

Shabbaton Edition



SPRING 5781

RISE

REACHING OUT WITH INSPIRATION SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

A Project of Chazkeinu





A **REVOLUTIONARY PROJECT** UNITING JEWISH WOMEN WORLDWIDE

A **PEER-LED ORGANIZATION** STRENGTHENING AND EMPOWERING
JEWISH WOMEN WITH MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

SERVICING WOMEN LIVING WITH:

- ADHD •
- ADDICTION •
- ANXIETY •
- BIPOLAR •
- CYCLOTHYMIA •
- DEPERSONALIZATION/
DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS •
- DEPRESSION •
- EATING DISORDERS •
- INSOMNIA •
- OCD •
- PANIC DISORDER •
- PARANOIA •
- PERSONALITY DISORDERS •
- PHOBIAS •
- PPD •
- PTSD •
- PSYCHOSIS •
- SCHIZOPHRENIA •
- SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDE •
- SOCIAL ANXIETY •
- TRICHOTILLONMANIA •
- ... AND MORE

ALSO SERVING WOMEN WITH
UNDIAGNOSED EMOTIONAL STRUGGLES

OUR PROGRAMS

- > PHONE SUPPORT MEETINGS
- > CHAT CLUB
- > QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
- > PARTNER PROGRAM
- > INSPIRATIONAL EMAILS
- > ONLINE FORUM
- > OUTREACH MEMBER LIST
- > DAVENING (PRAYER) GROUP
- > SHABBATON
- > CHAZKEINU GATHERINGS
- > EMPOWERED NON-EMERGENCY SUPPORT
HOTLINE
- > CARE PACKAGES
- > BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

“AFTER THE FIRST MEETING I JOINED, I WAS ON A HIGH! IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE. I FELT SO CONNECTED AND VALIDATED.”

“I WOULD DESCRIBE CHAZKEINU AS A HEARTBEAT, IT IS ESSENTIAL AND PART OF WHAT KEEPS ME ALIVE.”

“I HEARD SOPHISTICATED NORMAL WOMEN SHARE THEIR STRUGGLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.. I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS DAMAGED GOODS ANYMORE. I THINK OF MYSELF AS A REGULAR PERSON WITH A TOUGH CHALLENGE.”

“I HAVE BECOME MORE CONFIDENT, STRONGER, HAPPIER, BECAUSE OF CHAZKEINU.”

“CHAZKEINU HAS BECOME MY GO-TO PLACE TO CONNECT AND FEEL LIKE A REAL HUMAN BEING.”

IF YOU ARE A WOMAN LIVING WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES OR COPING WITH A FAMILY MEMBER STRUGGLING, WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US! PLEASE CALL, EMAIL OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!

314.346.7414 • CHAZKEINU@GMAIL.COM • WWW.CHAZKEINU.ORG

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| Letters |

To My Dearest Chazkeinu Sisters,

Welcome to a new addition of RISE
A treasure we can see with our very own eyes

We have created together a life changing organization
Our growth and success far exceeded anyone's expectation

Thank you for joining our Chazkeinu Family
Contributing your unique talents and personality

Heroes overcoming obstacles and challenges from above
You all have so much to be proud of

May we grow together and bring out the best in each other
Many 'sensational' experiences as we connect with one another.

*With much love and admiration,
Zahava
Chazkeinu Founder*

*A Message from Rabbi Yisroel Grossberg,
Rabbinical Advisor of Chazkeinu*

We are here together for such a beautiful Shabbos immediately following the Yom Tov of Shavuos. On this holiday we became Hashem's people, the chosen nation. We have grown so much from our humble beginnings as a newborn nation only forty days ago, as we left Mitzrayim.

Sometimes, it is specifically following a challenge that we experience a real “growth-spurt”. This is what psychology calls “Post Traumatic Growth”; using a trauma or a challenge as a catalyst for renewed development. Many of us know, from ourselves or others, that difficulties can be a springboard for personal growth and inspiration.

Chazkeinu has proven to be a lifeline for so many people. And Chazkeinu has experienced tremendous growth, even under duress. This past year with all of the corona challenges did not weaken our strength. On the contrary, Chazkeinu has grown so much, with so many new and exciting programs for everyone to enjoy, and we look forward to further development for all.

May we merit to always grow despite our challenges.

Are you creative? Do you enjoy drawing, painting etc.?
Do you enjoy writing articles or poetry? Please send all
submissions to Chazkeinunewsletter@gmail.com, and
we will try include it in the next edition of RISE.

| Feedback|

I am deeply inspired by the professionals who come on Sunday and Wednesday evenings and support Chazkeinu Sisters and the Jewish community. I remember how one of the Empowered therapists gave me the time to talk about my distressing OCD symptoms and took the time to email me a resource!

Thank you to the Empowered therapist who introduced me to somatic work! She walked me through a mini-tracking session and I thought it was really cool. Now I work with a somatically trained therapist and it really works for me. Thank you, thank you, and thank you.

I was crying over an issue for two months and since I wasn't currently in therapy I went to see my old therapist. The session was not helpful at all, due to the fact that my therapist completely shrugged me off. At that point, I called Empowered and spoke to someone who didn't know me or my background story at all; however, it took 15 minutes together to reframe the whole situation and make it a non-issue. Two years later, I'm back in therapy again.

You guys are amazing!! I had something really big come up last night, and I didn't feel trusting or comfortable to talk to anyone about it. With hesitation I decided to call empowered...wow! I

really gained the guidance I needed so badly. I hung up feeling so much lightness and clarity.. Thank you so, so much!!

