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**FEBRUARY 2026**

# **LIVING**

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& THE BRANDYWINE VALLEY

**DELAWARE**

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"Lately, I find myself in the same downtown Philadelphia hospital parking garages, elevators, and waiting rooms. My senses are overtaken by all-too-familiar stimuli—harsh fluorescent lighting, the sharp scent of cleaning supplies, and pink gowns that 'open in the front.' I wish it was déjà vu, but it isn't." Meredith Rosenthal shares a new story of the impact cancer has had on her life, as well as those whom she holds dear.

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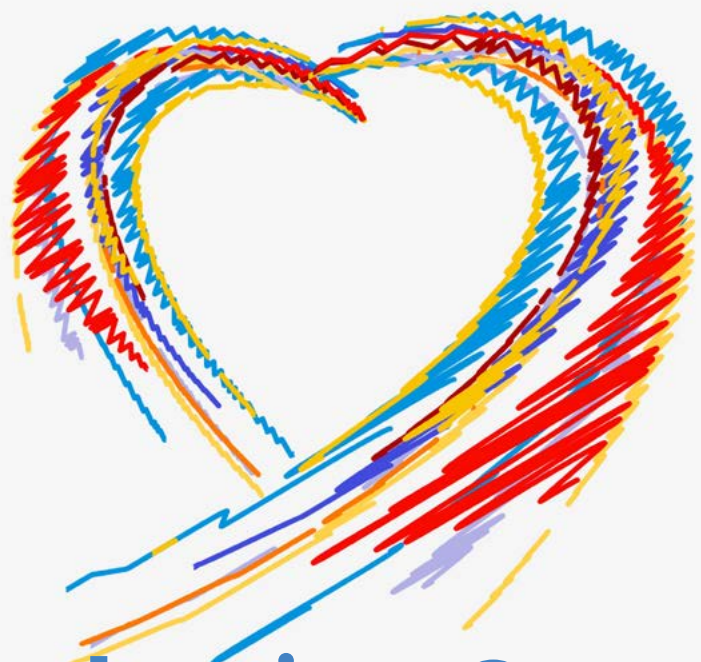
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# “Strengthening Our Community from the Inside Out”

In our tradition, we are taught that our physical and mental well-being are the vessels through which we perform the work of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). This month, as we focus on health and wellness, we reflect on how nurturing our individual health directly sustains the vitality of our entire community.

At the Federation, we believe that building a thriving community starts with healthy individuals. Whether it is supporting mental health awareness or ensuring our seniors have access to the care and social connections they need, our mission is to protect and enhance Jewish life at every stage. Thanks to our beneficiary agencies and partners, we provide critical social services to our community.

True wellness cannot be discussed without acknowledging the heavy toll which rising antisemitism and hate take on our hearts and minds. When we feel forced to conceal our identities or navigate daily life with hypervigilance, it drains our spiritual and physical vitality.

We recognize that this 'vigilance' is a form of trauma. This is why the Federation's commitment to your wellness includes both security and soul-care. Through our **Community Security Campaign**, we work to ensure your physical safety, while our beneficiary agency wellness

initiatives provide the communal support necessary to heal the anxiety and isolation which hate aims to create.

True wellness is not a solo journey. It is found in the "golden path" of balance (*shvil hazahav*) and in the power of our collective responsibility. I encourage you to take time to rest, recharge, and reconnect. By prioritizing our health today, we ensure we have the strength to serve, celebrate, and grow for years to come.

**We Grow Stronger TOGETHER As One.**  
With gratitude,  
**Seth J. Katzen**  
*President & CEO, Jewish Federation of Delaware*

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# Affixing the Mezuzah on the Doorpost of Woodburn

By **RABBI ELLEN BERNHARDT**,  
JCRC Director and Community Chaplain  
Photo Credit: Brad Glazier



On the coldest day of the year in 2025, approximately 25 people gathered in the warm kitchen at Woodburn, the home of the Governor of Delaware. The building, itself, is an 18th-century Georgian mansion, replete with relics and pictures of the history of Delaware. On the dining room table is a set of china with the seal of the State of Delaware in the middle. In the foyer are portraits of the first ladies of the State.

The home, reportedly, was a station on the underground railroad, and there are supposed passageways which hid slaves

on their dangerous journey from slavery in the south to freedom in the north. This is particularly close to the hearts of Jews, as many of our prayers contain “*zacher l'yitziat Mitzrayim*.” This phrase means we remember the Exodus from Egypt, when the Hebrew people were led out of bondage to the promised land of Israel over 3,000 years ago.

We know that our governor, Matt Meyer, and his wife, Dr. Lauren Meyer, affirm their Jewish values of democracy, freedom, charity, and the concern for those in need.

Rabbi Chuni Vogel, Rabbi Abe Rabinowitz, Rabbi Julie Danan, and Cantor Liz Pellen joined Josh Schoenberg (co-chair of the JCRC), Yuval Moha (community emissary from Israel), and community leaders and members in the intimate ceremony in which the Governor and First lady—together with their son, Levii—affixed a mezuzah to the door of their official home, Woodburn.

I delivered the following remarks on the occasion:

"Governor Meyer and First Lady, Rabbis and guests, thank you for inviting us to participate in this intimate moment in your home, one in which you are publicly stating the importance of your Judaism. We do not take for granted that we, in the United States, can display our Judaism protected by the law of the United States.

The mezuzah is one of the most recognizable symbols of our tradition, one which embodies history, from the blood on the doorposts of the home of the Israelites as the angel of Death passed over their homes in ancient Egypt, to the *Shema*—the most important prayer, which affirms our belief in one G-d. That tiny scroll rolled up inside the mezuzah case contains the first two paragraphs of

the Shema, and it is it says, 'You should teach them [the commandments] to your children and speak of them when you are in your homes or on your way, when you are lying down and when you rise up . . . and inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gate.'

We find ourselves just a few days from the start of Hanukah, the holiday of lights, in which we celebrate our fight for religious freedom. Governor, my prayer is that you always continue to fight for freedom and the Jewish values that I know you hold dear: kindness, empathy, education, the dignity of all people, and helping those in need.

On Hanukah, the rabbis ask if we should light one candle the first night and add one each night or light eight candles the first night and one less each night and, as we know, we light one candle the first night until the Hanukiah is blazing with candles on the eighth night. Why? '*Maalin b'kodesh*'—We should increase our holiness.

Governor and Lauren, you have chosen to be public servants, giving up privacy and financial gain. We thank you for your commitment to leading the people of our great State and, as we light the Hanukah candles, we wish you '*maalin b'kodesh*,' that this mezuzah which we affix today increases the holy work that you do for this State and for all whom you touch.

We began this ceremony by singing *Hinei Ma Tov*—how good it is that we are all together—and we conclude it by singing the prayer for peace, for *Shalom Bayit*, peace in your home, peace in the State of Delaware over which you preside, for the entire United States, for our beloved State of Israel, and for the entire world.

*Oseh Shalom bimromav*—May G-d grant peace to the Universe, bring peace to us and to all Israel and let us say, amen.

Mazel tov!"





# AKSE's Celebration of Light

Over 140 congregants and community members were in attendance at the Siegel JCC as Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth presented a culminating event celebrating its 140th anniversary year. The event was organized by Rabbi Abe and Alan Goldberg, with many others contributing their efforts. Senator Lisa Blunt-Rochester and Governor Matt Meyer were present and offered remarks. Howard Berlin reminisced about his multi-generational AKSE family. Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin presented an entertaining, but sobering, keynote speech focusing on the Jewish future. Rabbi Albert Gabbai of the 285-year-old Congregation Mikveh Israel concluded the program with a benediction. There was much delicious food, as well as the uplifting melodies of musicians from the Ezekiel's Wheels Klezmer Band.

Photo Credit: Brad Glazier





## Local Jewish Grad Students Celebrate Chanukah

In the midst of finals and busy lives, Jewish graduate students been carving out time to bring Jewish joy to their campuses. Watching hundreds of students choose connection, celebration, and Jewish identity, even when life is hectic, has been incredibly grounding. They are carrying forward a tradition which generations of Jews fought to preserve: the simple but powerful right to live Jewishly, openly, and with pride.

Photos provided by Meir Zimmerman,  
Regional Director of the Jewish Grad Organization



## Community Menorah Lighting in Newark

On Sunday, December 14, the Newark Jewish Community came out in support of the Community Menorah Lighting on Main Street in front of the Hyatt Place. Thanks to Sasha Aber, Temple Beth El, UD Hillel, and UD Chabad for their support.

Photo Credit: Seth J. Katzen



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# Renewing Our Spaces. Strengthening Our Community.

BY SIEGEL JCC

Photo Credit: Kayla Buchanan



This past year has been a transformative one at the Siegel JCC. Across our campus, we've invested in meaningful renovations designed to enhance the way our community gathers, moves, relaxes, and connects. Each project was approached with intention, care, and a deep understanding that the J is not just a facility—it is a shared home for our community.

One of the most exciting upgrades this year was the complete renovation of our gymnasium. With brand-new flooring that is easier on knees and joints, the space now better supports everyone who uses it—from young athletes learning fundamentals to seasoned players training at a higher level. New basketball hoops and fresh paint have given the gym a renewed sense of energy, reinforcing it as a central hub for movement and community.

