

## Notes From The Conrey Library

**Did you know?** Rabbi Niles has written 10 books.!!! Six of them are available now in the CBS Conrey library and the rest are on their way. They can be found on the table as you walk in labeled “Staff Picks”. Rabbi Niles is gifting everyone with two of his books: *Gonzo Judaism* and *The Challenge of the Soul*. Here is a run down of most of his books.

### **Gonzo Judaism: A Bold Path for Renewing an Ancient Faith**

Here is a book that is both clarion call for a new Jewish agenda and a blueprint for an adventurous but genuine path toward spiritual growth and religious wisdom. Rabbi Niles says that most conventional Jewish institutions are out-of-touch and have relied too much on nostalgia, guilt, and fear—none of which resonate with modern Jews. He challenges Jews to adopt the “gonzo” spirit—the rebellious, risk-taking attitude associated with the gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson—and to take creative, innovative steps to reshape and revitalize contemporary Judaism.

Goldstein urges readers to take a fresh look at Judaism, to become educated about its history and tradition, to discover what is authentic, yet what also feels spiritually relevant and meaningful, and to create a Jewish culture and community rooted in affirmation, joy, and celebration. He provides a wealth of information on numerous organizations, institutions, synagogues, grassroots groups, and networks that can help get you started on the gonzo path.

### ***The Challenge of the Soul: A Guide for the Spiritual Warrior***

In times of upheaval, many of us seek guidance from a spiritual mentor, someone who has confronted challenges and become a stronger person as a result. Here Rabbi Niles Elliot Goldstein draws from his own hard-won insights and personal experiences as a congregational rabbi, martial artist, FBI chaplain, and limit-pusher and interweaves them with the teachings of sages, biblical figures, and thinkers of all stripes to help us get beyond our own perceived limitations and face life’s challenges with fearlessness and fortitude. Goldstein identifies eight essential qualities that he believes we must cultivate to live a life of self-empowerment and then uses a

programmatic approach to explore these qualities and the ways we can develop them in ourselves.

Rabbi Goldstein is known for challenging himself physically, mentally, and spiritually. He counseled law enforcement officers at Ground Zero, has traveled to numerous remote and inhospitable places to learn and teach, and has sought out difficult experiences to rigorously test himself and the meaning of his faith.

### **God at the Edge: Searching for the Divine in Uncomfortable and Unexpected Places**

Here is a book about adventure, raw experience, and facing inner demons. Sometimes it takes a journey to the edge to recognize God's presence in our lives. Rabbi Goldstein shows how a prepared mind can find spirituality in some of the grossest or most fearsome places.

### **Lost Souls: Finding Hope in the Heart of Darkness**

These days it is no longer just adolescents who feel that the universe is falling apart. In **Lost Souls**, Rabbi Niles writes of the chaos and fear so many of us experience in our public and private lives. In spite of all of this he is able to deliver a promise of meaning, direction, and hope in our lives.

There are untold numbers of books designed to help readers deal with losses: of a spouse, a job, a pet. Here, Rabbi Goldstein offers a moving meditation on the meaning of losing one's way. Drawing on autobiographical vignettes, psychoanalytic theory, biblical tales and Hasidic wisdom, Goldstein suggests that being lost is "bewildering," but it also can be "transformative." For when we are lost, we can clarify what is really important to us, and place ourselves on a new, more authentic path. Goldstein generally brings the theme of loss back to earth with concrete examples. Readers will find this short, courageous book on the elemental feeling of being lost informative, instructive and inspiring.

### **Eight Questions of Faith: Biblical Challenges That Guide and Ground Our Lives**

A spiritual exploration of some of life's biggest questions—questions that have been asked by prophets and kings, mystics and sinners—that continue to be asked by every one of us today. Rabbi Goldstein has the

wonderful ability to interweave, in a compelling but accessible way. His personal experiences with insights from literature, religion, and philosophy help us navigate the challenges of the human journey. You don't need to know anything about religion or spirituality to appreciate this unique and powerful work.

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### **Duties of the Soul: The Role of Commandments in Liberal Judaism**

Here is an anthology of 13 essays by esteemed leaders of the Reform rabbinate re-examines the role of mitzvot in liberal Judaism as viewed through philosophical, experiential, and practical contexts.

### **Craving the Divine: A Spiritual Guide for Today's Perplexed**

Rabbi Goldstein writes of the chaos and fear so many of us experience in our public and private lives, and makes it clear that we are not nor have we ever been alone in our angst.