Now, when that person who I had that situation with comes up, I can deal with it a million times better cause I have the perspective I gained on Empowered.

Feedback On



I appreciated the validation and guidance I received when I reached out to Empowered. I felt that I received a good perspective when I finished the discussion.

Thank you so much for giving your time to support us at Chazkeinu.

I called the empowered line to help me figure out if what was happening in therapy was normal. The therapist on call suggested I bring it up with my therapist at our next session, but I was too uncomfortable. She helped me find the right words and then we role played. It didn't take long, but it saved me so much aggravation.

She was really an amazing therapist!

I am amazed at this service that Chazkeinu offers. Empowered Hotline has helped be able to get the support I have a quick question that needs an experienced and objective person and opinion. Thank you so much for all that you do.

I'm Wasting my Life

By Avrohom Steier

Life is short. We all know that we have been sent to this world for a limited number of years, after which we will return our Souls to the Creator and, hopefully, merit eternal bliss. We also know that the way to obtain that bliss is to use our time in this world appropriately, doing what needs to be done in every aspect and every challenge of life. The question that must be addressed is: How does mental illness fit into this picture?

At first glance, mental illness and the challenges that come with it seem to be a complete waste of time. Instead of davening or doing chessed, one is forced to focus on controlling and overcoming their anxiety, depression, personality disorder, anorexia, or whatever illness they are confronted with. The feeling is that while everyone else is able to accomplish so much, using their lives to the fullest, I am stuck trying to accomplish seemingly minor tasks that will not ultimately bring me to any proper standing in this world or the next. In short, while dealing with my emotional challenges, I am wasting my life away, and when my time comes to leave this world, I will have nothing to show for myself.

While this attitude is very understandable for someone who finds himself locked in an epic battle that he did not ask for, upon further review, the reality seems to be quite different. The Chafetz Chaim wrote a sefer entitled Machane Yisrael in which he gives guidance and encouragement to the Jewish soldiers that had been conscripted into the army. In the second chapter, he addresses the feeling that the years in which one is part of the army are wasted years where one is unable to accomplish much.

*Even though, truthfully, during these times that he is obligated to serve in the army, it will definitely not be easy for him to keep the roots of the Torah, let alone if he will desire to guard it with all of its branches (details). However, in exchange for this that he will be courageous and will be victorious in the great battle against the Yetzer Horah, and he will see to it to guard the Torah in all its details at that time, **in the future [world] these days will be seen as the best days of his life**, and he will be [counted] from the holy of Hashem for this, and none of the free men (those who did not serve in the army) will be able to stand in his area [in Heaven].*

The Chafetz Chaim is teaching us an important lesson. When someone is going through tough times, it behooves them to realize that the value of everything that they do is so much greater. Small acts done under great duress can be worth much more than great acts done with relative ease. While we humans are only able to judge an act by its ultimate accomplishment, Hashem gives much credence to the pain and difficulty involved in even trying to accomplish something relatively small.

Far from being wasted days, months, and sometimes years, the days spent coping with the challenge of mental illness are days of great potential, and far from being days that one will want to skip over during the reckoning at the end of his life, they are in fact, days that will shine brightly for eternity.

Avrohom Steier is a Rosh Chaburah in Bais Medresh Govah in Lakewood, NJ and the author of the book Battle of the Mind; a book offering Torah based words of encouragement and inspiration for those battling mental illness.

“Small acts done under great duress can be worth much more than great acts done with relative ease.”

| Features |

SELF care

By Goldie Schechter MA LAC

What is self care? Many times we hear the word “self” and it puts us in a mind frame of self-ISH. We hear the words self care and we think if I take care of my SELF then I’m selfish! So I am here today, to say that if I DON’T take care of myself then I am really being selfish! How do you like that?

Well, let’s look at what happens when I run myself ragged. When I don’t eat right and I don’t sleep enough, YES, things get done. All the laundry, cleaning, and work get done. BUT, am I pleasant? Am I smiling? Am I a joy to be around? Am I complimenting my family or the other people around me? Are THEY feeling appreciated?

Or

Is everything around me chaotic and crazy? Am I running on Adrenalin and running LOW on Adrenalin? This way I can: NOT think, NOT stop, NOT rest and contemplate my life, and NOT have to check in and see how my family is doing. Yes, while not taking care of myself, I am in essence allowing EVERYTHING to slide. For some of us, that might be a coping mechanism that allows us not to stop and think and it allows us to let our usual responsibilities slide.

What are my usual responsibilities? For everyone it’s different. For one person it might be a job. For another woman It might be preparing meals. It might be cleaning the house. It might be getting the children off to school. It might be my personal hygiene, therapy, my social life, or good

eating habits. If I’m running ragged, I can say who cares if I have emotional stability! I’m too drained! And no one will argue with you because they see how chaotic your life is and how well you’re holding it all together (NOT!)

So let’s take a step back and talk about what happens when we practice self care and how we hold up! First of all, let’s appreciate the difficulty in our daily lives. Let’s for once say it like it is! OK everyone??? We are officially allowing 10 seconds of wallowing in self pity! 10-9-8....It’s soooooooo hard! It is! Whether you’re dealing with therapy that’s stagnating, or therapy that’s up to a difficult situation. Whether you’re dealing with decisions and toddlers and other kids at home with issues. Whether you are dealing with a spouse in denial or abuse issues. It Is Soooooooo hard! Now we are done wallowing! So everyone gird thy loins. We are putting back on our WE CAN DO IT ALL SUPERWOMAN costumes and our pity party is over! (You know you have to have pity parties every now and then because you MUST recognize the craziness and the difficulty and how AMAZING you are for dealing with it all! But you also MUST have a plan for AFTER the pity party! You absolutely can’t have a “party” longer than 10 min and only if you have full support or a PLAN for coming out of it!) So I have a plan!

