem* caused plagues to happen, why Pharaoh's heart was hardened and other existential and hashkafic exploration, preschoolers can be engaged on both the straightforward and more conceptual levels in ways that are developmentally appropriate. We present two versions of the "headbantz" game, one requiring simple recall and the other more personal thought. Both versions serve to engage preschoolers and can be used during the plague recitation during the seder, or at meal or other times.

A minimal amount of pre-*yom tov* preparation is necessary to print the cards or make your own.

PREPARATION

In advance of *yom tov* you need to print or make your own version of one card for each plague. The card should be blank on one side, and on the other have the name of the plague in English and Hebrew, and a pictorial representation that preschoolers will recognize. We have supplied our version of the ten plague cards beautifully illustrated by Ann Kriftsky on page 3, which you can print and cut before *yom tov*.

BASIC VERSION: WHAT PLAGUE IS ON YOUR

MIND? / YOUNGER PRESCHOOLERS

This is a guessing game in which the person whose turn it is (the guesser) holds a plague

card to their forehead so that they cannot see what is on the card, but everyone else (the clue givers) can. The guesser then asks questions to help them puzzle out which plague they have on their forehead. You can have the preschooler be the guesser for all of the plagues, or take turns with various seder participants as guessers. Since preschool attention span is limited, especially if they are not actively engaged, consider giving preschoolers multiple turns as the guesser.

Young preschoolers are quite concrete in their thinking and are just beginning to understand basic categories. For that reason, young preschoolers may ask very simple questions such as "am I frogs?" The teaching tips below offer two ways you can help preschoolers when they are confronting a new activity and one that involves conceptual thinking.

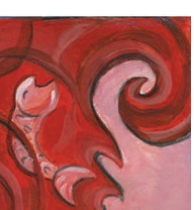
TEACHING TIP

Do an example. By having the first round include an adult as the guesser and modeling the types of questions that you can ask you provide preschoolers with a guide as to how to proceed. You may model questions like: *am I alive? Did I hurt people or animals? Did I fall from the sky? Do I jump or hop?* **Use prompts.** Even after examples, preschoolers benefit from prompts and assistance to help formulate questions. Clue givers can suggest questions such as "ask if it happened to water".

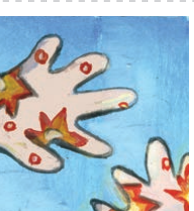
ADVANCED VERSION: WHAT'S PLAGUING YOU? / OLDER PRESCHOOLERS

Distribute the plague cards to people around the seder table. On your turn, you hold your plague card to your forehead and complete the following three sentences:

I think the plague of _____ is scary because _____
I think Hashem sent the plague of _____ because _____
Instead of the plague of _____, I am so happy that Hashem gives us a world with _____ in it.



Blood
דם



Boils
שחין



Frogs
צפרדע



Hail
ברד



Lice
כנים



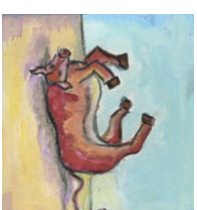
Locusts
ארבה



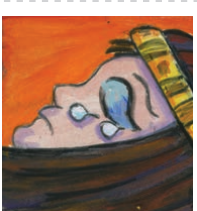
Wild Beasts
ערוב



Darkness
חשך



Animal Sickness
נבד



First Born
מכת בכורות

Elementary School Learners: Learning From Mistakes

BETHANY STRULOWITZ | LAYA SALOMON

Reflection is an indispensable ingredient of a successful Seder, as the Haggadah itself reminds us: "In each generation, we are obliged to view ourselves as though we had left Egypt." Cognitive psychology has documented the role reflection and, in particular, self-reflection, plays in promoting deep and lasting learning. Helping elementary age children learn about their learning (referred to as metacognition), drawing back the curtain on how learning happens, is one of the most powerful learning tools we can give them. The activities included here help build such reflection in elementary school learners. Since we are considering the Ten Plagues, we recommend focusing on what lessons we may learn from reflecting on the novel and unanticipated experiences of the past year as well as the powerful metacognitive tool of reflecting on and learning from mistakes.

