

September 29, 2020

P.A.S.S. Meeting #18

Reminder: Instead of bashing those we blame for the alienation, we would like to focus on the personal experience of alienation (feelings, struggles, what gives us hope, how we get through it), and how we deal with it (regardless of who caused it). We don't want to alienate anyone in our group whose experiences or causes are different from our own.

Topic: What does forgiveness mean to me? Whom would I like to forgive (including ourselves)? How do we go about forgiving others and/or ourselves?

- Holding resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.
- Forgiveness is not about the other person necessarily. Sometimes it's a release for ourselves. It doesn't mean that forgiving is forgetting.
- It's about letting go of the anger so I don't have to live with it every day of my life.
- Forgiving myself is at the top of my list. My kids gave me purpose in life. I lived *for* them, *because of them*. When I lost them, I lost purpose and meaning. I had to learn to rethink it all.
- I remember that I'm human. I probably made some mistakes. I'm just human. But that doesn't mean that I deserve the pain of alienation.
- Forgiving myself doesn't mean beating myself up that *I should have done this or not have done that....*
- I daven to be able to forgive... it's so hard. I try to remember that the other person is unwell...
- There are days that I *don't want* to forgive. And that's ok.
- It has helped me to be part of a group and hearing from others. I remember that I should try to do for my kids and give them whatever I can... Hopefully they'll come around.
- I have a hard time hating...
- I bought my son and daughter-in-law a housewarming gift when they moved into the neighborhood. I knocked on the door and my DIL was surprised to see me but she invited me into her home, showed me her beauty salon... I complimented her home and salon. She's been warmer since...
- I don't hate my son. I just feel bad for him. He's going into Yom Kippur from such a bad place.
- I am only responsible for my own actions, not for the actions of others.
- I walk daily on the boardwalk, I daven mincha at the beach, and I talk to G-d. It helps me immensely.
- I try to remember that I was a good-enough parent and that is good enough.
- I don't have to engage in "forced forgiveness" because that'll cause false forgiveness as well as other problems, such as wondering what's wrong with me that I don't exactly feel it.
- I called my kids instead of waiting for them to call me before Rosh Hashana.
- Nothing in the world made me happier than doing for my children.
- Anger blocks me and makes me stuck.
- I forgive myself for being human.

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- It's too painful to send text messages to my kids and be ignored. I'm thinking of being silent for a while and then trying again.
- I need to find myself. I forgot who I am. I lost sight of my needs and wants and desires.
- I say Gam Zu L'Tova, this is totally not "*tevah*-nature."
- I distract myself from the initial pain. When it strikes, I do some activity to distract myself and it passes after 90 seconds.
- I remember that there are other blessings in my life.
- I pray for the alienator and my children.
- I give my children space.
- I trust myself.
- *It is one who is unhealthy who pulls away.* I try to remember that.
- I hope that things can change.
- I believe that if the mountain doesn't come to Mohammed, then Mohammed *goes to the mountain*. Sometimes I reach out to my kids (if I'm emotionally in a place to do that) especially when they don't reach out to me.
- I don't like the topic of forgiveness.
- Right now, I can't forgive the alienator but I forgive my son. He's just a kid.
- I'm not fully there yet to forgive. I will never forget.
- In my family, the letters (recommended by Ashley?? or Dr. Sue??) did not help (despite that it has helped others). It made things worse.
- Erev Rosh Hashana, I wrote an email to each of my kids. One of my boys in Israel responded and we had a great conversation for 40 minutes. He showed me his room, roommate, clothes, etc.
- I feel sadness, loss, grief...
- I have moments that I feel forgiveness and compassion for the alienator and my children, and moments that I find myself so angry.
- Once I recognized what happened to me and what was done to me, I was able to forgive myself.
- My daughter wanted to come with her 4 kids before Yom Kippur as she does yearly. But my kids keep showing up albeit drunk... I have to take care of myself. They're strange and alienated. It's difficult to forgive in these moments.
- It's a process. It takes time to get out of that space.
- I reach out to people in my recovery. I write. I read. I read inspirational literature that gets me out of the headspace.
- I've learned to make Hashem's Will *my will*. I have to work on this daily.
- I've had to learn to let go of any expectations.
- I try to take the high road...
- I daven and say Tehillim.
- Hashem is my spiritual and emotional husband.
- *I tell myself all those things I wish others said to me.*
- I remember that Hashem has a plan.
- Yomtov and Shabbos are the hardest...
- The more I accept things, the easier it is for me.
- *I aim for progress not perfection.*