Now that we agree that we do so much and we have so much on our plate, we have to

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understand that in order to keep this energizer bunny running we MUST put in NEW BATTERIES every now and then!

Self care comes in different forms. We need emotional self care. We need physical self care and we need spiritual self care. We all have different personalities and different situations and different needs, but we all need to make sure to be as healthy as possible. As much as everyone says to you, "You have to take care of yourself!" You don't believe them! You think I'm fine, I'm fine! It's OK, I can manage! So I'm here to tell you, "NO YOU CANT! YOU CAN'T BECAUSE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE SUFFERING IF YOU ARE NOT taking care of yourself!"

So let's start with physical self care: We all need our basic physical needs fulfilled. We all need sleep. Some people need four hours. Lucky them! Some need six and some need eight! Don't fool yourself into thinking you need less than you really do! A well rested person is a much better person and one night of sleep is not enough! A well rested person means eight and a half hours every single night!

We need food. GOOD NUTRITIOUS FOOD. Now is not the time to diet! Even if being skinny makes you happy. Better to work on self love and body acceptance than to be dieting now, but don't gorge on junk either! Right now is the time to eat three excellent, delicious, nutritious meals a day, and if a friend offers to take you out for coffee and cake, you GO!

We all need love. Hugs and strokes and kisses. DON'T UNDERESTIMATE a person's need for physical touch! I remember once in a class I took on geriatric care, they kept on stressing that the elderly usually live alone so they aren't getting touched very often. That's why elderly women will go twice a week to get

their hair done and nails done. The beautician is touching them and fulfilling that need! When you meet a woman who lives alone, make sure to hug her, rub her back, and hold her hand because she isn't getting that at home.

What about emotional needs? If you can allow yourself the luxury and the pleasure of having someone to talk to, a counselor, a social worker, coach, a therapist, a Rov, a mentor etc., that is excellent! Best friends are good. Actually, friends are GREAT! A set appointment for taking care of your emotional needs is SO important! I can't stress it enough! So whether you actually see a therapist, talk to a Rov or a coach, or vent to your best friend make sure to have this kind of talk therapy in your life!

What about a break, some respite? Maybe you can use a foot massage, a pedicure, a back massage, a shopping date with friends, a day in bed, Shabbos cooked and sent over etc. Please make sure to STOP the Ever-ready Bunny, open the back, and recharge the batteries!

OK, now let's talk about spiritual recharging. Some of you may feel very close to Hashem. Some of you may be happy sitting with a Tehillim all day, taam Gan Eiden! Some of you may have turned off the second I said spirituality. We all know Hashem created the world and is watching over us day to day, minute to minute, but for some of us when we go through a tzara it becomes difficult for us to turn to Hashem. Some of us might be angry at Hashem and that's fine, because Hashem knows what we're going through! He loves us and doesn't judge us. He waits patiently for us. So until then, what can I do to revive my spiritual soul? I can look at beautiful flowers! (One Pesach my children had Chicken pox and we had to do an outdoor activity for Chol Hamoed. They

"Please make sure to STOP the Ever-ready Bunny, open the back, and recharge the batteries!"

complained bitterly, but we had no choice. We went to the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens! What a spiritual treat! Wow! The flowers were exquisite! The ambiance was serene, and the scenery was a balm for my soul.) You can listen to beautiful music. To an Orchestra or to Classical music. You can do Yoga or meditate. Some of you are groaning! I promise you! Once you do the real thing, you'll be hooked! And YOU, yes you! The one who's thinking uh, uh not me! I am the ADHD Queen of America No yoga for this momma! I'm talking to you 'cuz you're going to love it the MOST! You cannot imagine the power of turning OFF the outside world and visiting our inner selves. It's a real experience.

Another way to revive ourselves spiritually is to connect with another person. When two neshamos connect, we feel vibrant and energized! Maybe you can ask a mentor for the name of someone who is going through a similar situation to yours and maybe you can text, call, email, or meet for lunch! Maybe calling this group and feeling a connection with other women is your spiritual self-care! I hope so! There are many seforim out there that are can be learnt one page at a time over the

phone with a friend. We can say shir hama'alos mimaamakim when we have a chance. In any case, I hope that we all understand how important self-care is. I hate to say this, because it goes against everything I

believe when it comes to self-care, but just in case somebody is still thinking that self-care is selfish let me at least beg you: If you can't do it for yourself then don't do it for yourself! Do it for your family! Do it for your friends! That's right! If you still cannot bring yourself to take care of yourself because YOU are so important and YOU deserve it. Then at least take care of yourself so that you can take care of others, because if you are depleted then you will not be able to take care of anyone else. I hope I was able to give over to all of you the importance of self care for your physical, emotional, and spiritual well being!