Alongside the physical upgrades, our athletic programming has grown as well. While we continue to offer introductory sports clinics, we have expanded into continuing training opportunities for more experienced athletes. Through private, semi-private, and group instruction, participants can now build skills, strength, and confidence in a more focused and personalized way. The upgraded gymnasium provides the ideal environment for this next level of training—supporting athletes of all ages as they grow and challenge themselves.

Another deeply meaningful project was the rebuilding of our former camp office, which was lost in the 2022 fire. From that challenge has come something truly special: our new Clubhouse. More than just a replacement, the Clubhouse represents resilience, growth, and opportunity. Designed to host even more programming than ever before, this space will serve as a vibrant hub for creativity, connection, and engagement, allowing us to expand camp offerings and create new, year-round experiences for children and families.

Wellness and recovery were also major focuses of the renovations. Our spa area received a complete refresh—including updates to the whirlpool, steam room, and sauna—creating a more comfortable and inviting space to relax, recharge, and recover. These improvements reflect a broader commitment to supporting the full wellness journey—beyond workouts alone.

As part of that commitment, we introduced our Assisted Stretch and Recovery Program. Designed for everyone from beginners to elite athletes, this program helps improve mobility, prevent injury, and supports overall performance. Guided by certified trainers using safe, effective techniques, assisted stretching targets areas that are difficult to reach on your own—helping members move more freely and feel better faster. It is a natural extension of our enhanced spa and wellness offerings, supporting both active lifestyles and everyday comfort.



In addition, all of our indoor locker rooms were fully redone. These reinvigorated spaces prioritize comfort, accessibility, and functionality, ensuring that every member—from swimmers and gym-goers to families and seniors—has a positive and welcoming experience. Clean, modern locker rooms play an important role in making the J feel comfortable and inclusive for all.

Our aquatic spaces also saw significant enhancements this year. The indoor pool was updated with new tiling, a refreshed pool deck, and fresh paint throughout the area. These improvements support safety, longevity, and enjoyment, ensuring the pool remains a cornerstone of the J experience for swim lessons, fitness classes, lap swimming, and family fun.

While we are proud of all that has been accomplished, we are always looking ahead. Continuous improvement is part of who we are at the J, and even more enhancements are planned for the year ahead—both inside our facility and across our outdoor campus.

One exciting focus for the coming year is our goal to raise \$50,000 for a new Early Childhood Center playground. This project will create a safe, engaging, and joyful outdoor space for our youngest community members. To support this effort, we will be hosting several fundraising events early this year, inviting our community to come together around this important investment.

Additional outdoor campus improvements are also on the horizon, including new shade structures, a dedicated handwashing station, and enhancements to our outdoor locker rooms. These updates will improve comfort, safety, and functionality, especially during our busiest camp and summer months.

Together, these renovations—past, present, and future—reflect an ongoing investment in people, connection, and community. With every improvement, we remain committed to being stronger every day at the J—creating spaces that support wellness, growth, and belonging for generations to come.



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# Hadassah: Sussex County Chapter L'dor v'dor

## Gail Seligson brings Jewish women together for friendship and tikkun olam in “Lower” Delaware

BY **SUSAN TOWERS**, Co-Chair of the Jewish Living Delaware Advisory Committee

**T**his February, the fledgling Hadassah chapter in Sussex County is kicking off its first book group. The idea came out of a quite lively and spontaneous discourse at its Hanukkah luncheon at the Clubhouse at Baywood in Millsboro.

“And not on Zoom, but in person where we can all get together,” someone said above the collection of voices erupting from the long table.

The dozen women had ordered off the menu, picking from a choice of salads, sandwiches, and hot dishes as they participated in multiple conversations around them. Laughter echoed throughout the room.

Seated in the middle of the long table next to the window, chapter founder and president Gail Seligson told the women that the first book group gathering could be at her home in the Lewes area. Following an overwhelmingly positive response, Gail, a few days later, sent out an email to all members with details about the book event.

“I like the camaraderie, and I support the strength in numbers,” chapter member Dylle Patz said later about Hadassah,



Gail Seligson; Photo Credit: Susan Towers

though she was not at the luncheon. “As women, we are enjoying each other’s company and are doing something important and beneficial for other women and children. It is a form of *tikkun olam*.”

Gail’s lengthy email to members also noted upcoming events, which includes a pasta making class at a local Italian restaurant in March, and announced the chapter’s new cookbook now being created.

“We’re an active chapter,” Gail said. “We get together four to six times a year.”

Though most members live near Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, and Milton, some also come from Bethany Beach and Millsboro.

Gail and her husband, Chris Braudy, moved to Lewes in 2016 from Arlington, VA. Then, she discovered that there was no Hadassah chapter in the area. Gail and her husband not only had been active at



Hadassah Hanukkah luncheon in 2005; Photo Credit: David Kline of The Clubhouse at Baywood

the Rodef Shalom synagogue in Mclean, but Hadassah was in her blood. Her mother Miriam Aaron, who was born in Israel but raised Gail in Brooklyn, was “very active” in Hadassah, Gail says. Miriam had given her a lifetime membership to Hadassah before she died in 2013.

“It would have meant a lot to my mother (that I would start a Hadassah chapter),” Gail says. “She was not so religious, but very community minded. I feel that forming this chapter is my mother’s gift to me.”

Gail had her work cut out for her, however. She reached out to the Wilmington Jewish community, and ended up connecting with Leslie Picker, whose experiences with Hadassah dated back to the 1980s when she was president of the Chai Chapter of Wilmington. As far back as 2019, Leslie had tried unsuccessfully to start a chapter in Sussex County. Gail also connected with longtime Delaware Hadassah leader Suzy Grumbacher.

“The Wilmington chapter already had a list of women in Sussex County who had shown interest in joining a local chapter if one were to be formed,” Gail recalled, noting that her initial list was composed from this. More names came about through word of mouth. Suzy had also connected with women living in Sussex who were interested in joining Hadassah.

Leslie recently recalled an early meeting in Lewes at Iron Hill Brewery of women interested in joining. “I think there were 19 women there.”

The women got together several times and by September 2023 Gail was able to get an official charter completed for the new chapter. Today, members are as diverse as is the Jewish community in Sussex County. Some belong to Seaside Jewish Community, an unaffiliated synagogue in Rehoboth Beach. Some attend Chabad events and Shabbat services in Lewes. Others have no active affiliation to a synagogue or

denomination, but simply want to connect with other Jews and help the community and/or Israel.

“Hadassah’s primary role is to financially support the Hadassah hospitals in Israel,” Leslie says. “But it also builds leadership skills. I credit my growth intellectually to what I am able to accomplish through Hadassah.”

With the proverbial “sleeves rolled up,” Gail continues to work to keep the chapter moving forward. She works with members to find and organize activities in which they’d like to participate, and looks for a place where they can meet regularly. She also stays connected to Hadassah corporate to keep the chapter in line with the organization.

*Tikkun Olam*—helping others, is one of her goals. In September last year, she and her husband Chris, a cancer survivor, participated in the six-day Keystone State Ride from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia to raise money for the Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

“I just wanted to share with you how fortunate I feel that Gail joined our ride this year,” ride organizer Dave Wellborn said. “It was so wonderful to get to know her during the week. We had such a great time. The ride is such an incredible bonding experience, especially since we all are so dedicated to cancer research.”

**If you are interested in learning more about the Hadassah Chapter in Sussex County, contact Gail Seligson at: [gseligson@aol.com](mailto:gseligson@aol.com)**

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# Love—Jewish Style

BY RABBI MICHAEL S. BEALS, aka “The Love Doctor,” Rabbi at Temple Beth El



Photo Credit: AdobeStock

It is possible I am on *halachic* thin ice here. Valentine’s Day is officially a saint’s day. Centers of Jewish education, like day schools and Sunday schools, can’t really celebrate the day with their students. But growing up in public school, I always looked forward to getting and giving Valentine’s Day cards on February 14th, especially with those cute heart-shaped Smarties with the cryptic messages and Hershey’s kisses for our real special friends. It seems a shame for our kids in Jewish educational settings or our adults at Shabbat synagogue services that happened to fall on February 14th—like this year—to be denied such simple pleasures.

So, who was this Saint Valentine, anyway? One legend holds that he was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men—his source for potential soldiers. Valentine defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine’s actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that Valentine be put to death, circa 270 CE.

Because of this story, Pope Gelasius declared February 14th “St. Valentine’s Day” around 498 C.E. There is also a thought that the church chose this day because they wanted to make the pagan “Lupercalia Festival” more in keeping with the values of Christianity. Coming from a pagan tradition, early adherents to Christianity would have fond connections with the Lupercalia festival. This was the time when young bachelors of Rome would choose a name from an urn containing all the eligible Roman women, and they would then be paired for the year. After a year of fun, the couples were free to go their separate ways—certainly not in keeping with the values of the early Church. And this is precisely

why the Church may have chosen to replace this pagan festival with the more appropriate St. Valentine’s Day.