John Dewey, an education scholar, famously wrote, "We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience." The learner reviews his/her actions, makes adjustments and corrections, and thus propels the learning process forward. Helping elementary aged learners develop a habit of self-reflection supports their growth into becoming lifelong learners. A challenge to overcome, however, is the natural disinclination to admit one's errors and to see errors as roadblocks rather than stepping-stones. The activities below help shift elementary age learners' beliefs about mistakes by exploring Pharaoh's actions in response to the 10 plagues.

INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

Ask elementary learners to consider Pharaoh, who is described as "hardening his heart," likely an indication that he was unable or unwilling to reflect on his actions and their consequences. If only Pharaoh could have developed the skill of self-reflection in his youth! Instead, we find him making the same mistake over and over again while nevertheless expecting different results each time.

Share some or all of these examples or ask elementary learners to suggest one:

1. After the plague of frogs (*tz'fardei'a*) was removed by Moshe at a time of Pharaoh's choosing, it says: "Pharaoh saw that there was a respite (a break); he hardened his heart and ignored them" (Exodus 8:11).
2. After it was reported to Pharaoh that the plague of disease (*deyer*) had not affected Jewish livestock, he called for an investigation. Even though it confirmed the initial report, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not release the people" (9:7).
3. After the plague of locusts (*arbeh*), Pharaoh's own counselors advised him to let the people go, saying: "Would you sooner see that Egypt has been lost?" (10:7). Even though he initially consented, he just as quickly went back on his word and chased Moshe and Aharon out of his presence (11).

DISCUSSION QUESTION

What are some things we learn from Pharaoh's behavior?

TEACHING TIP

Open-ended questions provide students with an opportunity to stretch their reasoning, resourcefulness, creativity, and independence. With no single right or wrong answer, open-ended questions enable students to think more deeply. Open-ended questions typically include words like *may, might, possibly, or could*, and they often begin by encouraging multiple responses with phrases like *how many ways, what are some reasons, or how many solutions*. The aim is to encourage children by suggesting that all answers are plausible and worthy of sharing!

Choose one or all of the following activities to engage learners during the seder or at other times during the holiday.

ACTIVITY: NO WRONG ANSWERS

Roll a die, or tell participants to choose a number from 1–6, and discuss the corresponding open-ended question.

1. Why do you think people repeat the same mistakes?
2. What does it mean to *learn* from mistakes?
3. How might making a mistake be a good thing?
4. What would be an appropriate reaction after making a mistake or failing at something? What should you tell yourself and feel?
5. What might be an incorrect reaction after making a mistake or failing? What should you not tell yourself and not feel?
6. Some of the greatest people are actually individuals who once made the biggest mistakes and experienced huge failures. How do you think they became great?

ACTIVITY: HOW GROWN-UPS GROW

It is helpful for children to hear that the adults in their lives face challenges, make mistakes, and learn from the process. Invite adult seder participants to share a personal story of a time they learned from failure, and how they grew from the experience. You may open the floor to anyone who wants to share or pre-plan and have guests ready to respond.

ACTIVITY: GREAT MISTAKES

Read or share stories of failures on the part of famous people. Some Tanakh examples include Yosef (who reported on his dreams of ruling over his brothers), and Moshe Rabbeinu (hitting the rock). Some secular examples include George Washington and Thomas Jefferson (kept slaves), Thomas Edison (failed inventions), J.K. Rowling (publisher refusals), and Albert Einstein (did poorly in school).

ACTIVITY: TAKE A BOW

Celebrate failures and mistakes in a dramatic way. Each person takes a turn, stands in front of the room and announces, with great enthusiasm, a (safe) failure or mistake they made, explains what lesson he or she learned, or can learn from it, and then takes an exaggerated bow. The audience claps and cheers loudly. Examples of mistakes include, "I wore the wrong shoes to work!" or "I forgot most of my lines during the class play!" In this way, children learn to embrace mistakes and failure as necessary stops on the journey to success.

Tween/Teen Learners: Making It Personal

JOSH GOLD | MOSHE KRAKOWSKI

As we prepare for our *sedarim*, it is important to recognize that the deepest learning does not occur when we simply tell our children what they need to know. Rather, the most powerful transmission of our *masorah* occurs when we activate learners' curiosity by asking questions that promote critical thinking and inquiry development, and model active listening skills when having conversations. This type of authentic learning is the most reliable way to ensure our tweens and teens feel a sense of ownership over their Judaism and, in the words of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z"l, "turn history into memory." Such student-centered cognitive engagement is also perfectly aligned with adolescent development, which allows for significant abstract thinking.