Goldie Schechter MA LAC loves empowering others! She works with females of all ages and uses somatic experience as a means of working with emotions. Goldie loves educating her clients with methods at their disposal in fighting negative feelings. Her motto is: We can't control our circumstances, but we can control our reactions to our circumstances

SELF-CARE CHECKLIST

@thefabstory

	sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
meditate	<input type="checkbox"/>						
morning yoga	<input type="checkbox"/>						
eat veggies with every meal	<input type="checkbox"/>						
drink 8 glasses of water	<input type="checkbox"/>						
daily gratitude practice	<input type="checkbox"/>						
read one chapter of a book	<input type="checkbox"/>						
tidy up your space	<input type="checkbox"/>						
do something creative	<input type="checkbox"/>						

| Meet a Member |



Meet a Member

Can you please share with our readers a little bit about yourself and your struggles?

I am a single girl in my twenties and I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder (type one) when I was sixteen. I have experienced abuse and trauma, which led to an eating disorder which, baruch Hashem, I no longer have. I see a psychiatrist for medication management and I also see a therapist to work through past traumas, effectively manage triggers, and address symptoms of bipolar disorder. I am so grateful to have a wonderful support team, which also includes two mentors, a very close friend from high school, and my awesome Chazkeinu sisters.

Can you share with us how you have worked and continue to work on overcoming your difficulties?

Therapy, therapy, and more therapy! I have learned so much over the past four years with my therapist and I feel like I have come so far. I have worked and continue to work very hard to get past the unhealthy coping mechanisms that I used when I was younger. I have learned how to manage the dips in my mood more effectively with self-care, coping skills, and external support.

What is one of the difficult parts of your challenge?

I think that right now, the most difficult part of my challenges is in the area of shidduchim. At a certain point in the dating process, I need to be upfront with the boy I am dating regarding my mental health circumstances. Yes, I have gotten used to having “the conversation,” but I still have not gotten used to consistent rejection. It is really, really hard. It helps to remember that Hashem has planned a zivug for me, who will appreciate me despite – because of – my challenges.

Which of Chazkeinu's programs have you gained the most from?

Definitely, the forum. I enjoy connecting with others, but mostly, I love being able to empathize and support others in their struggles. As part of the staff, I love having the opportunity to help provide an environment where Chazkeinu sisters can feel safe and supported.

(Continued on page 12)



Meet a Member

Can you please share with our readers a little bit about yourself and your struggles?

I was born in NYC and I grew up on the Lower East Side. For high school I went to Bais Yakov of Boro Park. Following my years of formal education I went to Touro College in Flatbush to pursue a degree in speech language pathology. My father is from a Chassidish background and my mother comes from a Litvish background. Although we weren't Chassidish, we grew up with exposure to Chassidus. My father took us along to Tish and I met different Rebbes a number of times over the years.

Growing up on the east side we were in a YU community and although we were not a YU-type family we were friendly with many wonderful people from that community. I went to BYBP for high school, had connection to Chassidus, made Lubavitch friends in college... I feel like I've seen it all. I am familiar with many different communities and nothing fazes me, I understand different mentalities. I feel like this is an asset to me in my current life and the different roles I play.

I feel that my unique background creates a situation where my position as the Chazkeinu intake person is totally natural. My exposure and connection to so many different types of Yidden allows me to connect to "sisters" from different parts of the world and different circumstances.

Another major piece of my background is the fact that I grew up with an oldest bother who is severely autistic, almost completely non verbal, and mentally retarded. This reality had a huge impact on my life. Although I was unaware at the time, I was growing up with severe trauma caused by him.

What can you tell us about your struggles

For me, things fell apart during my first pregnancy. People are aware of Post Partum Depression; for me it was Prenatal Depression. The hormones of pregnancy, coupled with years of unprocessed childhood trauma proved to be too much for me. It was not a simple journey. It took time to figure out what was wrong with me. I am grateful I had a wonderful OB who was able to give me clarity on my situation. It took time to find the right help, but B"H we did.

I feel like I have come full circle since now I am able to take my own experiences and mistakes, and use them to help others in similar situations. I “meet” fellow Chazkeinu sisters from around the world and it is so meaningful. Additionally, I recently mentored someone with similar issues to my own. I helped her get through her own difficult pregnancy and that was so special for me.

Where are you currently holding in life?

I Boruch Hashem have two beautiful daughters, ages 14 and 12. I work as a speech therapist and have a Torah Mate, with whom I recently studied the Laws of Family Purity, something I'm really proud of. Additionally, I am very busy with Chazkeinu. The intake line is quite a busy one...my role calls for running the line, getting to know people and trying to help, especially with referrals.

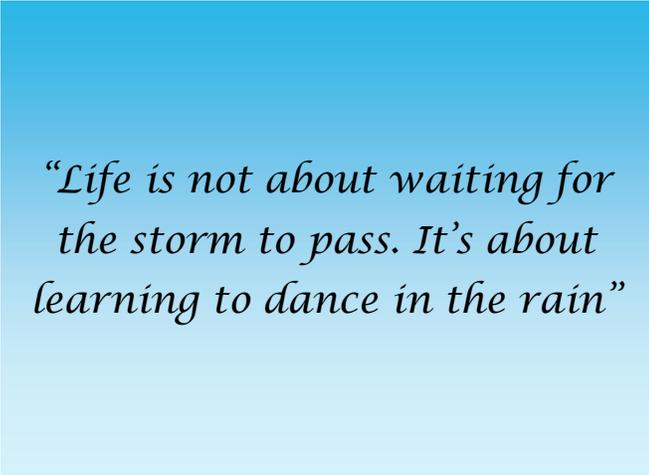
What message would you like to share with us?

My essential message is to never give up, and to strive to find meaning in all that happens. When I was so sick, if you would have told me that one day I would be doing the work I do now, I would have thought you were crazy. I never would have imagined being in this role.

