

Central Synagogue



A Healing Service



123 East 55th Street
New York, New York 10022
(212) 838-5122

*Provided by
The National Center
for Jewish Healing
www.ncjh.org*

WELCOME TO CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE'S
HEALING RITUAL

Over the course of the past year, the Rosh Hodesh group of Central Synagogue Sisterhood studied Jewish rituals surrounding life cycle events. As we studied, we became a community for each other. We had all experienced the physical and emotional travails that are the counterpoints to the joys in our lives. While we were all at different points in the process of healing, we felt the need for a Jewish ritual to acknowledge the momentousness of what we had experienced.

Some want to find a way to celebrate our healing
and to thank Adonai for bringing us back to
health and wellness,
some need to reach out to others to form a spiritual
community for much needed human support, and
some need to ask God for help in getting us safely
to the other side of our ordeal.

Each of us comes to this service from a different time and place on the journey of our lives. Hopefully, each of us will find something in the service to provide the spiritual solace and strength that we seek, wherever we are in the healing process.

SERVICE OF HEALING

ALL SING NIGGUN

Healing

Survival is not healing. Survival is one step on the journey of healing.

Healing is the body and mind's repair -- a processing and integration of the physical or emotional assault that we have survived. On the other side of healing, we emerge, annealed and reshaped, uniquely different from the person who began the journey. Hopefully, we will be completely healed, body and mind, with insight, compassion and wisdom.

Whether we face a surgeon's knife, an ongoing course of chemotherapy, the death of someone precious, a painful divorce, each of us confronts our ordeal as the individuals we are and with the tools we have brought with us.

Ultimately, each of us faces our pain alone. Yet, during the dark moments,

we reach out to our family and friends for the loving touch that will re-energize us in our struggle, we reach within to draw out our own newly found strength, and we reach inward, outward and upward to seek divine intervention and explanation.

ALL SING NIGGUN

The Intention

Healing is both an exercise
and an understanding
and yet not of the will
nor of the intention

It is a wisdom
and a deeper knowledge
of the daily swing
of life and death
in all creation.

There is defeat
to overcome
and acceptance of living
to be established
and always
there must be hope.

*Not hope of healing
but the hope which informs
the coming moment
and gives it reason*

The hope which is
each person's breath
the certainty of love
and of loving.

Death may live
in the living
and healing rise
in the dying

*for whom the natural end
is part of the gathering
and of the harvest
to be expected*

To know healing
is to know that

all life is one.

THE DOOR IS OPEN...

Either you will
go through this door
or you will not go through.

If you go through
there is always the risk
of remembering your name.

Things look at you double
and you must look back
and let them happen.

If you do not go through
it is possible
to live worthily

to maintain your attitudes
to hold your position
to die bravely

but much will blind you,
much will evade you,
at what cost who knows?

The door itself
makes no promises.
It is only a door.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד!

Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One!

בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד!

Blessed is His glorious kingdom for ever and ever!

All are seated

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֹת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-יִנְפְּשֶׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ.
וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם, עַל-לִבְבְּךָ.
וּשְׂנַתָּם לְבִנְיָךָ, וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְלִקְחֶךָ
בְּדֶרֶךְ, וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your mind, with
all your strength, with all your being.
Set these words, which I command you this day, upon your
heart. Teach them faithfully to your children; speak of them
in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when
you rise up.

וְקָשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ, וּכְתַבְתָּם
עַל-מְזוּזֹת בֵּיתְךָ, וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ.

Bind them as a sign upon your hand; let them be a symbol
before your eyes; inscribe them on the doorposts of your
house, and on your gates.

לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתֵיכֶם-מִצְוֹתַי, וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים
לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם. אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים. אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

Be mindful of all My Mitzvot, and do them: so shall you
consecrate yourselves to your God. I, the Lord, am your God
who led you out of Egypt to be your God; I, the Lord, am
your God.

רְפָאנוּ יְיָ וְנִרְפָא, הוֹשִׁיעֵנו וְנִשָּׁעָה, וְהַעֲלֵה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה
לְכָל-מְכוּחֵינוּ.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, רֹפֵא הַחַוּלִים.

Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save us, and we shall
be saved; grant us a perfect healing from all our wounds.

Blessed is the Lord, Healer of the sick.