The Talmud, a 6th century collection of Jewish law and legend, describes a day of love in the Jewish religion that precedes Valentine’s Day by perhaps as much as 1,700 years. Tu B’Av, the 15th of the Hebrew month of Av, served as a matchmaking day for unmarried people in the second Temple period (before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.). The first mention of this holiday appears in the 3rd century Mishna, an early collection of Jewish laws from which the Talmud is derived.

One of the early sages in this text, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, is quoted as saying, “There were no better days for the people of Israel than the Fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur, since on these days the daughters of Israel go out in white and dance in the vineyards. What were they saying? ‘Young man, consider who you choose (to be your wife)’ . . .”

The Talmud digs even deeper into history for the origins of the 15th of Av. It explains that this was the day, in Biblical times, when the men from the various tribes of Israel were permitted to marry women from other tribes. Who knew that Biblical tribal intermarriage was a problem?

It should be noted that, like several other Jewish holidays—including Passover, Sukkot (The Feast of Tabernacles), and Tu B'Shvat (the New Year of the Trees)—Tu B’Av also begins on the night between the 14th and 15th day of the Hebrew lunar month. This is when the moon is full. It is not such a jump between the arrival of a full moon and a time associated with romance, love, and fertility. However, all Talmudic references aside, for 19 centuries—between the destruction of the Temple and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948—there have been no Tu B’Av

commemorations, except for the skipping of the mournful *Tahanun* prayers on this day.

But, here’s the real problem. Tu B’Av, the Jewish festival of love, falls sometime in August. School is not in session. So, there is no way of teaching this holiday to our Jewish children. But February 14th is always in the middle of the school session. To me, it seems pretty silly for Jewish day schools and afternoon Hebrew schools to totally ignore the 800-pound Valentine gorilla sitting in the classroom—especially with all that Hallmark and candy-makers’ pressure being brought to bear.

How might a creative Jewish educator approach February 14th today? As part of a well-rounded Israel studies curriculum, we could tell our children that the commercial powers in Israel have declared February 14th “*Yom Ahava*,” the Day of Love, and we could bring in Hebrew-language Hallmark cards to show how Israelis celebrate this holiday today.

But I believe the best place to begin a Biblical exploration of romantic love would be with the story of Jacob. He is the only person in either the Jewish bible or the Christian New Testament, and perhaps the Koran (although I am only guessing) who fell in love with a woman at first sight and kissed her. The lucky woman was Rachel. The power of that love is described in the Midrash, a third century collection of rabbinic parables and commentary based on the Torah.

The Midrash states that Jacob’s love for Rachel was so strong that the seven years he was forced to work for her hand in marriage seemed to pass in what felt like the blink of an eye. From Jacob, we might explore other Biblical love scenes, like the one between Moses and Tsipora. In that story, Moses, on the run from Pharaoh’s Egypt, comes upon Tsipora and her six sisters at the well, being bullied by shepherds. Moses takes all the menacing shepherds on, is victorious, and ends up with Tsipora’s hand in marriage. Now this is the stuff of romance. Who needs Hallmark?

And, if its real romantic love poetry that you are after, look no further than the Bible’s “*Shir Ha Shirim*,” The Song of Songs, attributed to a young King Solomon. He writes, “Arise my darling, my fair one, and come away, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, your face is lovely. *Ani l’dodi v’doi li*—I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine. He feeds among the lilies.”

What study of Jewish love literature would be complete without including poems from the “Golden Age of Spain,” particularly the 11th century love poetry of Shmuel Ha Nagid and Yehuda Ha Levi. These poets, writing side by side with their Muslim counterparts, wrote religious poetry as easily as poems praising wine, women, and song.

And speaking of religious poetry, the Friday night Sabbath liturgy of Kabbalat Shabbat, composed in the

Galilee in the 17th century includes much love poetry, centering on the Jewish people’s relationship with God and with the Sabbath Queen. The most famous prayers in this genre are *L’cha Dodi* and *Yedid Nefesh*, with its suggestive poetry: “*Hi-ga-lay na u’fros, cha-viv, ah-lie et su-kat sh’-lo-makh*—Reveal Yourself, Beloved, for all the world to see, and shelter me in peace beneath your canopy. *Ma-hair, a-hoov, ki va mo-ayd, v’cha-nay-nee kee-may olam*—The time, my Love, is now; rush, be quick be bold. Let your favor grace me, in the spirit of days of old.”

In the prayers and biblical passages surrounding the core prayer in our liturgy, the *Shema*, with its clear declaration of the Oneness of God, we first declare God’s love for us with the *Ahava Raba* prayer, and then declare our love for God in the biblical *V’Ahavta* passage. Taken as a whole, the key word is *Ahava*, Hebrew for love. And, be it between God and people or between two individuals, Judaism celebrates the reciprocity and sanctity of love.

On Saturday, February 14th, I want to create every reason possible for any Jew looking for the best, out-of-the-box Valentine’s Day Date experience to consider joining me at Temple Beth El, at 301 Possum Park Rd., Newark, from 10 AM–12 PM.

I will be armed with chocolates, red roses, and Valentine’s Day-inspired food for kiddush lunch following services. I will overemphasize every piece of liturgy we cover that mentions love. My sermon will be filled with Jewish love literature.

I can think of no better time to study these texts of love found in our bible and in our liturgy. Wishing you love—between you and God, between you and your dear ones—today, on February 14th, and on every day! And, if your heart so moves you, see you at Temple Beth El in Newark, for flowers, chocolates, Valentine’s Day-inspired food . . . And remember to wear red!



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# “What message would you offer to Jewish Anti-Zionists?”

**RABBI YAIR ROBINSON**

Congregation Beth Emeth

Years ago, long before October 7th, when I was taking a confirmation class to New York City, one of my students approached to ask a question. This student was—and is—an empathic and considerate person who cared deeply for the Jewish value of *tikkun olam*—repairing the world, and strives to lives those values. She approached me on the subway as we were traveling to Friday night services. She asked, “do I have to love Israel?”

There were a lot of things I could have said in that moment that would have all been wrong. How could I simply say ‘yes,’ when I myself have often spoken out against Israeli governmental polices that I have long found abhorrent: upholding the Orthodox stranglehold on marriages and divorce, trapping women in abusive relationships; the mistreatment and neglect of the Bedouin community and Arab citizens; allowing the *haredim* to avoid military service, stressing the rest of the country economically and socially; and letting West Bank settlers to run roughshod over their neighbors.

On the other hand, how could I say, ‘no?’ Israel is our longed-for home, a shelter for so many Jews around the world, the only place where we as a people can be in the majority, a place that has been, truly, “the first fruit of our redemption” as a people? Problematic and imperfect? To be sure, but also one of the few places where we can be ‘normal.’

After a half-a-second I told her that we need to be in relationship with Israel. That sometimes Israel will disappoint us, but it’s ours, and it won’t fix itself unless we commit ourselves to her and her people—who are our people. We do need to love and be in relationship with our fellow Jews. As we have seen, no one will save or protect us like one another, despite all of our differences and challenges.

In a world that insists on all answers being either ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ I continue to insist on that nuance: that if we truly love Israel, we must be willing to challenge her policies when they are wrong, and that we are still obligated to be in relationship with one another. Only then, I believe, will the hope of two thousand years truly flourish.

**RABBI PETER H. GRUMBACHER**

*Rabbi Emeritus,*  
Congregation Beth Emeth

Look around you. What are the stories that have been impacting your People for more than two years? Perhaps the calm of Jews walking down the street in Brooklyn, in London, on university campuses? Nowadays, those stories would be considered fantasies, wishful thinking at best. No, we read about hatred that is spewed against us, reminiscent of almost a century ago, and thinking about it, reminiscent of far too many incidents across the centuries.

Let me ask you, to where did our English people go when England kicked us out in 1290? In 1939, where did the 800 Jews find refuge when the ship, the Saint Louis, was refused landing in one port after another and had to return to Germany? Would the Holocaust have happened had there been a Jewish state? Probably, but surely the number of our People murdered would have been far fewer.

Let me ask you, where did the Soviet Jews go in the 1980s once the Kremlin permitted them to leave? Yes, many came to the United States, but they had the chance to emigrate to Israel, and many did. And in the middle of the 20th century, when Arab countries kicked out their Jews who had lived there for centuries, where did they go if not to Israel? And the Ethiopian Jews? And, today, many French Jews?

You, who are Jewish and proclaim yourselves to be anti-Zionists, have the right to view the response of Israel to the October 7th tragedy as overkill. But if you had any true knowledge of history and what Israel means to us, you hopefully would realize

that joining with the enemy, whose anti-Zionism can indeed be translated as antisemitism, is, as they say and have said forever, not good for the Jews! Not good for you!

If the government of Israel’s deeds today are hostile to your values of justice and righteousness; if you see ploughshares being turned to swords and this offends you, speak up and write and protest vehemently, but do not cast away the baby with the bath water. There are thousands upon thousands of Israelis who have joined in various locations crying out loud that they cannot and will not condone the bloodshed and destruction heaped upon Gaza, nor the disgusting actions of the West Bank settlers against innocent Arab farmers. And they will be heard, God-willing, in the next election.