This year, more than any other in recent times, engaging in conversation around the *makkot* is both relevant and relatable. As society grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, our awareness of the pain and disruption that widespread afflictions can have on our lives has never been greater. There is no doubt that tweens and teens, themselves directly impacted by the pandemic, have much on their minds and much to share.

The discussion prompts below are designed to engage tween/teen high level cognitive skills while asking them to relate and connect the ten plagues, the current world reality, and their personal experience and growth. Choose one or several to begin a dialogue with your tween/teen.

TEACHING TIP: ENGAGING TWEENS AND TEENS

Tween and teen children are at a stage of life where they are able to see nuance and complexity in things that may have seemed simple and straightforward in the past. They are able to move from the concrete to the abstract with greater facility, and then relate those abstract ideas back to their personal lives. In discussing the makkot, it may be helpful to challenge tweens/teens to consider how their own experiences of COVID-19 might provide insight. How has this experience changed them? What lessons have they learned?

PROMPT 1: GOOD FROM BAD

While the *makkot* were extremely harsh, punishing the Egyptian nation severely, they also birthed the freedom of the Jewish people, and brought an awareness of monotheism to the world.

Despite all the suffering in the pandemic, are there any good things that have happened?

- Some things that you might consider with your tweens/teens are the tremendous advancements in technology and medicine, an increased focus on our values and priorities, and the increased *chesed* that has arisen in light of the extreme challenges.
- It may be worth recalling the Lubavitcher Rebbe's comment that the *makkot* should not be seen primarily as plagues of punishment, but plagues of pedagogy (education), because out of the pain there are lessons and there is growth.
- What other avenues of growth might your tweens/teens suggest?
- Are there other aspects of the seder that might provide a template?

PROMPT 2: BALANCING GRATITUDE AND EMPATHY

While much of the seder is an expression of *hakarat hatov* to God, we are also acutely aware of the Egyptian suffering. We ourselves never forget the pain we experienced in Egypt, and so we have empathy for the pain the Egyptians suffered as well. This is the reason Abudhrham (Spain, 13th century) says we spill out a drop of wine after each plague, as it is connected to the verse in Proverbs (24:17), "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls." Even as we rejoice in the good that ultimately came out of the plagues, we shed a tear for those who suffered.

How can we balance our sense of gratitude to God with other seemingly conflicting emotions?

- How can we thank God for the *makkot* while also bemoaning the Egyptian suffering?
- How might *hakarat hatov* play a role in our response to the pandemic?
- How can we hold diametrically opposing emotions simultaneously?

PROMPT 3: SHORT CIRCUITING NEGATIVE CYCLES

Aside from all of the death and suffering in the pandemic, there have been secondary challenges that have arisen—challenges that have put pressure on existing stressors in society. From political and religious polarization, to Zoom fatigue, and financial challenges, society has struggled to maintain an even keel.

Is there a way to stop the vicious cycle of negativity that can come from the stress of a pandemic?

- In thinking about our sorrow at Egyptian suffering, consider how we, in today's day and age, might relate to our "enemies"?
- How does worship of God change one's orientation towards suffering? What was the significance of the Korban Pesach at the time of the Egyptians' greatest punishment?
- Consider Pharaoh's lack of empathy for Jewish suffering. When he and his people suffered, why did he not develop empathy for the Jewish slaves? How can we use our experiences of the pandemic to develop empathy for others?

Adult Learners: Who's The Audience for the Plagues: Some Meaningful Seder Discussions

PENINA BERNSTEIN | ILANA TURETSKY

The Ten Plagues play a central role in the story of *Yezti'at Mitzrayim* (the exodus from Egypt). While the plagues provide a captivating storyline, they also prompt a variety of questions—one important one being who their target audience is. We will explore three potential answers—(1) *Egyptians*, (2) nations of the world, and (3) the Jewish nation—and consider the associated messages that are communicated.