• •

Grant me, O God, the strength to face each hour of this and
every day. In fact, when it seems that I cannot face even this
hour, fill me with sufficient strength to face the next five
minutes. Amen.

A Prayer:

A prayer:
some day, some month
perhaps this month
let my body and its blood
at long last teach me the lesson
I struggle so against accepting--
let go let go let go give up control
surrender to the flow of life within.

Dear...

Dear
Thank you for giving me
the opportunity and power
to see and begin to understand
the resources in the universe
that will enable me
to lead a life of well-being.

Silent Readings:

Importance of Community

Strange is our situation here upon earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that we are here for the sake of each other, above all, for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of others, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received and am still receiving.

(Albert Einstein)

Recovery From a Difficult Childhood

A prayer, a wish
that you may be healed
from the wounds of the
abuse of your childhood.
And that you may move
from fear to strength,
a healing from the trembling.

Prayer for the Healing of my Son

God, give him the awareness
of his own specialness.
Give him the strength
to be what You want
him to be.
Give him the peace
that comes with knowing
one's gifts and using
them, and the wisdom
to keep reaching for those yet
undiscovered.

Hope for the Future

To feel hopefulness for the future
and not be consumed by dread of
future illness or unhappiness.

To not let fear of the future
destroy enjoyment of the present.

I would like to see, globally, a
healing of hostility and more respect
for differences of all kinds --
religions, lifestyles, etc.

Healing After a Miscarriage

Nothing helps. I taste ashes
in my mouth. My eyes are flat,
dead. I want no platitudes,
no stupid shallow comfort.
I hate all pregnant women,
all new mothers, all soft babies.

The space I'd made inside myself
where I'd moved over
to give my beloved room to grow--
now there's a tight angry
bitter knot of hatred there instead.

What is my supplication?
Stupid people and new mothers,
leave me alone.
Deliver me, Lord,
of this bitter afterbirth.
Open my heart
to my husband-lover-friend
that we may comfort each other.
Open my womb
that it may yet bear
living fruit.

Prayer Before an Operation

O merciful Parent, I turn to Thee in prayer.
Thou who bindest up wounds and healest the sick,
I put my trust in Thee.
Knowing that I am in Thy hands, O God,
I have faith that Thou wilt not forsake me.

Give me courage now and in the days ahead.
Grant wisdom and skill to my physician;
make all those who are assisting me
instruments of Thy healing power.

Give me strength for this day
and grant me hope for tomorrow.
Hear my prayer; be with me; protect me.
Restore me to health, Adonai,
so that I may serve Thee.

רפאני יי וארפא. הושיעני ואושעה. כי תהלתי אתה:

Heal me, Adonai, and I shall be healed;
Save me and I shall be saved;
For Thou art my praise.

A Patient's Prayer

Eternal God, source of healing,
Out of my distress I call upon You.

Help me to sense Your presence
At this difficult time.

You have already sent me gifts of Your goodness:
The skill of my physician,
The concern of others who help me,
The compassion of those I love.

I pray that I may be worthy of all these,
Today and in the days to come.

Help me to banish all bitterness;
Let not despair overcome me.

Grant me patience when the hours are heavy;
Give me courage whenever there is hurt or disappointment.

Keep me trustful in Your love, O God.
Give me strength for today, and hope for tomorrow.

To Your loving hands I commit my spirit--
When asleep and when awake.

You are with me; I shall not fear.
Help me, O God, in my time of need.

A Special Prayer in Time of Illness

שמע-י קולי אקרא וחנני וענני:
Hear my voice, Adonai, when I call;
Be gracious to me and answer me.

(Psalms 27:7)

In Thy hand is the soul of every living thing,
I turn to Thee, Adonai, in my distress.

Give me patience and faith;
Let not despair overwhelm me.

Renew my trust in Thy mercy
And bless the efforts of all who are helping me.

Be with my dear ones in these difficult days.
Give them strength and courage
To face the anxieties which they share with me.

Grant me Thy healing
So that in vigor of body and mind
I may return to my loved ones
For a life which will be marked by good deeds.

