

October 2017 Message from President Howie Hirsch

Now that the HIGH Holidays are over, my message this month is about attitude. On Yom Kippur, we made a vow to G-d that we will do our best not to sin. We also made a vow to forgive all sins from anyone who we feel has done us wrong over the past year (or years). One of the things that I have found in my life is that carrying a grudge against another person does nothing to affect the other person, but it does affect us. How do we get over feeling that someone has taken advantage of us? Or used us? Or done some harmful thing to us?

The answer is our attitude. Abraham Lincoln said that people are as happy as they want to be. I like to think that is true. I have seen people getting chemotherapy with smiles on their face and love in their heart. How do they do it? Attitude. Attitude is the one thing that when you wake up in the morning, you have control over. I am always grateful when I wake up, because I woke up again. This is a blessing and I am thankful for it. When I am asked to do something around the house, I am grateful that Iris needs me. When I am asked to do something for the temple, I am grateful that I have people who count on me. When I am asked to do something out of the ordinary at my job, I am grateful that I am able to support my family. When something doesn't go my way, I am grateful for the opportunity to try something different. Maybe it will be better than what I had been planning in the first place.

But being grateful and appreciative is a learned habit. Every day we wake up, we have a choice on how we will act. Will we be pleasant to other people? Will we be nasty? Will we build bridges, tear down fences between us or put up new fences to alienate ourselves from others? Every one of us has troubles. Life is not easy and we all have troubles to contend with. If you can look at your troubles with a smile on your face and love in your heart, that will be a good day.

Lastly, I urge you to be part of our community. There are two types of people in our community. There are the ones who reach out to help others in need. This is a good type of person to be. The other type is the type of person who will allow someone to help them. I find this type of person even more valuable than the first. My good friend Sharon Herson tells the story that her friend Charlotte wanted to come to temple but could not drive at night. Charlotte at first did not want Sharon to go out of her way to bring her to temple. Sharon replied, "You are giving me the opportunity to do a Mitzvah". Be both a mitzvah doer and a mitzvah receiver and you will lead a very full life.

Love, Howie