(Continued from Page 10)

What message and words of inspiration would you give to those with similar challenges?

In my experiences with therapy, I have learned that when therapy with one therapist does not work out, it is a reflection of the therapist, and not therapy itself. I tried two therapists before I found the therapist I currently work with, and I know that there are people who have tried even more than two. With my first therapist, I was convinced that therapy is the most sappy, boring experience that does not do anything but waste time. As a teenager, it was often a struggle to keep my eyeballs in place during those sessions. My second therapist and I had a good rapport, but we never really worked through anything substantial. I was so surprised when I realized that I was actually working on substantial things in therapy – and enjoying it!



“Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass. It’s about learning to dance in the rain”



Do you struggle to regulate your emotions and find it hard to soothe yourself? Do you find it hard to tolerate difficult emotions? Do you have difficulty navigating interpersonal relationships? If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, know that you are not alone – not by any means! Many people find emotional regulation to be a tricky balance. As human beings we feel intensely; it’s how Hashem created us - we’re supposed to feel! Feeling means we’re alive and running! However, it gets tricky when our emotions take control and dictate our thoughts and actions instead of us being in control.

Okay, so now that we know that what’re we to do?

Fortunately, DBT, created by Dr. Marsha Linehan, was created for this and is life changing. DBT has 4 modules, and each module has a whole subset of critical skills we may be missing.

Mindfulness, the first module, and the core of DBT, focuses our attention on the present moment by gently redirecting our thoughts and feelings of the past or future to the here and now. Its goal is not to relax us but rather to help us feel a bit more grounded amid pain, struggle, and hardship. By focusing on the present moment, we are allowing our truest selves (also known as Wise Mind) to be in control. Essentially, we are acknowledging our pain, while gently redirecting our thoughts and feelings to the present moment and task at hand.

One subset skill of mindfulness is the Observe skill. With the Observe skill, we are doing exactly as described above: We are acknowledging our feelings (without judgment); we’re taking note of them and giving space for them to exist. But at the same time we ensure that we aren’t getting caught with it.

In short? We are creating space for all our parts – non-judgmentally, and then redirecting our attention to the present moment when needed.

The second module, Distress Tolerance, teaches us how to tolerate and manage difficult emotions, situations, and changes we encounter all the while staying in control. In other words, the goal of Distress Tolerance skills is to slightly take off the edge, so it’s bearable. One such skill is Self-soothing. By using each of our five senses, we can soothe ourselves and help make things feel a bit more tolerable. For vision, some people find watching a waterfall or gazing at a blue sky to be powerful. For sound, some find that listening to different sounds and music to be helpful. The key is to find what helps you and to use that as your go-to Distress Tolerance skill.

The third module, Emotion Regulation, is, well, about regulating our emotions! Sounds like an important skill, no? ☺ In this module, we have a skill called Opposite Action. Essentially, Opposite Action is doing the opposite of what our emotions (or Emotion Mind) are telling us to do. We are changing our emotion and/or its intensity when it’s no longer serving us. Let us use a relatively pareve and common example to illustrate this skill usage. Let’s say, I send a text message to Mrs. B on a Sunday morning reminding her to call me that afternoon. I wait, wait some more, and find myself growing increasingly frustrated and annoyed. After all, I know that Mrs. B usually gets back to me right away, so

this derails me. In between all the waiting, I check my phone multiple times but don't see any messages from her. I then text her a second time, hoping that by this time, she will surely respond. But time is passing, and she still hasn't responded, and I'm more than just a little upset. I'm frustrated, I'm annoyed, I'm worried that perhaps maybe she's even upset with me – who knows at this point! My emotion mind is screaming!

However, if I employ and use Opposite Action correctly, I will ask myself if my anger and level of intensity is effective and warranted. (Notice that I didn't say "valid," because all emotions and feelings are valid). If it's not warranted or if the level is too high, I will gently remove myself from the situation and act opposite to what my anger is telling me to do. That might mean putting my phone away to avoid sending her more messages and using a skill to distract and ground me. After doing this, I will probably find that my anger has indeed gone down in its intensity. If it has not, it will probably be best to consider using another Distress Tolerance skill.

Finally, the **concluding module of DBT is Interpersonal skills**. Interpersonal skills teach us how to navigate relationships that perhaps may be tricky. It teaches us how to keep and maintain relationships, how to effectively ask for what we want or what we don't want, and to keep our self-respect. Interpersonal skills give us a wealth of knowledge and guides us when having interpersonal difficulties. One such skill is DEAR MAN. (Marsha likes using acronyms). The acronym DEAR MAN, stands for Describe, Express, Assert, Reinforce; Mindful, Appear-Confident, Negotiate. The goal for this skill is to use each of the letters to either ask for something we need, or to decline and say no to someone else's request. Say we want to ask our boss for a raise. We would Describe the facts of the situation, Express our feelings, Assert our request, and Reinforce it. This how it may look:

Describe – *I've been working here for some time and I really enjoy the work I'm doing.*

Express – *I'm finding the work I do to be valuable and rewarding, and at this point, I need a some more money to cover my expenses.*

Assert – *As a valued employee and hard worker, I believe I deserve a raise of 50%.*

Reinforce – *This raise will help me financially and help me perform even better.*

MAN is all about *how* we deliver our request. Being mindful of our tone of voice, our posture and making eye contact. Lastly, we want to make sure we Negotiate. Sometimes we need to "give in order to get"!

