

# JFS@CHAI HOUSE

## STAYING CONNECTED



Issue 17 April 29, 2021

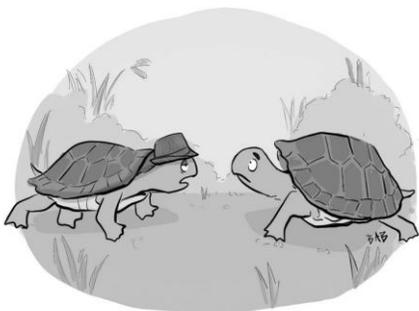
### Spring Greetings!

It's the time of year when we see new life emerging all around. Everything seems to be waking up after an extended slumber. You may be feeling that way too! You may be getting outside more to enjoy the spring weather, and also starting to meet with people you haven't seen in a long time.

We look forward to gathering with you in person. Very soon, we hope!

Fondly,

The JFS@Chai House Staff



*"I panicked when they said we could come out of our shells again."* - Brooke Bourgeois, The New Yorker

### REFLECTING ON LIFE AT CHAI HOUSE AFTER COVID

A few weeks ago, we started two support groups for the Chai House community. One is a bereavement and grief support group for people struggling with grief and loss. The other is Come Up for Air, for people who want to talk about their feelings about socializing and getting back into their "normal" routine when the pandemic is over. The bereavement group is six sessions. If you didn't sign up for the session we are now running, send your contact information to Sumi or Rabbi Brickner, and we will put you on the list for the next session, which will start soon afterward. Come Up for Air meets monthly on the third Thursday of the month at 2:00pm.

Now, these two groups meet via Zoom. But I believe we will be meeting in person sooner than we think - as more people continue getting vaccinated.

Some people may be hesitant to be with others like they were before the pandemic. If you do feel that way, that's understandable. A lot has been written about the emotional toll a year of social distancing has taken on people's emotions and psychological wellbeing, especially for our aging community. Recently, I read an article about the effects of a year of social isolation on the brain. The author writes: "After lockdowns throughout the darkest months of winter, there is a sense that we are collectively losing our minds, forgetting simple things and general sluggishness." It's called "Brain Fog," and it is a real thing. Chair of the Department of Neuroscience at Carleton University, Dr. Kim Hellemans, studies the effects of stress on the brain. She writes that "[the] Lack of social interaction is a contributor to the loss of our normal cognitive functioning." And it can leave all of us feeling overwhelmed.

Fortunately, our brains are very resilient, and Brain Fog is temporary. Over the centuries, we've learned how to adapt. Just as we adjusted to a new way of life a year ago, so too will we adjust to life after COVID 19. It will take some time, and it will be different for everyone, but we can regain our energy and our desire to get out and socialize.

"There's going to be a reverse culture shock when we enter society," says Dr. Hellemans. "We're all going to get tired. It's

like a re-entry to face-to-face conversation.” This adjustment will look different for everyone. “It’ll exist on a continuum from people who bounce back right away to others who may need more support, medicine, and therapy.”

While we are all trying to figure out how to re-enter our community, let me share a few suggestions:

**First**, take your time. Do not try to transition all at once. Identify your highest priorities like getting vaccinated, seeing the doctor, or reconnecting with close friends. Just plan a few things each week. Don’t try and do too much.

**Second**, lean into your feelings. Believe me, the tension or anxiety you may be feeling is a normal reaction to your feelings about re-entering the community and being with people you haven’t seen in a long time. Find ways to talk about that, like participating in the Come Up for Air support group I mentioned above. If you would like to speak to someone privately, Fern and I are available for that, too.

**Third**, fight the feeling of surrender. The loss of friends and family and the absence of socializing has taken their toll on us all. You are not alone in your feelings. As hard as it may be to know that others share your feelings may make it easier. Always remember that it is so important to reconnect with people. When you are engaging with another person, it’s a reminder that you matter and that alone can invigorate the soul.

At the end of the day, our lives will not be the same as they were before the pandemic. In some ways, that makes us sad, as we remember those we lost. In other ways, however, it’s exciting as we realize that we still have the will to live through challenging times and the ability to grow and learn as we continue to stay in touch with the world through Zoom and other new technologies. Life may not be the same as it was, but we are still alive, and you matter. So let’s make the best of it.

- Rabbi Barney Brickner



## **JFS@CHAI HOUSE MAY EVENTS**

### **Groups w/ Barney & Fern!**

Tuesday, May 4, 11 & 25, 2pm via Zoom

#### **Bereavement Support Group**

*Check back for next session*

Thursday, May 20, 2pm via Zoom

#### **Come Up for Air Support Group**

*New members welcome!*

### **Look Out for Our Flyers & Calendar for Details & Other Events**



## **COVID19 VACCINE UPDATE**

Beginning 04/14/21, Santa Clara County, **extended** vaccine eligibility to anyone 16 years and over and lives or works in the county.