AUDIENCE ONE: EGYPTIANS

The *Midrash Aggadah* (*Sefer Shemot* 7:15:1) underscores the idea that the plagues were directed at the Egyptians, with each plague executed using the principle of "*Midah K'neged Middah*" (measure for measure).

For example, the Egyptians, sent Jewish men to tend cattle in far-away fields to separate them from their wives and prevent Jewish population growth. In response the plague of pestilence decimated Egyptians' livestock.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can *Midah K'Neged Middah* be found for each plague—how does each connect to specific *Egyptian* actions?
- What underlies *Midah K'neged Middah*? Is it the idea of fairness or something else?

Perhaps the primary purpose wasn't retribution but rather to teach the Egyptians important ideological beliefs—

"וְיָדַעְתָּ מָחָר כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהִים"—"The Egyptians will know that I am God,

through my stretching out of my hand over Egypt" (*Shemot* 7:5).

As expounded upon by the Ramban (*Shemot* 13:18), the plagues were meant to send a powerful message to the Egyptians that idolatry is futile. God is the ultimate power in the world. A final possibility is that the plagues were pragmatic: a mechanism to convince Pharaoh to free the Jews, catalyzing the redemption (*Shemot* 3:20 & 7:27, and *Rabag* 9:7).

AUDIENCE TWO: NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Suggested in the *Tosafot Hashalem* (*Shemot* 7:3. With appreciation to the alhatorah.org website), the purpose of the *makkot* was to teach the world about God's dominance and control over the world. The plagues also demonstrated to current and future generations their fate should they try to oppress the Jewish nation.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

If you could broadcast a message to the world, what message would you choose?

TEACHING TIP

Use participants' names whenever possible—Names help people feel seen and heard, which invites further engagement.

AUDIENCE THREE: BNEI YISRAEL

With the Jewish nation as their audience, the plagues demonstrate concepts critical for the Jews' physical and spiritual salvation.

Rashi (*Shemot* 7:3) states that God's primary intention was to unequivocally exhibit His strength and control over the world (see *Shemot* 10:2 & 14:31). The Ramban (*Shemot* 13:6) expounds on this by sharing the layers of Emunah (belief) that God sought to impart: that He created the world and established the laws of nature; that He continues to know and be involved in the details of the world; and that no force in the world is stronger than Him. While Ramban seems to suggest that these lessons were meant to be learned by Jews and Mitzrim, only Jews were commanded to memorialize these events, making them part of the Jewish heritage. Knowing these truths was a prerequisite for receiving the Torah, establishing the authenticity of God and, by extension, the system of mitzvot that He would share with us. Beliefs regarding God's involvement in our personal lives are explored by many scholars as an important dimension of our spiritual persona.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Share an experience in which you felt the hand of God in your life.

TEACHING TIP

Seder participants may have varied backgrounds. Questions that ask about personal experiences rather than requiring knowledge or skill can help all learners participate in rich discussions.

Alternate understandings relate to the slave mentality of the Jews. When confronted with obstacles they might wish to return to Egypt. The plagues resulted in the Egyptians chasing out the Jews, eliminating this possibility. Also, as slaves, Bnei Yisrael had witnessed and experienced Egyptians persecuting Jewish families, seemingly without any accountability. It was critical for the Jews to witness a demonstration of justice in response to this behavior. The Torah would be given to free people, and a sense of personal responsibility and agency, and appreciation for God's world as one of justice, accountability, and order needed to be communicated.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

What psychological mechanisms would create a desire to return to slavery, a condition in which you have no personal choice or responsibility? To what extent do you think people today (religious or secular) live with a sense of personal responsibility/accountability? What forces build accountability in your life? When is accountability liberating and when is it constricting?

TEACHING TIP

A pre-planned follow up to a question deepens discussions. Follow up can include new questions, connection to other historical or personal events, or invite judgement or evaluation. Open-ended rather than yes/no questions also cultivate discussion. Rather than, "Is it surprising that the Jews would want to return to Egypt?" ask "How can we understand the Jews' desire to return to Egypt after being so mistreated there?"

CONCLUSION

The ambiguity relating to the intended audience of the Eser Makkot makes for interesting discussions and highlights their far-reaching implications for all audiences, and for us at our seder tables.