This concludes our brief and informative piece on Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. I hope you enjoyed it and understand a little bit about it, and, most importantly, its potential to help us all – not just those with Borderline Personality Disorder. Maybe even consider taking a DBT class and let us know how it's helped you!

*"Sometimes you will never
know the value of a moment
until it becomes a memory"*

-Dr. Seuss

| Chazkeinu Sisters Share |



A Collections of Poems, Stories,
and Inspiration from Fellow Chazkeinu Members

By Avigayil

Feeling alone with the pain within me
If only there was a support group where I could be
Open and expressive about what I feel
Without the shame of sharing my tale

Like a light in the dark
Like a map in a maze
Chazkeinu appeared to clear my haze

My journeys not over
The path I am on may be long
But with my sisters in Chazkeinu
I feel much more strong

There are others who can relate
I am not in this alone
We talk and we share
With Zoom meetings and on the phone

Chazkeinu has given me chizuk
To believe in me
That I can get through this
And to uncover my strengths that I did not yet see

Thank you Zehava and my Chazkeinu sisters, too
I thank Hashem for bringing me to you
May Hashem continue to help us help others
through the pain we endure

My Birthday Message

By Zahava

Gifted with a new year
Hashem wants me here
My birthday has arrived
Time to see how I've thrived

A thirty nine year journey
I'm grateful to be worthy
So many new chances
Precious gifts I'm granted

I know I'm not alone
He's with me as I've grown
I have all that I need
To help me succeed

Step by step day by day
I will find my own way
To do the very best
He'll take care of the rest

So much I have to say
On my birthday
Ani Hayom Y'ladticha

Sheal Mimeni V'etna
I long for a new start
He answers tefillos in my heart

Oh Hashem You did create
A time to celebrate
Yom Huledes Samayach

Please bring the Geulah
Send a real Yeshua
Peace and happiness for all

An impression it leaves
So many memories
Both the hardships and laughter
I now see before and after

A soul that's inside me
So much I hope to see
From pain comes progress
Climbing higher to success

Clean and Organized: A Reality or Fantasy? You Choose!

By Saralah

Clean,
Shining,
Pristine,
Gleaming.

The house is clean and ready to go,
It's organized from head to toe.
Everything is in its place; everything has a home.

Schedules are set, meals are planned,
Dinner is made in advance.

Papers are stacked in their home, clearly labeled.
Everything in its place.

At work, I'll even try to make some sense of the mountain
of clutter on the teacher's desk. (How does she manage
with all those papers strewn about??)

All the toys are cleaned up and the floor is from a much-
needed vacuum.

The magazine are stacked in a neat pile.

I usher in this feeling...
Peace reigns and calm unfolds,
I relish in this experience with my entire being,
I gulp it in and store it in my brain.

And I'm even a little jittery from all the inner excitement.
(My next task is to "organize" my emotions via jour-
naling...)

I take in the moment and stretch my over-excited mus-
cles.

No, it's not Shabbos or Erev Shabbos, but it technically can
be.

It's an all-around feeling of orderliness and calm.
(Yes, there's a big element of control here. But we'll invite
it in being that a clean and organized home not only feels
good but tastes good, too!)



Acceptance is an interesting concept
It's not something that's easily felt
Until you get there, it's a tough fight
As you hold on, to what should be; what's right

You say, it shouldn't be like that
Emotions shouldn't be swung like a bat
I am a human being
I do have feelings

Why do you let that go?
When did you turn into foe?
Can't you give me what I need
My voice, why don't you heed?

You have all these angry feelings
You try to do some healing
But it isn't working
You see to be sinking

After all, it is not normal
You want to feel full

You need the basics in life
Not all this strife

But you see it doesn't help
Even when you fight or yelp
So why not try something new
You may feel better too

Instead of saying it's not okay
Accept that it's this way
Instead of being angry at it
Accept that this is your fit

Cuz no matter how hard you try
How many tears you cry
It will never change
Things will stay in the same range

The only thing that's in your hand
Is your ability to understand
That this is your life
Even if it's full of strife



When I Had a Flat Tire
By Rachel E

That was cool
I felt calm and serene
When I had a flat tire.
I didn't get angry
Or lose my cool
When I had a flat tire.
I did not stress
Of what would be
When I had a flat tire.
Rather, I smiled
Laughed to the world
When I had a flat tire.
You may think
What's the big deal
When you have a flat tire.
I've been through it
Came out alive

When I had a flat tire.
I didn't get angry
Stressed or anxious
When I had a flat tire.
But you are not I
So, you didn't react like me
When you had a flat tire.
Don't compare yourself
To a very different me
When I had a flat tire.
When you had a flat tire.
I am proud Of how I reacted
When I had a flat tire.
I didn't yell I didn't scream
When I had a flat tire.
I was calm I even laughed
When I had a flat tire.

I am so proud
Of my very self
When I had a flat tire.
Because it shows
How much I grew
When I had a flat tire.
I didn't react
Like I would in the past
When I had a flat tire.
And that is something
So dear to me
Cuz I had a flat tire.
So, whoever said flats are bad
Ask me; I'll tell you
Cuz I had a flat tire.

Eicha? How?

By Devorah W

How did such a thing happen in this day and age?
Must be that people were not properly engaged.

For it to be like a storm,
Ravaging people's lives and ruining the norm.

Today I take a stand,
By my side I will ultimately band;

the useless tumult of the coming days,
For the sun to shine it's rays.

I will do so by having the right perspective,
Letting go of thinking in terms of the collective.