So, once you have learned Israel’s history, and once you get a grasp of what has been the mission of the terrorist neighbors of Israel for almost eight decades if not longer, perhaps your perspective will change. No one is asking you to be complacent; the Prophets of Israel condemned those who went against the moral and ethical principles of the Torah. But I and others are, in fact, asking you to reconsider your misguided view.



Each month, Rabbi Peter H. Grumbacher, along with rabbis from around the state, answer your questions about Judaism.

**Have a question?  
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# I Wish It Was Déjà Vu, But It Isn't.

BY **MEREDITH ROSENTHAL**, Breast Cancer Survivor

Lately, I find myself in the same downtown Philadelphia hospital parking garages, elevators, and waiting rooms. My senses are overtaken by all-too-familiar stimuli—harsh fluorescent lighting, the sharp scent of cleaning supplies, and pink gowns that “open in the front.” **I wish it was déjà vu, but it isn't.**

This time, it's not about me. Instead, I'm helping my mom, Iris Vinokur, navigate the complicated, disorienting experience of a breast cancer diagnosis. Fortunately—or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it—I'm familiar with how all of this works. It's been just over three years since my own diagnosis, now my mom faces the same reality.

After the death of my father, Jack Vinokur, in January 2025, my mom understandably delayed her routine mammogram. My parents had been married for 57 years, and my dad always accompanied her to that appointment. I can picture him in the waiting room—impeccably dressed in a blue blazer, khaki dress pants, and a flat cap—patiently waiting for the love of his life to emerge, reassured by the familiar words that everything “looked okay.”

About six months after she was supposed to have a mammogram, the day finally came for her appointment. This routine mammogram was anything but routine. My dad wasn't in the waiting room—my brave mom went alone to what

she thought would be a non-event. I still find myself regretting not being with her, but who would have thought she would be diagnosed at 80 years old, after having just supported me through my own cancer journey. The radiologist—ironically, the same one who had delivered my own diagnosis—shared the news that it was most likely breast cancer, and further testing would be needed. Anyone who has faced this diagnosis knows that one of the hardest parts is the waiting. Waiting for results. Waiting for appointments to be scheduled. Waiting—just waiting.

Now what? Deep breath. Without hesitation, my mom made it known that she wanted the same medical team that

cared for me. From the breast surgeon to the oncologist, we knew the drill.

Her journey is different. While the type of cancer is the same, being diagnosed in your late 40s is different from being diagnosed at 80. She opted for a lumpectomy. I had a double mastectomy with reconstruction. Radiation for Mom. Chemo was on the table for me; although it's a treatment I never ended up enduring due to complications. Five years of oral medication for Mom. Five years of oral medication for me. However, different medications because we are at different hormonal points in our lives. Everyone's journey is different.

Mother and daughter with the same type of breast cancer must mean that there's a genetic component. Right? You would think, but that's not the case. Mom and I both had genetic testing and counseling, and none of the markers point to genetics—at least for now. New genetic markers are always being discovered. So many questions. So many fears. Top on my list—what does this mean for my daughter? Earlier diagnostic testing for her? What can she do to prevent yet another generation facing breast cancer?

And yet, genetics don't seem to tell the whole story. With so many of my dearest friends being diagnosed with breast cancer,

I can't help but wonder why it is so prevalent. Doctor after doctor point to environmental factors—and they don't solely mean pollution. They are clear that all of us need to reduce the stressors of daily life. My mom and I always make a list of questions before each appointment. She wanted to ask “our” breast surgeon what else could be done to prevent the cancer from coming back. I'm sure it was the same question the doctor had already answered dozens of times that month. It was also the same question I had asked three years earlier. I already knew the answer because I had heard it before, but I let Mom ask—just in case something had changed. It hadn't. The advice was the same: “Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Don't drink alcohol. Reduce your stress. And continue to get screened.” My mom looked at me and said, “You were correct.” Yes, Mom. Unfortunately, I know all too well—and now, so do you.

By the time this article is published, my mom's journey will have taken many twists and turns. Truthfully, it's a journey that never ends. Even when the physical part fades, the mental weight stays. So where does this leave me? Sitting beside my mom—sometimes as her guide, sometimes as her daughter—both of us doing the best we can with what we

know. I will keep sharing our story, as a survivor and as a daughter, in the hope that it encourages others to listen to their bodies, to take care of themselves, and to remember that **even in the hardest moments, no one has to walk this path alone.** ■

## About the Author:

**MEREDITH ROSENTHAL** lives in North Wilmington with her family and is actively involved in the community, serving on several local boards, including the Siegel JCC, the University of Delaware's Hillel, and Jewish Living Delaware advisory committee. She has been a realtor for more than 20 years, is licensed in both Delaware and Pennsylvania, and works with Long & Foster Real Estate's Greenville office. Earlier in her career, Meredith was an Emmy Award-winning TV reporter and producer and served as press secretary to two U.S. Senators. When she's not touring houses or volunteering, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, writing, and traveling.



Annie Mom Philly - Iris and her granddaughter, Annie Rosenthal, grabbing a cup of coffee in Philadelphia  
Photo provided by Meredith Rosenthal



Mere Mom Philly - Meredith and Iris at their favorite Philadelphia restaurant, Parc.  
Photo provided by Meredith Rosenthal



# SOARING

## TOWARD RECOVERY



A Jewish Living Delaware exclusive interview with SOAR Executive Director Dr. Maya Khalid-Janney

BY EMMA DRIBAN, Editor

In Judaism, the sanctity of life is one of the most significant values, known as *pikuach nefesh*. This principle is held above almost all others, empowering us to break Sabbath laws in the service of saving a life. When a life is put in peril, we are compelled, by any means necessary, to give aid. This mitzvah is also what guides us to support survivors of violence.

In Delaware, nearly 25% of women and 15% of men are reported as survivors of sexual abuse. And, the unfortunate truth is, many of these people will never come forward or seek the help they may need. Whether they do not feel supported, feel they won't be believed, or can't overcome the overwhelming stigma still surrounding abuse of this type, there is a significant need right here in our state to help those who have been victims of this violence.

Survivors of Abuse in Recovery, or SOAR, is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing professional mental health services to victims of sexual trauma and their families regardless of their ability to pay. A leader in the field, SOAR also provides education, advocacy, and professional development.

SOAR's recovery services include individual, family, and group psychotherapy services designed to help victims of all ages recover from the sex crimes that have been committed against them. More than 2,000 adults, adolescents, children, and their families residing in Delaware and the surrounding counties in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland utilize SOAR's services annually.

Dr. Maya Khalid-Janney, Executive Director of SOAR, sat down with us to share the organizations goals.

### 1. For those unfamiliar with SOAR, how would you describe the organization's core mission and the values that drive your work?

Our core mission is to support survivors of sexual abuse. When SOAR was created, there wasn't a lot of awareness around sexual abuse or how frequently it happens. It was something hidden within homes and communities. SOAR came about way back in the 1990s. I know that doesn't feel that long, but we've come a long way since then as a society. The #MeToo movement

particularly inspired a lot more awareness around sexual abuse in the media with celebrities coming forward, and perspectives have shifted. But our focus has stayed the same: to work with survivors of sexual abuse and sexual trauma with specialized care. There are not many providers in our industry. Honestly, I don't think there are enough providers in general when it comes to mental health, but this is especially true when it comes to those specializing in recovery from sexual abuse.

### 2. What brought you to the organization?

While I was completing my doctoral education, I had significant cases with sexual abuse survivors on my caseload. And, for me, the common denominator was that the trauma is linked to the mental health issues I was seeing. When I had a client come in with an eating disorder, for example, oftentimes there would be a root trauma which rippled into the eating disorder. Once you start thinking that way, that trauma is the root cause of a lot of the things that we're seeing, you can't change that line of thinking so easily. Those experiences made it my passion and goal to work with trauma and start working on healing trauma. I became Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) trained, which is one of the two World Health Organizations evidence-based approaches to PTSD and trauma. Then, I started seeing the remarkable way the brain heals from things like this, and it got me really invested, specifically in all forms of trauma. My caseload was so heavy with instances of sexual abuse that the area became my niche. It came to me.

### 3. What unique challenges do survivors of sexual trauma face when seeking mental health support, and how does SOAR work to remove those barriers?

For many survivors, there aren't therapists who are specifically trained to work with sexual abuse. We're coming further in the field of trauma but, for many years, people were just afraid to hear about the trauma. They were not able to tolerate it themselves

Photo Credit: unsplash.com

Continued on next page



for whatever reason. Not every therapist is cut out to work with this specific population. It takes a toll on you. You have to have a calling for it, to be working with survivors. It's gratifying, though. Survivors need therapists who are specifically trained to work with sexual abuse and aren't going to be appalled by what they hear or shocked, because then it creates the space where the client isn't able to be the center of the session. SOAR removes these barriers by ensuring that all of our clinicians are specifically trained to work with sexual abuse survivors. We create an environment where survivors are met with calm, competence, and compassion—not disbelief or discomfort. That safety is essential for healing.