עזרתי היית אל-חטשני ואל-תעזבני אלהי ישעי:

*Thou hast ever been my help;
Cast me not off nor forsake me,
O God of my salvation.*

(Psalms 27:9)

A Prayer After Loss

*I will lift up mine eyes to the hills;
From whence shall my help come?*

*My help comes from Adonai,
Who made heaven and earth.*

*God will not allow your foot to be moved,
God that keeps you will not slumber.*

*Behold, God that keeps Israel
Neither slumbers nor sleeps.*

*God is your keeper;
God is your shade upon your right hand.*

*The sun shall not smite you by day,
Nor the moon by night.*

*Adonai shall keep you from all evil;
God shall keep your soul.*

*God shall guard your going out
and your coming in,
From this time forth and forever.*

(Psalm 121)

ALL SING NIGGUN

RABBI RUBINSTEIN INVITES TESTIMONIALS
AND BLESSES THE CONGREGATION

מי שברך אבותינו, אברהם יצחק ויעקב, שרה רבקה רחל
ולאה, הוא יברך וירפא את החולים _____
הקדוש ברוך הוא ימלא רחמים עליו, להחזיקו ולרפאותו,
וישלח לו מהרה רפואה שלמה לכל-אבריו וגידיו בתוך
שאר חולי ישראל, רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף, ונאמר
אמן.

May the one who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, bless and heal _____. May the
Holy One in mercy strengthen them and heal them soon, body and
soul, together with others who suffer illness. And let us say:
Amen.

ALL SING SHEHECHEYANU:

ברוך אתה ה' אלהנו מלך העולם שהחינו וקימנו והגינו לזמן הזה.

Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheynu
Melech Ha-olam
She-he-che-yanu, V'ki-manu,
V'hi-gi-yanu, la-zman hazeh.
A-men.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the
Universe, for instilling us with life, sustaining
us, and bringing us to this season.

GIVE US THE STRENGTH

God give us the strength
to transcend setbacks and pain
to put our difficulties into perspective

God give us the strength
to fight against all forms of injustice,
whether they be subtle or easily apparent

God give us the strength
to take the path less traveled
and more disturbing

God give us the strength
to persevere
to reach out to those in need--
May we abandon none of your creations

May we never become callous or appathetic because
of our own disappointments

May our personal pain never be used as
an excuse to stop heeding your call

God give us the strength
to continually strive to do more

Let us always strive to give, even if we,
ourselves, feel alone or impoverished

For we must always strive to reach
beyond ourselves.

ALL SING BOTH NIGGUNIM

FINAL BENEDICTION
or
SING OSEH SHALOM

SPECIAL THANKS

With great appreciation to Rabbi Peter Rubinstein for supporting and participating in this project.

Thank you Dorothy Siegel for help with editing and printing, and Livia Thompson for administrative support.

Thank you Gail Chessler for helping to organize and edit the service.

We thank Sisterhood President Barbara Jayson for producing the Rosh Hodesh Group that produced this ritual.

Rabbinic Intern Karen Bender typed and edited the service, and facilitated the Rosh Hodesh Group.

We thank all members of the Rosh Hodesh Group who created this original Healing Ritual. We also thank everyone who attends this Healing Ritual, offering support to the Central Synagogue Community, and gaining support from the Community. We wish you strength, health and peace.

SOURCES

- Title page: Gail Chessler
- "Survival is not healing": Gail Chessler
- "The Intention": Margaret Torrie, Kol Haneshamah, p. 208
(the word "man's" changed to "person's")
- "Grant Me O God," Gates of Healing, CCAR, 1988
- "A prayer: some day..." from Meditation on Menstruation, by Merle Feld, Four Centuries of Jewish Women's Spirituality, by Ellen Umansky, p. 221.
- "Dear": A member of Central Synagogue Sisterhood's Rosh Hodesh Group.
- "Importance of Community": Albert Einstein, adapted, from Kol Haneshamah, p. 203.
- "Recovery From a Difficult Childhood": A member of Central Synagogue Sisterhood's Rosh Hodesh Group.
- "Prayer for the Healing of My Son": A member of Central Synagogue Sisterhood's Rosh Hodesh Group.
- "Hatikvah": A member of Central Synagogue Sisterhood's Rosh Hodesh Group.
- "Prayer Before an Operation": Prayers for Healing, p. 8, Prayer Book Press, 1983.
- "A Patient's Prayer": *ibid*, p. 2.
- "Give Us the Strength": Angela Grayboys and Laura Rappaport. According to "Shacharit: Exploration-Celebration in Prayer," February 1, 1993, this was found in "ROW Service," and unpublished manuscript, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati.