Hanging my hopes Instead on my own responsibility,
In order to do so with agility;

I will gather my strength and not waste it on things over
which I have no power,
Waiting anxiously for it to change with each passing hour.

I will go to my drawer,
And reach for anything that will make this ice thaw;

Of a heart that is hardened,
Until the time comes to be pardoned;

From this golus mentality,
That has swept us into a whole new reality.

One of complacent self pity,
While we go about it in a way that is not so pretty.

We have nowhere to escape; Outside there is the sword,
Inside we are dead bored.

But there will come a day,
I know it, just as sure as I exist today;

That hindsight,
Will be one that G-d will right.

Because it can only get better from here,
There will come a time where we have nothing to fear.
And all we will hold onto is good cheer.



Letting go of the Chains By Breindy W

I don't want to leave you behind
In the stinky environment of the old mind
But the old feelings turn rewind
Forcing me to feel what I find

I find fear of the future
The kind beautiful soul I nurture
I only want to stick to the fear of the past culture
It feels like a high stature

I find heaviness of yesteryear
Surrounded by those pretending to love me so dear
But now it's clear
They do love, to their limits and boundaries must be made
for them to hear

I find the tension is loud
When they are up in the cloud
The resistance is low
To calm down below

I have built up anger and disbelief

Looking for relief
Looking for clarity
While seeing a whole new reality

I don't how I will change the mold
From these feelings of old
To new feelings of gold
But I do know that if these stories are still told
By me alone as they unfold
My heart will believe them and it will turn cold instead of
bold!

Gather up the strength
Go the great length
To look t it in the eye
Send those old feelings on the fly
Be brave
Don't go in the cave
Behave
You'll get there
One day at a time
While I remain here!!

Baruch Hashem

By C.S.

Baruch Hashem for the sky so blue.
Baruch Hashem for this day so new.
Baruch Hashem there is a me and a you.
Baruch Hashem I can say thank you.

Baruch Hashem my heart does beat.
Baruch Hashem for my hands and feet.
Baruch Hashem for the food I eat.
Baruch Hashem for the people I meet.

Baruch Hashem I can see and hear.
Baruch Hashem for the clothes I wear.
Baruch Hashem for my family so dear.
Baruch Hashem for water that's clear.

Baruch Hashem for birds in the sky.
Baruch Hashem when my soul does fly.
Baruch Hashem when I want to cry.
Baruch Hashem when I don't know why.

Baruch Hashem when my pain is so deep.
Baruch Hashem I woke up from my sleep.
Baruch Hashem when my heart does leap.
Baruch Hashem when I want to weep.

Baruch Hashem for everything that went wrong.
Baruch Hashem it has made me more strong.
Baruch Hashem for days that are long.
Baruch Hashem I can sing this song.

Baruch Hashem for the good and the bad.
Baruch Hashem when I feel so sad,
Baruch Hashem when I feel so glad.
Baruch Hashem for the experiences I had.

Baruch Hashem there is no end.
For everything Hashem does send.



Looking forward to a **Sensational** Shabbaton.

Thank you Zahava, Baila P, Rachel G, and her husband, Rabbi Grossberg and his wife.

We give you all a hand of gratitude; a handful of **Sensational** love.

Shabbaton is so holy, special, relaxing;

and so nonjudgmental, so accepting, so full of fun and love!

How can Shabbos end? Only with a separation called Havdalah.

We see the flickering flames of the Havdalah candle.

We smell the Besamim.

We hear the words of the Havdalah prayer.

We touch the Besamin and pass it around.

We taste the Havdalah wine and celebrate with a joyous Melavah Malka.

Shabbos is over. There will be new struggles. May HaShem strengthen us to overcome them.

HaShem is always with me every step of the way;

holding my hand and guiding me with Emunah and Bitachon.

Chazkeinu's **Sensational** Shabbaton #5

אני מאמין באמונה שלמה בביאת המשיח ואף על פי שיתמהמה עם כל זה אחכה לו בכל יום שיבוא.

I will wait... I will wait...I will wait...

We are promised that Moshiach will come.

In the meantime, I will hope... I will hope... I will hope ...

Each day brings me closer. HaShem will give me courage to be strong, to have patience and to go on one day at a time.

My brother always told me that when we wanted to make my mother happy, all we had to do was mention Moshiach

... and she would smile and laugh.

May my mother, Sarah Sheindel bas Yehudah Aryeh

have an aliyas neshama and bring Moshiach now!

A Grounding Experience

By Sarah

We live in a fast-paced world – one that demands a lot of our attention and depletes us quickly. Let's be real: how many of us are on our phones more than we'd like to admit? How many of us get this rush of adrenaline when we get a "like" or when 2 blue checks appear on our WhatsApp chat?

Probably too many of us... At least I know I'm guilty of it.

That's what happened on the city bus today. I was on my way home from a local bagel shop (getting my iced coffee!!) and carrying a little more than my 2 hands can handle in the snow. So, I was on the bus for a 5-minute ride – and what do you think I did or thought to do next??

Yup! You got it! I was about – just about to pull out my phone and check to see if I got any text messages. But I stopped midway and recalculated. I gave myself a firm "no," and said told myself that I do NOT need to check my phone. *How about we experience this moment for what it is?* I thought.

And that's what I did! I sat in my seat and just noticed how it feels. How it feels with my back against the chair? How I feel in my coat? Do I feel snug, secure, and warm or am I experiencing discomfort? I invited in this experience and accepted it graciously and felt warmed by it being that it was about 33 degrees outside and snowing. And let me tell you – it was delicious – b"H!