**4. Can you walk us through what the recovery process might look like for a survivor entering SOAR's programs for the first time?**

First and foremost, we don't ever turn a survivor away. If they don't have insurance, we have different forms of grants and subsidies that we can use to cover their treatment. We work with people to figure out how they can pay for the service if they can, and if they can't, then we have additional services we provide to cover for that. Once they go through our intake process, we have an internal meeting where we figure out what the client needs. We explore what modality would best suit their needs. We find out their time and day preferences, their stage of life, their preferences for in person versus remote meeting. Then, we do an in-house matching. We look at all our clinicians—currently just under 40 providers—and see who has availability and who's going to be the best fit. The client has every right to feel out the clinician for a session or two and say, “Hey, this isn't working for us. I need a new clinician.” And we'll match them up with someone else.

Ultimately, we want the client to have a good fit the first time around, because it's already hard coming to a place with the expectation that you are going to work on your abuse. We want it to be as easy as possible.



Dr. Maya Khalid-Janney giving a presentation on her expertise; Photo provided by SOAR

Once we get into therapy, we use a triphasic model. All of our clinicians use this umbrella model. Even though people use different modalities, they all utilize a three-phase model which starts with stabilization of symptoms and psychoeducation. The client learns about what happens to their body and their mind when they're sexually abused. They learn how they can stabilize some of the symptoms they are experiencing and how they might better regulate their emotions. Then, the second phase is the processing of the trauma using whichever modality their clinician practices and which the client feels is a good fit for them. And then, the third phase is reintegration, slowly tapering down and saying you've kind of gotten to a point where you're able to move forward and reduce frequency of sessions.

**5. SOAR supports individuals of all ages. How are services tailored to meet the different developmental and emotional needs of children, adolescents, and adults?**

It's a completely different ballgame and it takes specialization to work with children. We have play therapy and EMDR tailored to children. We have a lot of specialized people in Delaware who support us. Dr. Rebecca Zenker, for example, is a psychologist who works specifically with kids and who consults with us on a

monthly basis. Our clinicians get monthly consultations if they're working with kiddos and it's called our “child and adolescent team meeting.” They meet with the specialized psychologist or doctor in that field to get additional support on those cases where they might need it. For adults, we work as a team, both internally and with our clients, to ensure we are meeting their needs, using modalities that work for them, finding the right providers for them. We also have groups, for adults and teens.

**6. What are some common misconceptions about sexual trauma and recovery that you often seek to correct through your programs or outreach?**

That people should "just get over it." I think that's the biggest thing. That you should just wake up one day and it shouldn't matter anymore. From my perspective, when you have an injury, if you get in a car accident, you're injured. You may recover. And, of course, you will eventually recover once you get treatment. But that wound, that scar, that feeling is always going to be there. It's something that becomes part of you. It's made you who you are. That's the metaphor. As long as we're fixing it, we're giving the first aid that we need, and we're recovering and healing from it.

**7. In addition to clinical care, SOAR emphasizes education and advocacy. What does that work look like on the ground, and why is it essential?**

Unfortunately, the legal system isn't always the greatest when it comes to perpetrators. Only 1%–8% of perpetrators are actually convicted of sexual abuse related crimes. Sometimes, our clients have pardon hearings for their perpetrators and we have clinicians who support them through those occasions. Maybe that means they help them write their victim impact statement, or maybe they actually show up in the courtroom and support their client. That support can be given at different levels, depending on what the client's comfortable with and the clinician's able to commit to. But we do advocate for our clients through the system as well, whether that's Division of Family Services or Children and Families First. We support going through Child Advocacy Center



Photo provided by SOAR

interviews. Sometimes, we have kids who have been removed from their biological parents' homes and our clinicians have to make input decisions, fact based witness decisions. So again, our clinicians are not sitting there trying to evaluate custody-based decisions in any way, but they are the

ones who hear from the children directly. They're able to advocate the child's voice in the legal system and in other ways. We go down to Dover and advocate more funding to support survivors. We advocated for the new victims' rights bill that passed in 2024. We support the agencies that are down there talking to our legislators to create greater support for survivors.

**8. SOAR serves more than 2,000 people annually. What does this scale of impact reveal about the need for these services in Delaware?**

Those statistics are astonishing. One in four women have experienced some form of sexual assault or abuse or harassment, and then one in seven men have experienced sexual abuse of some sort. Now that it's becoming safer for people to come forward amongst all genders, all populations, I think that we're seeing more people coming forward to get help. We don't have a wait list, thank God. But I think that there's a significant need in the state of Delaware. I know, specifically, we're starting a human trafficking program this year to support our sexual abuse survivors and human trafficking survivors in general through the state of Delaware. That's a need that we've had in this state for quite some time. It's devastating that there's no outpatient services for people who have been trafficked.

**9. Have you seen a significant shift in who comes forward during your time in the organization?**

Definitely. In probably just the last 10 years of my career, I've seen a shift towards more boys and men coming forward. After Jerry Sandusky was exposed and convicted, there was a shift in our field towards recognizing that boys and men and people of all genders are also survivors. We offer all gender groups, where we are very sensitive to trans and LGBTQ rights, as well. And, while there's been a shift, is it where I want it to be? No, absolutely not. Men still have a really significant taboo or resistance to getting treatment because they might feel like it's emasculating or it's not safe for them.

**10. Looking ahead, what are SOAR's biggest goals or priorities for the next few years, and what support from the community would help you achieve them?**

A big financial goal of ours is to become less dependent on government funding in general. Currently, we are very dependent on providing services based on grants we receive. We're trying to amp up our annual appeals and have our greater Delaware community provide greater support so we are not relying on government funding. We are also expanding our programs to support a human trafficking program expanding our clinician base. We do train clinicians and interns at SOAR, and we've made that program more robust in the last few years. We do psychological testing, which is something that we started four years ago, which can offer evaluations for ADHD or trauma or dissociative identity disorder. We're definitely working on expanding those programs.

One big thing I want to highlight is that we offer a training program where we go out into the community to train other professionals. The reason this is important is that we want other people to be aware of what sexual abuse looks like, to know the signs of sexual abuse and how to help survivors without re-traumatizing them. We're 30 to 40 people at SOAR who are trying to do this work, but if we can get people in all these different parts of Delaware to support the structure, to be more aware of sexual abuse or human trafficking and all these topics, I think we can find that there's a gamut of survivor supporters out there. ■

**To learn more about how you can support the work of SOAR, visit [www.survivorsofabuse.org/](http://www.survivorsofabuse.org/)**

*Thank you to Lesley Tryon, JFD's Endowment and Finance Administrator and Board President of SOAR for her guidance on this piece.*



# LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

BY DAVID FRUCHTMAN



Judy Gold; Photo Credit: Justine Ungaro



Noah Gardenswartz; Photo Credit: @noahgcomedy



Emo Philips; Photo Credit: emophilips.com



Ophira Eisenberg; Photo Credit: Wikipedia



Myq Kaplan; Photo Credit: IMDB

## MENT TO CHICKEN SOUP)

Little did Seth Katzen know when we met in the summer of 2019 that he would play a pivotal role in launching a comedy series bringing nationally touring Jewish comedians to Delaware. What began as a simple idea has blossomed into a vibrant tradition which continues to bring joy and laughter to our community.

How do the Jewish Federation of Delaware and Arden Gild Hall keep attracting such incredible comedy talent to this little barn in the woods? I have a few thoughts.

As the former president of Congregation Beth Shalom's Men's Club for nearly a decade, I organized programs ranging from Sunday brunches with guest speakers to adventurous outings like ziplining, canoeing, knockerball, and the ever-popular *Latkapolooza*. But, in hindsight, booking comedian Rabbi Bob Alpert for a CBS fundraiser may have hinted at what was to come.

As my Men's Club term was winding down, I met with Ron Ozer, who leads Arden Concert Gild, to express my interest in joining. Since 1997, Arden Concert Gild has presented concerts of virtually every musical genre at Gild Hall. I told Ron that my experience in programming, organizing, and marketing events—combined with my deep roots in music from my years at the legendary Jeremiah's Record Exchange—could be valuable to the group. He agreed.

At one of my first Concert Gild meetings, I asked whether Arden had ever considered bringing comedians to Gild Hall. As a lifelong fan of stand-up—and someone who once performed it—I was eager to help make it happen. I learned the idea had been mentioned before, but never seriously pursued.

So, I pitched one of my favorites: **Emo Philips**, the cult comedy legend known for his falsetto voice and surreal delivery. The team was intrigued, but logistics—mainly his Los Angeles base and unpredictable touring schedule—proved too complicated.

Undeterred, I remembered seeing **Judy Gold** perform at the Siegel JCC a few years earlier. She was hilarious, unapologetically Jewish, and I knew she'd be perfect for Arden. I approached Seth about co-sponsoring the show with the Federation. The Federation had long been known for bringing the Jewish community together through engaging cultural events—but this would be a first: a *comedy show* partnership between the Federation and Arden Gild Hall.

Thanks to Seth's enthusiasm and visionary programming, we moved forward. Some Arden Gild board members were cautious—it was new territory—but I assured them that co-sponsorship with the Federation would widen our reach and share the financial risk. After negotiating with Judy's manager, we officially booked our first show.