Mourning and Mending: Finding Healing and Hope in These Fraught Times

KAREN SHAWN

We try to imagine our trials in Egypt; we recite the *makkor* that betell the Egyptians, up to and including the death of the firstborn. These events are painful, bleak; they required great resilience to endure. While we don't know how individual Egyptians reacted and eventually rallied, we do know *our* story: It is one of redemption, of Exodus.

We were 600,000 strong and had Moshe Rabeinu and the outstretched arm of Hashem Himself to intercede, guide, and ultimately save us. Today, though, as we are the ones enduring the trial of plague, often bereft and alone, we have no Moshe to intercede, and we may not recognize the hand of Hashem if we have lost loved ones, are without *parnassa*, or have fallen ill ourselves. How, then, do we find the strength to rally, to journey through the current desert of despair to the promised land of good health, open schools, and full employment?

Perhaps we can look to Holocaust survivors to see how they summoned resilience. Of course, not all did; the French survivor Charlotte Delbo writes, "As far as I'm concerned / I'm still there / dying there / a little more each day / dying over again / the death of those who died" (*Auschwitz and After*, 1995). Many others, though, live fruitful lives touched with joy. How do they do it? How did they balance the necessary tasks of mourning and then mending?

When the poet Sarah Traister Moskowitz writes in Yiddish, she "restores the bond"

between her murdered family and herself (Fishman, 2007, pp. 553–554). Israeli artist Daniela Rosenhouse paints photos of her murdered family along with photos of her family today and hangs the paintings throughout her home. "Thus," she says, "the dead and the living come together to form a whole. I am trying to fill the void, mend the broken parts, and bring these people forth from oblivion" (PRISM, Spring 2011, Vol. 3, pp. 83-89).

Restore the bond, *fill* the void, *mend* the broken parts: I think this is, in part, how we move from trauma to the post-traumatic growth-work of healing and building, from being focused only on tragedy to being focused as well on the here and now—and on the future.

How do we do this? Sometimes it is by researching, learning, and commemorating. For mending after the Shoah, that might mean interviewing and befriending local survivors. Today, it might mean researching the remarkable medical advances made by Israeli and other scientists working to cure Covid-19; volunteering at vaccination sites; befriending the homebound; or learning about those in your community who have passed away and sending condolence notes to the bereaved.

For others, mending comes from reading: true stories of resistance, defense, and defiance during the Holocaust; of devotion and sacrifice of essential workers today. Even as we read about the camps and find

no solace, no lessons, we *can* uncover significance, hope, and meaning in tales of courage and resilience that some Jews exhibited there. As we read about heroic and death today, we also learn about heroic nurses who held iPads for patients to see their loved ones, who sang to them, or spent months in quarantine to avoid infecting their own families as they tended to patients daily.

Survivor Viktor Frankl speaks of "the depth and vigor of religious belief" in the camps. In Oriana Ivy's poem "God's Hearing," for instance, the women in her grandmother's barrack pray so loudly that a kapo rushes in, "shouting, *Not so loud! God is not hard of hearing!*" (PRISM, Spring 2012, Vol. 4, p. 83). Today we read of courageous rabbis and chaplains who pray with those suffering, even if only through a computer, and comfort their worried or bereaved families, even as they stand masked and six feet distant.

Psychologists speculate that processing events of the Holocaust "may be easier ... when [they are] framed in terms of survival and rebuilding rather than [only] victimization and trauma" (PRISM, Spring 2011, Vol. 3, p. 112). We celebrate survivors' will to live and rebuild. Today, we celebrate those who survive Covid-19 after months of hospitalization and now devote themselves to helping others.

Learning about resilience post-Holocaust helps us acknowledge that if people survive tragedy, they can often overcome its devastating effects. This understanding is crucial

if we are to be able to take some meaning from adversity and grow by incorporating this meaning into our lives. We learn that there can, eventually, be healing after anguish. Our collective grandparents—survivors, related to us or not—share their strength through their stories and hope those truths will help sustain us through our troubling times. We owe it to them and to the next generation to mourn this fraught time, but also to mend; to remember it, but also to continue, because we are a people, as the Seder illustrates, of remembering and continuing.

Through sharing uplifting truths, along with devastating ones, of our trials in Egypt and the Exodus; of those who were murdered and those who survived the Holocaust; and of those who perished and those who endured this pandemic, we, too, can find healing and hope in this difficult time we all share.