Visit: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/covid19/pages/covid19-vaccine-information-for-public.aspx>  
You’ll find links to multiple healthcare systems’ scheduling sites. Information is updated regularly so keep checking back. ***Contact us if you need help scheduling an appointment or need transportation assistance getting to your appointment.***

## **AFTER YOU'VE BEEN VACCINATED – TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK**

On Tuesday, April 27, the CDC issued new, more relaxed mask guidelines for **fully vaccinated** individuals. Fully vaccinated people no longer have to wear face coverings **outside** unless they are around large crowds. The state of California will adopt these guidelines, as will Santa Clara county.

The CDC detailed a list of activities (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/participate-in-activities.html>) that vaccinated people can safely resume without wearing a face covering. They include walking, running or bicycling outdoors with members of your household; attending small outdoor gatherings; and dining at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households.

Masks still need to be worn indoors in public places, including in lobby areas, hallways, laundry rooms, stairways and elevators.

***Fully vaccinated** = 14 days after receiving their second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or two weeks after the single-shot Johnson & Johnson dose.*

	Unvaccinated People	Your Activity	Fully Vaccinated People
		<b>Outdoor</b>	
Safest		Walk, run, roll, or bike outdoors with members of your household	
		Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends	
		Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people	
Less Safe		Dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households	
Least Safe		Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event	

**CONTACT US: The JFS Office is open!**

**Mon-Thurs 11am-5pm    Fri 11am-3:30pm**

***Appointment Recommended***

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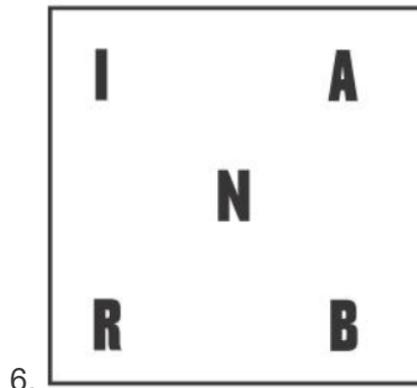
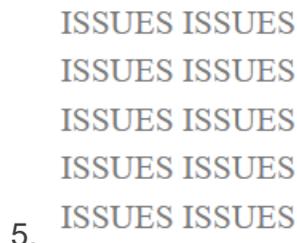
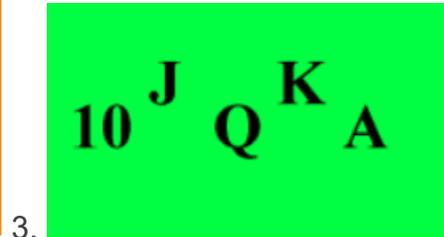
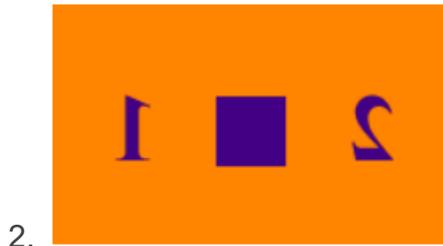
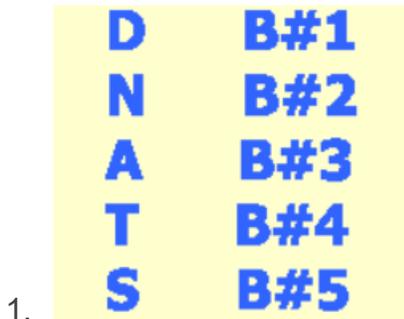
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## Brain Exercise

A. **Rebus Puzzles** – Back by popular demand! Please excuse any duplicates from previous issues.



### B. **Brain Teaser: Purses at Dawn**

Hillary Yellow, Jane Red and Lucy Gray each have a gray purse, a yellow purse and a red purse, but none of them has a purse color that matches her name. They unexpectedly meet one day.

The woman with the red purse comments, “How odd!” to which Lucy Gray replies, “Most odd indeed!”

What color is each woman’s purse?

### Answers to Issue #16

#### A. Word Challenge

Three-Letter Words		Four-Letter Words		Five-Letter Words		Six-Letter Words	
1.ado	9. ode	1.dent	8.oral	1. drain	1. alined		
2.ail	10. rad	2. dote	9.rail	2. laden	2. ardent		
3.dot	11. rod	3. into	10.rode	3. lined	3. denial		
4.den	12. roe	4. lain	11.rote	4. wined	4. ordain		
5.doe	13. rot	5. lard	12.toed		5. rained		
6.lad	14. ten	6. liar	13.twin		6. rodent		
7.net	15. win	7. lint			7. twined		
8. nil							