

Local

MAY PROGRAMS & HOLIDAYS



YOM HA'ATZMAUT

Thursday, May 1

SENIORS: FELT KNITTING

Seniors
Sekach Building

Thursday, May 1
Noon - 2 p.m.

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YOM HA'ATZMAUT CELEBRATION

Community
Congregation B'nai Israel

Thursday, May 1
7 p.m.

PJ PLAYDATE

Young Families
Gan Yeladim Preschool

Sunday, May 4
9:30 a.m.

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LADIES WHO LUNCH

Jewish Toledo Women 60 and Under
Rosie's Italian Grille

Tuesday, May 6
Noon - 1 p.m.

SENIORS: CREATE & RELATE SESSION 3

Seniors
Sekach Building

Thursday, May 8
Noon - 2 p.m.

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PARTNERSHIP2GETHER IN JEWISH TOLEDO

Community
Sekach Building

Monday, May 12
6:30 p.m.

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LAG B'OMER

Friday, May 16

SENIORS: TRAVELING OPERA

Seniors
Temple Shomer Emunim

Tuesday, May 20
Noon - 1:30 p.m.

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MEMORIAL DAY

Monday, May 26
Federation offices closed

*All information subject to
change with updates posted on

www.jewishtoledo.org



@jewishtoledo

Happy Tears

By Lauren Sachs

Lauren holds a bachelor's degree in English and Psychology, and a Master's Degree in Social Work, from the University of Michigan. After completing advanced clinical training at Yale University, Lauren worked as a therapist and consultant in a variety of settings. During her time in Jewish Toledo, Lauren has received the Harry Levison Young Leadership Award and the Shining Light Award, and is currently serving as the Chair for the 20th Annual NW Ohio Jewish Book Festival. In addition to her involvement within the local Jewish community, Lauren serves as a volunteer for Hospice of Northwest Ohio. Lauren is also the author of a forthcoming book about her late husband, his joyful approach to life and work as an oncologist, and how examining his life helped her better cope with her grief. To learn more about Lauren's journey and her work on living well after loss, visit www.literally-lauren.com.

Sometimes, when I hear the sound of a plane engine overhead, I am suddenly jolted back to August of 2020 and the day my husband died. Since Brad passed away in the early part of the pandemic, social distancing and time spent outdoors were a regular part of daily life. As we accepted visitors who wanted to pay their respects in our backyard, the engine sounds became a frequent refrain, leading me to associate that particular rumbling with his loss. Early on in my bereavement, the noise had a comforting quality. It helped me feel connected to Brad and somehow bolstered my sense that things might get better someday. As time went on and the pandemic eventually came to a close, my reaction to the sound also changed. Now, depending on the day that I hear it, I may simply have a moment of wistfulness. Alternately, I may feel an intense rush of emotion wash over me. On the latter days, it is as though I am momentarily grieving his loss anew, recollecting not only the pain of his demise but also missing the things that made Brad uniquely himself. Especially at those times, I find myself thinking about Brad's sense of humor, his strong moral compass, his playful demeanor, and his tremendous intellect.

As the chill in the air has lifted and spring has fully declared itself, I am once again spending more time outdoors and regularly hearing that most evocative of sounds. Just as the seasons constantly ebb and flow, I know that I have also gone through several phases of evolution since losing my husband. After Brad died, I wanted nothing more than for change to come. Given the intense loneliness and longing of my early loss, I yearned for a time in the future when I could once again feel settled in my life and anchored by a reassuring and mutual love. At that time, I was also petrified of the unknown before me. Still, I knew I could only hope for renewed happiness by seeking out a new path, allowing the time ahead to unfold with whatever twists and turns lay before me.

In my case, to find healing, I had to learn how to grow into my



future. Beyond simply accepting that change was an inevitable part of life, to truly start feeling better I needed to realize that there was no going back to the past. I obviously took time to grieve my husband's death, but also needed to stop resisting my future. One day in my spousal loss support group, our facilitator handed out a sheet full of positive affirmations for grief. I was particularly struck by the first one on the page. It read, "Today, I choose to heal." It would be a gross oversimplification to suggest that healing from loss is this straightforward. Still, I can honestly say from personal experience I learned to palliate the pain of my loss by making a conscious decision to find a path toward restorative health and wellness.

As I worked towards assuaging the heartache of my grief, I also needed to let go of the guilt I felt about moving forward in my life without my husband. Eventually I realized that choosing to heal is not about forgetting the past. Because I finally understood that the best way to honor his zest for life was to find my own, I could simultaneously stay connected to him while moving forward on my own. And even though the rumbling of a plane's engine can still bring a tear to my eye, most often they are the sort of happy tears that help me feel gratitude for my past, as well as a sense of joy and peace with the present.