On November 23, 2019, Judy Gold took the stage at Arden Gild Hall and brought the house down! The near-capacity crowd roared with laughter, and the overwhelmingly positive feedback confirmed we were onto something special.

Encouraged by that success, Seth and I teamed up again to book **Noah Gardenswartz**, a writer and performer on *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. Though based in Los Angeles, Noah had Delaware ties: his Maccabi Games basketball coach lived locally, and a visiting CBS rabbi had officiated his bar mitzvah in Colorado. It was another fantastic night, kicked off by a pre-show happy hour for Federation board members and friends.

Our next Federation-sponsored comedian, **Ophira Eisenberg**, came to Arden Gild Hall on December 9, 2023, just two months after the tragic events of October 7. Known for hosting NPR's *Ask Me Another*, Ophira brought her trademark sharp wit and warmth to a packed house. At a time when our community was still reeling, her performance offered much-needed laughter and light—a welcome break from the heaviness of the news cycle.

Most recently, we welcomed **Myq Kaplan**, whose intelligent, rapid-fire, and linguistically playful comedy had the audience in stitches from start to finish. His wordplay and philosophical humor—both hilarious and thought-provoking—left the crowd buzzing long after the show ended.

Through these shows, one truth has become clear: **laughter is indeed the best medicine**. In times of both joy and difficulty, it connects us, heals us, and reminds us of our shared humanity.

So, keep your eyes open for the next Federation-prescribed dose of laughter coming soon to Arden Gild Hall. You won't want to miss who's up next. ■

**To learn more about what Arden Gild Hall has to offer and for information about upcoming comedy shows, visit [www.ardenconcerts.com](http://www.ardenconcerts.com).**



# Eating Well with Nourish Markets

A Jewish Living Delaware exclusive interview with the founders of Nourish Markets

BY EMMA DRIBAN, Editor

**M**aimonides, known in Jewish tradition as the Rambam, was a great doctor. The Rambam wrote on many subjects regarding health and asserted that maintaining one's health is part of serving Hashem, because without good health no one can serve Hashem.

Eating well is part of this.

Beyond kashruth, as Jews we are obligated to be mindful of our diets, purposeful in how we eat, and cautious of

the impact our culinary habits have on the world around us.

Right here in Delaware, Nourish Markets aims to clean up grab-and-go dining by crafting fresh, organic meals for people on the move—from vibrant salads to protein-packed wraps, with a wide range of gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan options.

Nourish Markets believes that “your foundation for wellness starts with what's on your fork,” with ingredients that are never processed, artificial, or filled with

additives or preservatives—“because real food doesn't need fake ingredients.”

“Whether you're passing through an airport, grabbing a bite at a hospital, or on the go at a university, Nourish Markets is here to offer you food that tastes as good as it makes you feel.”

When we reached out to the co-founders, Sophia and Kevin Macauley, they were eager to share the story of how Nourish Markets came to be, their goals in creating sustainable grab-and-go cuisine, and what they hope to achieve in the future.

**1. Nourish Markets is redefining grab-and-go dining—what problem were you most determined to solve when you first envisioned the brand?**

We wanted to fix a simple, common frustration: there were almost no high-quality, clean, organic grab-and-go options in airports and other busy places, especially for people who need gluten-free, dairy-free, or plant-based meals. Nourish Markets began as that travel solution and grew into a way to deliver chef-crafted, real-ingredient meals to airports, hospitals, universities, cafes, and more.

**2. Co-founder Sophia's personal health journey is central to the company's origin story. How did that experience shape the philosophy behind Nourish Markets' menu and sourcing standards?**

Sophia's autoimmune diagnosis set our non-negotiables: organic, anti-inflammatory, locally sourced food, and committed to clean, pronounceable ingredients. Living on a local farm and working with root cause medicine showed her (and us) how much what we eat matters. Her experience inspired our philosophy and still guides every product decision.

**3. “Real food doesn't need fake ingredients” is a powerful statement. What does that principle look like in practice when developing new menu items? How often does your menu change?**

It's simple: no preservatives, no refined sugar, no seed oils, and no ultra-processed additives. If you can't read or pronounce an ingredient, it won't be in our products. We build menus from organic, local produce and house-made components, with seasonal rotations that follow what's freshest while keeping a set of reliable favorites.

**4. Nourish Markets emphasizes anti-inflammatory, whole-food ingredients. How do you balance nutritional integrity with flavor and convenience?**

We start with great ingredients and let the chefs do the rest. We work with functional medicine practitioners on nutritional priorities, then ask our culinary team to translate them into craveable flavors and practical formats. Some items are everyday nutritional pillars, and others are intentional indulgences made with clean, high-quality ingredients so you feel good after eating them.

**5. With options that are gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan, how do you ensure inclusivity without compromising quality or taste? Have you considered adding “kosher” to your impressive ethos of dietary inclusivity?**

Our goal is to make gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan options so delicious that no one notices a difference (we also have options with meat and poultry, sourcing only from the best quality, organic, and humanely raised farms). Thoughtful recipes, superb ingredients, and rigorous quality control mean inclusivity and taste go hand in hand. Many of our vegan items are naturally compatible with kosher diets.

Continued on next page



Photo provided by @Nourish\_Markets on Instagram



**6. Sustainability and wellness often go hand in hand. How does Nourish Markets approach environmental responsibility across sourcing, packaging, and operations?**

We prioritize local, regenerative, and organic farms; choose recyclable and compostable packaging and utensils; and use technology to minimize waste and optimize logistics. Sustainability informs sourcing, product design, and daily operations, because protecting health and the planet go together.

**7. What kind of cultural shift do you hope Nourish Markets inspires in the future of convenience food?**

We want convenience to mean real food, with customers choosing higher-quality options, communities supporting local farmers, and supply chains designed to sustain people and the planet. Our aim is to make nourishing convenience the norm, not the exception.

**8. Looking ahead, what does success look like for Nourish Markets—both as a business and as a movement for the next generation of eaters?**

Success is a world where convenient food goes hand in hand with health and joy. It looks like a growing, profitable network of markets and partners that makes farm-fresh meals easy to find, strengthens local supply chains, and ensures the next generation grows up knowing nourishing, nourishing, wholesome, food is the norm. That is the movement we are building. ■



To learn more about Nourish Markets, including what's on their current menu and how to partner with them, visit [NourishMarkets.com](https://NourishMarkets.com). Or, try their delicious offerings at one or more of their convenient locations:

**Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport**

7050 Friendship Rd (Concourse A), Baltimore, MD 21240  
\*Automated Market Open 24/7

**Brew HaHa - Avenue North**

1000 Renaissance Way, Wilmington, DE 19803

**Brew HaHa - Branmar Plaza**

1812 Marsh Rd, Wilmington, DE 19810

**Brew HaHa - Christiana Hospital (E-Tower)**

4755 Ogletown-Stanton Rd, Newark, DE 19718

**Brew HaHa - Delaware Ave**

222 Delaware Ave, Wilmington, DE 19801

**Brew HaHa - Greenville**

838 Kennett Pike, Wilmington, DE 19807

**Brew HaHa - Pike Creek**

5329 Limestone Rd, Wilmington, DE 19808

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# These Therapists Give a Name to the Way Jewish Distress Has Been Ignored Since October 7: ‘Traumatic Invalidation’

Miri Bar-Halpern and Jaclyn Wolfman strike a nerve with a paper about the mental toll of being told your distress and fears don’t count.

BY ANDREW SILOW-CARROLL



Originally published in June 2025 at JTA.org

Trauma therapists Jaclyn Wolfman, left, and Miri Bar-Halpern; Photo Credit:jta.org

Miri Bar-Halpern and Jaclyn Wolfman don’t use the term “gaslighting” in their paper on Jewish trauma after October 7, but they might as well have.

The Boston-area trauma therapists, writing in the *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, give a different name to the pain many Jews have felt over the last harrowing [28] months: “traumatic invalidation.” It’s a common term in their field, describing when, for example, rape victims are told they have “misinterpreted” events or even brought them on themselves.

They apply the term to what Jews have reported in the months after the Hamas attacks: “Rather than being met with compassion and care,” they write, “many were instead met with a stunning mix of silence, blaming, excluding, and even outright denying the atrocities of October 7 along with any emotional pain stemming from them.”

For the Jews in their study, “traumatic invalidation” took the form of colleagues who ignored or shunned them after

October 7, or suggested that Israel had it coming, or told them that they were “overreacting” to antisemitic comments.

They write of clients and colleagues excluded from clubs and professional associations, pelted with pro-Hamas messages from people they considered friends, and told that their grief over the deaths, kidnapping, and sexual assault of Jews after October 7 does not matter compared to the human toll in Gaza.

Individuals whose experiences are invalidated or downplayed can be at risk for a range of symptoms, including mood swings, anxiety, depression, and even post-traumatic stress. Making it worse, they write, are therapists and counselors who either don’t appreciate their Jewish clients’ pain or who minimize their distress.

Posted [May 2025] by a journal for specialists—part of a forthcoming issue on antisemitism and social work—the paper by Bar-Halpern and Wolfman has been shared widely on social media.