About the Contributors

Penina Bernstein, Azrieli doctoral candidate, is a Tanach teacher at SKA HS for Girls, as well as Campus Rebbeztin at Stern College. *The year of COVID has made me a more resilient educator by pushing me to try new ways to spiritually reach my students in both virtual and in-person settings.*

Joshua Gold, Azrieli doctoral candidate, worked in the New York City Department of Education for ten years and has been the principal of HAETR Middle School in Lawrence, New York for the past five years. *The year of COVID clarified my priorities and values and has allowed me to pause and appreciate many of the smaller things in life (a walk with my family, completing a puzzle with my kids) on a deeper level.*

Aviva Goldstein, EDD, is an individual and family counselor, educator, lecturer and consultant based in Jerusalem. *In the year of COVID I learned that my studies in resilience have been important to me, but watching it actually happen, in real time, in the lives of those around us, is extraordinary.*

Moshe Krakowski, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Azrieli Graduate School for Jewish Education and Administration at Yeshiva University and directs Azrieli's Master's program in Jewish education. *Everyone has been struggling to do the right thing when so few of us know what that actually is. I have learned to be more tolerant of others as we all work through the reality of life during Covid.*

Rona Milch Novick, PhD, Dean, Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration, Raiane & Stanley Silverstein Chair in Ethics. *The year of COVID taught me that even when you are separated from family, love travels across distances and can be shared on Facetime—and that even when so much is terrible, you can appreciate your blessings.*

Laya Salomon, EDD is Associate Professor at the Azrieli Graduate School and Director of Azrieli's PELE Fellowship Master's program. *This year of COVID taught me that anything is possible, and nothing is impossible. The Creator is in charge of His creations. (I am a pawn in this big vast world and can only focus on trying my best to move, one baby step at a time, closer to my life goals.)*

Karen Shawn, PhD, is associate professor at the Azrieli Graduate School of Yeshiva University (YU), founding editor of YU's publication *PRISM: An interdisciplinary Journal for Holocaust Educators*, and board member of YU's new Fish Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. *The recipient of prestigious awards for Holocaust education, she has written over 60 articles and essays on Holocaust education and is co-editor of the anthology *The Call of Memory: Learning about the Holocaust Through Narrative* (2008) and its companion teacher's guide. The year of Covid has taught me to be more mindful of and grateful for the many blessings in my life, and to recommit to providing help to those less fortunate.*

Moshe Sokolow, PhD, Haggadah Companion Editor, is the Associate Dean of AGS and director of the Fanya Gottesfeld-Heller Doctoral Program. *COVID has made me appreciate why an entire tractate of Mishnah is devoted to hand washing.*

Bethany Strulowitz, EdD, is the Director of Campus Life at Yeshiva of Flatbush Elementary School and the Chinuch Director for NCSY Camp Maor. *The Year of Covid has encouraged me to take risks and embrace failure in improving educational practices.*

Ilana Turetsky, EDD is a full-time faculty member at Azrieli Graduate School. In addition to teaching graduate courses and supervising student teachers, she works with multiple levels of school communities to improve the quality of the pedagogy, curriculum, and overall school environment. *The year of COVID has helped me appreciate that even when family members are physically far away, there are many out-of-the-box ways to create closeness and to share meaningful family experiences together.*

Illustrator

Ann Kofsky, author and illustrator, whose books for Jewish children include *Creation Colors*, *Sarah Builds a School*, and the *Kayle and Kugel* series. You can download her free coloring pages for Passover at www.annkofsky.com. *The year of Covid helped me be more aware of the many small blessings in the world—and realizing that they aren't so small.*

AZRIELI GRADUATE SCHOOL is the premier accredited higher educational institution preparing Jewish educators and educational leaders. Marrying educational research and innovation with the traditions and texts of an ancient people, the Azrieli Graduate School enables passionate educators to engage and inspire Jewish learners.

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Talmud Torah ke-neged kulam
Torah study is equivalent to all of the other mitzvot

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We recognize that we deeply impact our students and all the children, teens and adults who will be *their* students in the years to come.

For more information on how you can partner with Azrieli, please contact Dean Rona Novick at rona.novick@yu.edu or 646.592.6350



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