

When Nothing Will Ever Be the Same

(This article by Rabbi Leynor was originally published on April 26, 2017.)

In my professional and personal experience with “Grief/Loss/Returning to Life,” one of the toughest issues is realizing that everything you knew, everything you planned and hoped for, everything you trusted in will never happen. We feel lost, rudderless, unsure and afraid of what will be. We ask, will life ever be “normal” again? Will we ever laugh again, have joy again and celebrate again? How can we respond when, “*Nothing will ever be the same again?*”

I always encourage my clients to exercise the only control we have, which is choosing our response to what life gives us by making decisions that empower us, help us grieve, move us forward and help us find SOME comfort, healing, peace and strength.

Even before my beloved wife Karen passed, the fearful specter of the unfamiliar haunted my thoughts. What will happen with my kids, my career, my life? Throughout my studies, there are certain sayings and words which I carry with me.

First, from the *Wisdom of the Sages*,
“*Daya Le’Tzar’arah B’sha’atah*”

Aramaic for “*It’s enough to worry about your problem in its own hour.*”

Practically, if we worried and had anxiety about everything, it would be like a T’sunami, so we *take one thing at a time, one day at a time, then the next.*

After a while, I was aware of the fact, that even though nothing would ever be the same, *It Would Be Different.*

*Different can be scary, unsettling, unfamiliar,
but not necessarily Bad, just Different!*

I can’t tell you why these things happen, but my observations are that, most people never change anything, move or grow unless there is a crisis, trauma or death. Those things ensure that nothing will be the same.

My father of blessed memory always said, “*Life is not static, it’s dynamic, ever changing.*” The Chinese word for “**danger**” is also the word for “**opportunity**.” In the midst of the losses we all face are opportunities as well.

When things will never be the same, that is also freeing. We do not have to continue to live our histories. It enables us to re-imagine our lives and reinvent ourselves. I have watched a number of people who end up following their lost passions along the way, others find new meaning and purpose following what tugs upon their hearts.

I am reminded of the story in the Torah after the Israelites left Egypt, they are trapped by the Sea Of Reeds, the Egyptian chariots are bearing down, Moses is crying out to God, who

responds, "***Why are you always crying out to me JUST MOVE FORWARD!!!***" The first person enters the water and the sea splits.

When nothing will ever be the same, we have the power to decide "what making it different" will be. Even in grief, sadness, and loneliness, **take each problem in its own hour, and just move forward.**

Choose Life & Do TOV!

Rabbi Jeffrey Leynor

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In His Remembrance

*May Rabbi Leynor's memories inspire us to seek those qualities of mind
and heart which we shared when we walked life's journey together.*

*May we help to bring closer to fulfillment
Rabbi Leynor's highest ideals and noblest strivings.*

*May Rabbi Leynor's memories deepen our loyalty
to those things which we valued and shared -
faithfulness, love, SHALOM and devotion.*

*As long as we live,
Rabbi Leynor's memories too will live;
for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.*

(Inspired from prayers found in Yitzhor Reflections - The New Mahzor – The Prayer Book Press)