“We’ve been getting a lot of messages and emails saying just, ‘Thank you for

giving me the language,’” said Bar-Halpern in a joint interview with Wolfman. “We had one person saying that she was crying while reading it, because she finally felt validated . . . and things finally made sense to her.”

Bar-Halpern, 41, is a clinical psychologist, a lecturer at Harvard Medical School, and director of trauma training and services at Parents for Peace, a national helpline for U.S. families with children drawn to extremism of all kinds. She grew up in Israel and moved to the United States 17 years ago.

Wolfman, 45, is a Harvard-trained clinical psychologist who grew up in Connecticut. She is founder and director of Village Psychology in Belmont, Massachusetts.

Visit [www.jta.org/2025/06/11/ideas/these-therapists-give-a-name-to-the-way-jewish-distress-has-been-ignored-since-oct-7-traumatic-invalidation](http://www.jta.org/2025/06/11/ideas/these-therapists-give-a-name-to-the-way-jewish-distress-has-been-ignored-since-oct-7-traumatic-invalidation) to read an interview with the psychologists.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION FROM:

## DELAWARE GRATZ ENDOWMENT FUND

The mission of Delaware Gratz has always been and will continue to be the education of Jewish teens. Although we are no longer offering traditional classes, we are continuing to offer Jewish teens the opportunity to continue their Jewish education.

Delaware Gratz Endowment Fund will now be offering grants and scholarships to Delaware teens (currently in 9<sup>th</sup> grade) to attend educational opportunities.

These opportunities can include:

- Trips to Israel
- Semesters abroad in Israel
- Gap year educational programs
- Attending Jewish summer camps
- Attending special programs in Israel or in the United States

... as well as many other educational opportunities



Research has shown that the best way to not only give teens a Jewish education but also encourage them to become active and engaged Jewish adults is through experiential learning. These studies have shown that experiences in Jewish camps, youth groups, spending a semester in a school in Israel, and trips to Israel have a much greater impact on these teens than actually attending traditional classrooms.

The Delaware Gratz Board is committed to continuing to enrich the lives of our Jewish teens by supporting their continued Jewish education.



If your teen is interested in applying for a scholarship, download the Gratz application at: [ShalomDelaware.org/Scholarships](http://ShalomDelaware.org/Scholarships)

Questions may be directed to [Scholarships@ShalomDel.org](mailto:Scholarships@ShalomDel.org) or to the Federation office at 302-427-2100.

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Jewish Federation of Delaware





# Combating Metabolic Disorders with a Balanced Diet

BY JANIE TRUITT

Over the past five to 10 years, the prevalence of metabolic disorders—such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and metabolic syndrome (any three of the following: high blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, excess abdominal weight / elevated BMI, high triglycerides, low HDL—“good”—cholesterol)—has continued to rise globally. These conditions significantly raise your risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and organ damage.

At the root of these disorders is a condition known as insulin resistance, which evolves largely from your eating patterns, lifestyle, and the types of food you eat. The more sugar you consume and the more dysregulated your blood sugar levels are during the day (meaning multiple spikes and crashes) the more likely your cells are to no longer properly absorb insulin, which makes them less effective at using glucose. The glucose, therefore, remains in your blood stream and is converted to fat, causing inflammation which can trigger the metabolic disorders noted above, and weight gain. **NOTE:** Insulin resistance can be confirmed through testing for elevated blood sugar and insulin levels. Please consult your physician.

But the good news is that insulin resistance can be reversed through tweaks in eating strategies and minor lifestyle changes. The two most helpful things you can do are to eat in a manner which keeps your blood sugar levels steady throughout the day, and to integrate moderate levels of activity, both of which will help increase insulin sensitivity so that your body begins to use its insulin again, appropriately process glucose, and start to utilize stored fat, potentially leading to weight loss and a substantial reduction in the risk of metabolic disorders.

Keeping blood sugar levels steady can be achieved by integrating protein, fiber, and healthy fats in every meal, and integrating healthy snacks at strategic points during the day (mid-morning, mid-afternoon) to avoid blood sugar crashes (which can also lead to cravings and overeating). Protein, fiber, and healthy fats are



more slowly absorbed than carbohydrates and maintain your blood sugar levels longer. When eaten with carbohydrates, they slow the absorption of carbohydrates as well. Focus on whole and minimally processed foods and avoid Ultra-Processed Foods and excess sugar, as well as foods with a high glycemic load (meaning foods that spike your blood sugar very quickly such as sweets and white rice, pasta, bread, and flour. Switch to whole grains where possible.

As for integrating moderate levels of activity—a 15-minute walk, getting up from your desk for five minutes each hour or 10 minutes three times a day and walking around, etc., is enough to unlock a biochemical process that makes your cells more sensitive to insulin.

My counsel is to create a plan and attack it in small achievable steps to develop new, sustainable habits and to avoid overwhelming yourself. As an example, work first on getting better breakfasts, then perhaps integrating movement and so on.

## Numbers Worth Tracking

The following dietary components either directly contribute to or lower the risk of metabolic disorders and, when tracked and tweaked, can help you lower your risk of metabolic disorders and chronic disease. There are several free apps (Cronometer, Zoe, MyFitnessPal) that can help you track your consumption with minimal fuss.

■ **Saturated Fat** can drive up LDL cholesterol, increasing risk of metabolic disorder and heart disease. They are generally solid at room temperature (think butter) and are prevalent in high-fat dairy, red meat, and Ultra-Processed Foods (commercially prepared foods).

■ *Consume 20 g or less daily*

■ **Sodium** in excess raises blood pressure, increasing risk of heart disease, stroke, and organ damage. For the typical American, 70% of sodium intake comes from processed and restaurant meals while only 11% comes from adding salt at home.

■ *Consume 2300 mg or less daily*

■ **Added Sugar** is the sugar that is added to commercially prepared foods to increase flavor or extend shelf life. It enters your bloodstream very quickly and raises the risk of metabolic disorders, fatty liver disease, and heart disease. The recommended amounts are less than the amount of sugar in a 12-oz can of soda!

■ *Consume no more than 25 g (women); 36 g (men) daily*

■ **Fiber** helps reduce the risk of high cholesterol, obesity, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, heart attacks, strokes, and even some cancers and it is associated with better gastrointestinal health and reduced inflammation. Only 5% of Americans consume the recommended daily amount.

■ *Consume at least 25 g (women); 38 g (men) daily*

■ **Potassium** is one of the most important minerals in your body, helping lower blood pressure and stroke risk among many other functions. Over 90% of Americans do not consume the recommended daily value. **NOTE:** Before adding any supplement to your routine, please consult your physician. Supplements can interfere with medications and some supplements can build up in your body to toxic levels.

■ *Consume 4700 mg daily*

## Healthy Fats—Isn't That an Oxymoron?

Fat has received a bad rep over the years as being unhealthy. However, fat plays many important roles in our body including serving as a source of energy, protecting and cushioning vital organs, supporting cell growth, and assisting in the absorption of essential vitamins such as A, D, E, and K. Therefore, including some fat in our diets is extremely important. It just needs to be the right kinds of fat.

### ■ Unsaturated (healthy) fats

*(There are two types: monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.)*

Consume in moderation (they are still calorie dense). These fats provide energy; absorb into your bloodstream slowly, helping stabilize your blood sugar; and help reduce cholesterol levels, lower inflammation, and support cardiovascular health. This category of fats also encompasses Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, essential polyunsaturated fats. **NOTE:** Do not consume unsaturated fats in a hydrogenated form as they will have lost their heart-healthy properties. Unsaturated fats can be found in:

- Certain Oils: olive, avocado, corn, soybean, sunflower, cod liver, walnut
- Nuts & Seeds (also a great source of Omega-3's): just about all varieties, but key among them are walnuts, pecans, pistachios, chia, flax, hemp, soybeans

Continued on next page

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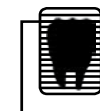
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- Fruits & Vegetables: avocados, olives, spinach, brussels sprouts, peas
- Protein: Eggs, salmon, mackerel, sardines, anchovies, tuna, rainbow trout, beans, lentils

- **Saturated fats**  
Consume in small quantities.
- **Trans fats**  
Do not consume. These are commercially produced fats (although they do occur naturally in some animal products). These fats raise LDL cholesterol, lower HDL ("good") cholesterol, and significantly increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

**Breakfast**  
In trying to follow the protein/fiber/healthy fats eating plan, my clients most often struggle with breakfast. Mornings are normally a mad dash out the door, grabbing something like a protein bar on the way. However, in managing metabolic disorders, breakfast TRULY IS the most important meal of the day. If you're not eating a balanced breakfast, you will usually end up crashing mid-morning, feeling hungry and getting cravings, and eating the first thing in sight. This sets you up for an entire day of roller coaster blood sugar levels. The good news is that, with a little meal planning and weekend or evening meal prep, a healthy breakfast is one of the easiest things to make ahead. That way, you can still grab something on the way out the door or heat and eat at home while consuming a healthy, balanced option. Great sources for make-ahead breakfasts include EatingWell.com, TasteofHome.com, and Healthy-Delicious.com. Some of my favorite make-ahead breakfasts include:

- Egg bites with your choice of filling (vegetables, chicken or turkey sausage or smoked salmon, a small amount of cheese)

- Avocado spread made with a drizzle of healthy oil and sundried tomatoes on whole wheat sourdough toast
- Cottage cheese or unsweetened Greek yogurt; berries; chia, flax, or hemp seeds; with 2 tsp of honey, maple syrup, agave, or date sugar (such as Date Lady)
- Overnight oats with high-fiber stir-ins (berries, apple with the skin, pomegranate seeds, kiwi with the skin) and nuts or seeds
- Baked oatmeal with fruit and nuts or seeds
- Greek yogurt with homemade, low-sugar, nut-seed-dried fruit granola
- Stone-ground grits cooked in bone broth with a microwave "fried" or poached egg
- Instant Pot or slow cooker stone-ground grits (such as House-Autry), or high-fiber, high-protein oatmeal (such as Bob's Red Mill); make a large batch for the entire week; serve with a healthy fat option and a protein option
- Bell pepper stuffed with grits or eggs
- Low-sugar smoothies (get sweetness from the fruit and/or some dates)

**Healthy Snacks**  
Snacking is an important part of maintaining stable blood sugar levels, particularly an afternoon snack around 3 or 4 PM so that you're not so ravenous when you get home that you are tempted by blood-sugar spiking snacks or you overeat at dinner. Also, once you've switched to a balanced breakfast, if you find yourself getting hungry before lunch, a small mid-morning snack is fine. These snacks will support your blood sugar without creating spikes. Here are some ideas:

- Nuts and seeds
- Roasted edamame
- Meat sticks with limited added sugar and sodium

- Smoked Salmon
- Tuna
- Hard-boiled eggs (try to keep egg consumption to 1-2 a day)
- Small leafy green salad with a drizzle of healthy oil, vinegar, and/or an avocado
- Unsweetened yogurt with fruit and nuts and 1 tsp of date sugar, honey, maple syrup, or agave
- Olives
- Air- or microwave-popped popcorn (not the popcorn in microwave bags from the grocery store snack aisle; do not cook with oil) topped with nutritional yeast (tastes like parm, high in B vits)
- Cheese sticks or cottage cheese
- Whole grain or gluten-free crackers, baked chips, or veggies coupled with some of the following
  - » Mashed avocado or guacamole
  - » Nut or seed butters
  - » Salsa
  - » Hummus

**About the Author:**  
**JANIE TRUITT** is a National Board Certified Health & Wellness Coach. She is currently starting up a private coaching practice, Accessible Health (available virtually and in-person), focused on helping individuals achieve their health, wellness, and nutrition goals. In addition, she will soon launch cooking classes focused on strategies and techniques for easily preparing healthy meals and integrating them into your eating plan. Janie's motto is "getting and staying happy and healthy doesn't have to be hard." Janie lives in Wilmington, DE with her son, Thomas Weiler. You can contact Janie at AccessibleHealth@Yahoo.com and follow her on Instagram (@AccessibleHealth), Facebook (@Accessible Health—Health and Wellness Coaching), and/or LinkedIn (Accessible Health—Health, Wellness and Nutrition Coaching)



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**May God console you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.**

Shirley Ross

Age 95, passed away December 16, 2025. She is survived by her daughters, Laurie Ross (Steve Zimmerman) and Lynn Lubing (Ben); grandchildren, Pam (Brian Saltzmann), Brian, and Miriam; great-granddaughter, Brynn; as well as numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.  
In lieu of flowers, donations in Shirley's memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association or a charity of your choice.


Susan Shertok

Age 74, passed away December 6, 2025. Born August 13, 1951 in The Bronx, NY, she was the daughter of the late Peter and Ida (nee Kiss) Schneider. Susan graduated from Walton High School and Hunter College. She loved music and played both the accordion and piano. Susan was a member of several choirs including being director of the Temple Beth El choir and the Song Birds at the Newark Senior Center. She was also the President of the Delaware Accordion Club.  
Susan is survived by her husband of nearly 50 years, Joel; children, Daniel Robert (Chaya Sarah), Stacy Beth Lisinski (Michael), and Michael Owen; grandchildren, Asher Lev, Esther Tovah, Aaron Pincus, Isaac Henry, and Judith Celeste.

Jeffrey Paul Stape

Age 72, passed away December 30, 2025. Preceded in death by his parents, Jack and Lois Stape; he is survived by his wife, Caryl Marcus-Stape; daughter, Pamela (James) Meissler; son, Mark (Alexandra) Stape; brother, Michael Stape; and grandchildren, Rosie, Charlie, and Henry Meissler.  
In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to Congregation Beth Shalom, the Siegel Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Delaware, or a charity of your choice.

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Exercise

BY YONI GLATT  
koshercrosswords@gmail.com

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: MEDIUM  
SOLUTION: PAGE 40

ACROSS

- 1. Dalai follower
- 5. \_\_\_ Zor-El, Supergirl's birth name
- 9. Talmudic Kama preceder
- 13. Alliance of countries
- 14. "Say", to 9-Down
- 15. Big name in Israeli food
- 16. Like a chazan in a rush?
- 18. Not to be confused with Ashi
- 19. "Mornin'" in Melbourne
- 20. Jewish sing-along
- 22. Quality
- 24. Pesty insect
- 25. Troops, briefly
- 26. Pushing one to say grace after meals?
- 29. Stats. in Ohtani's 50/50 year
- 30. Aaron's last was 123
- 31. "Cats" lyricist's monogram
- 32. Acts like a ganev?
- 36. Have a cheeseburger on Yom Kippur, e.g.
- 38. Nickname for a cowboy
- 39. Mauna \_\_\_, HI
- 42. Studying to refute Christian missionaries, perhaps?
- 47. Sixty minutes, in Milano
- 48. Far from faux
- 49. Old stringed instruments
- 50. The leaders Jehu killed to assume power, or where to read about it?
- 52. Give up, as a habit
- 53. "Million Dollar \_\_\_" ("Simpsons" episode featuring Homer's dad)
- 54. One way to prep for Chanukah?
- 58. Ring loudly, as a bell
- 59. "Love \_\_\_" (1964 Beatles hit)
- 60. List shortener, for short
- 61. "Well, \_\_\_ that special"
- 62. De-clump flour
- 63. Colon, in analogies

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13					14					15			
16				17						18			
			19				20		21				
22	23					24					25		
26					27					28			
29				30						31			
			32				33	34	35				
	36	37					38				39	40	41
	42			43	44	45				46			
47				48					49				
50			51					52					
53					54		55					56	57
58					59					60			
61					62					63			

DOWN

- 1. Weight units: Abbr.
- 2. Mont Blanc, for one
- 3. Freeman and Stanley
- 4. Like citrus fruits
- 5. "E.T." singer Perry
- 6. Horowitz in some shocking videos
- 7. Annoy greatly
- 8. Makes like some Talmudic rabbis
- 9. Some say he was Ibzan in Judges
- 10. Doles out, as duties
- 11. Hint of the past
- 12. Wrong
- 17. Prophet that reprimands David
- 21. More, in Mexico
- 22. Kitchen meas.
- 23. Yeshiva address?
- 24. Guitar part
- 27. Masters Tournament org.
- 28. "... book by \_\_\_ cover"
- 32. Cold-weather product name prefix
- 33. Neighbor of fn
- 34. "...had taken from man, made \_\_\_ woman" (Genesis)
- 35. Era of the Jews in Babylon
- 36. Torah writers
- 37. One whose freedoms are suppressed by the Supreme Ruler
- 39. Chocolate bar for four, perhaps
- 40. Karmiel to Tsfat dir.
- 41. Garland and Lynch, for short
- 43. AARP members, mostly
- 44. Earth shaking experiences
- 45. Asian island capital
- 46. Atom centers
- 47. Kosher animal that looks half-giraffe, half zebra
- 51. Chanukah treat
- 52. Half Windsor, e.g.
- 55. They protect Isr.
- 56. Joined the meal, perhaps
- 57. Not so fast, on some traffic signs



# CROSSWORD SOLUTION

--

Puzzle on page 39

1	L	A	M	A		5	K	A	R	A		9	B	A	V	A
13	B	L	O	C		14	A	M	A	R		15	O	S	E	M
16	S	P	R	I	N	T	I	N	G			18	A	S	S	I
			19	G	D	A	Y		20	K	U	21	M	Z	I	T
22	T	R	A	I	T			24	F	L	E	A		25	G	I
26	B	E	N	C	H		27	P	R	E	S	S		28	I	N
29	S	B	S		30	A	G	E					31	T	S	E
				32	S	N	A	T		33	C	H	E	S		
		36	S	37	I	N				38	T	E	X		39	K
		42	C	R	O	S		44	S	T	R	A	I	N	I	N
47	O	R	A		48	R	E	A	L		49	L	U	T	E	S
50	K	I	N	51	G	S	I	I		52	K	I	C	K		
53	A	B	I	E		54	S	P	I	N	C	L	A	S	57	S
58	P	E	A	L		59	M	E	D	O		60	E	T	A	L
61	I	S	N	T		62	S	I	F	T		63	I	S	T	O



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