I invite you to experience a taste, a small taste of what I did and felt. So, pause whatever you're doing and join me here!

Wherever you are, look to see if there's a chair, couch or something that you can sit on. Now place yourself there and just be. Be with it. See if you can notice, feel and observe yourself. Is your chair comfortable or is it hard? Can you feel your back against it? How does that feel? Do you feel the chair supporting you? Maybe it feels like a warm blanket supporting you in the cold? Or maybe you notice that it's old, rickety and is shaky? Or maybe the chair isn't that comfortable...?

Whatever it is, invite it into your being for just 1 minute. Let it ground you, hold and support you. You might even want to "hold" and relish in this feeling and come back to it as soothing anchor. And if not, that's okay, too. (We don't have to love/enjoy every experience).

You might even want to do this with food. Hold the container or plate containing the food and observe it. What do you see and notice? What comes to mind? Perhaps the food is colorful and something you really like. Or maybe it's heavy and weighs a lot? Again, ***feel the experience*** and enjoy, be with it for however long you feel comfortable and enjoy!

*Believe you can and your half
there"*

-Theodore Roosevelt

What Does it Mean to be

STRONG

By C.S

What does it mean to be strong?
It means to say, "I am wrong."

It doesn't mean to say, "I am right."
It means to drop a fight.

It doesn't mean to yell and scream.
It's to talk in a voice that's soft as a dream.

It's not to use words that hurt.
It's to help others that are in the dirt.

It's not to always stand up tall.
It's to get up when I fall.

It's not to always get my way.
It's to keep going when everything seems dark and gray.

It's not to say, "I always know what to do."
It's to admit "I don't have a clue."

It's not to say "I can do this all without you."
It's to admit "I need your help to pull me through."

It doesn't mean to always fly.
It means to sometimes cry.

It doesn't mean not to feel.
It means to begin to heal.

It doesn't mean to show off what I've got.
It means to admit what I'm not.

My strength is something others cannot see.
For it is in inner courage, that's hidden deep within me.

You Tell Me

By Rachel E

You tell me I'm dumb
But have you ever seen
The 100% on my test paper?
You tell me I'm slow
But have you ever seen
Me run down a mountain?
You tell me I'm ugly
But have you ever seen
My beautiful eyes?
You tell me I'm worthless
But have you ever seen
The poems I've written?
You tell me I'm lackluster
But have you ever seen
My creativity spill over?
How can you continue
To knock me down
With all your baseless words

When you don't
Even know who I am?
I am smart!
I am quick!
I am pretty!
I am worthy!
I am creative!
And you know it too.
You're just jealous
So you continue
To push me down
Trying to bring yourself up.
You think it's gonna make you
Any smarter, prettier or fast?
You're only accomplishing
One thing.
Hurting me.
So please stop.

And if you wont
I will not allow your voice
To ruin my beautiful colors.
When you're not around
I accomplish so much.
I shine
Like the bright sun
Soaring ever so high.
My ideas go so fast
I don't have time
To process them all.
So please go
Leave me alone
Go find someone else
To keep "company"
I can manage just fine
Without you



5th Annual Shabbaton Song

It's in the atmosphere
The day is finally 'here'
Chazkeinu Shabbaton #5
Oh, the joy we 'feel'
'SENS'ational, so real
A 'taste' of the place where we thrive

'See' who you really are
Each one a shining star
I'm 'here' for you and you're 'here' for me
Excitement we propose
Cuz everybody 'knows'
Chazkeinu's where we're meant to be

Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
The place where we 'feel' at home
Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
The place that we call our own

Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
Smiles and laughter abound
Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
It's 'here' that true friendships are found

Together we'll illuminate
The darkness will dissipate
A closeness that just cannot be undone
'Hand' in 'hand' always better
A sisterhood like no other
We know we'll always be forever one

Forever one
Forever one
Forever one
Forever one, one, one

I 'feel' it in the air
That each sister so dear
Has a special 'touch' to display
And when we all unite
Oh, what a special 'sight'
Together we go a long way

I'm full of confidence
It all makes so much 'sense'
'Cuz 'hand' in 'hand' we make a great bond
And deep inside my soul
It's 'here' that I feel whole
Chazkeinu, were above and beyond

Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
The place where I want to be
Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
Together as one you and me

Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
The place where each of us shine
Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu, Chazkeinu
Chazkeinu, yes, you are mine

| Rising up |

*“The one who trusts in Hashem
should anticipate, from within the
gloom of his pain, that the darkness
will be the cause of the light.”*

-Shaarei Teshuva



A Project of



314.346.7414

www.chazkeinu.org

info@chazkeinu.org

The Chazkeinu Team

Founder and President: Zahava List

Co-Founder: Tamar Mishkin, Naomi Shulman

Rabbinical Advisor: Rabbi Yisroel Grossberg

Clinical Advisor: Yocheved Rabinowitz

Email Intake Coordinator: Malky Rosenberg

Chizuk Email Coordinator: Yehudis Scheinkopf

Partner Program Coordinators: Esty, Fraidy, Sarah B.

EMPOWERED Coordinator: Bruchy

RISE Newsletter Editor: Tzippy

Israel Representative: Rivka K.

Project Coordinators: (Tante Leah's) Baila P., Breindy K., Elisheva, Estie, Mimi, Raizel Lamm, Sarala, Shania, Shani F, Shani, Sora Mindy

Chazkeinu Connections, Administrator: Ahuva

Web Designer: Shmuel Mitzmann from *My Custom Software*