Moshal puts money on better SA leadership

TALI FEINBERG

As the single biggest donor to political parties in South Africa, Durban-born billionaire Martin Moshal is deeply motivated to helping the country fulfill its potential and the promises of the past.

“So many people made the ultimate sacrifice to create a democratic South Africa for a better future for all. In the past few years, it should be clear to all that those sacrifices have been put at risk and could have been for nothing. What a tragedy that would be,” the philanthropist and entrepreneur told the SA Jewish Report in an exclusive interview on 31 July. Notoriously media-shy, he quips that “publicly, I try to be a man of few words. At home with my Jewish wife, I’m forced to be!” However, he feels it’s important to explain why he has donated a cumulative R4.5 million to the Democratic Alliance (DA) and ActionSA. His donations accounted for 16% of all donations received by South African political parties in the past two years, and more is still to come.

Moshal donates to political parties because he wants to have a wider and deeper impact. “The social returns of good governance and a growing economy are enormous. As individuals, there’s only so much we can achieve. A government has the ability to have an impact on the entire country for better or worse. That’s why investment in competent parties with integrity can have such an impact on the country as a whole.”

“At this moment in history, it’s important to provide support to all centre-left and centre-right parties,” says Moshal. “I’m supporting the DA, ActionSA, and I intend to support Mmusi Maimane’s Build One South Africa as well as the Inkatha Freedom Party. If they come together or work in some way as a team, they could provide solid leadership and government of the country. “I’m not saying these parties are all perfect, but we shouldn’t let perfect be the enemy of good,” Moshal says. “They are far better than the government we have today. I don’t think people fully appreciate how big an impact donations can make in potentially improving the prospects of these parties and our country. Given our country’s history and the current situation, there’s a strong moral argument for supporting opposition parties if we have the means to do so. They need our financial help. The payoff is changing the trajectory of millions of lives for the better. With such a return, I believe it is an incredibly good bet.”

Born and raised in Durban, Moshal studied Business Science at the University of Cape Town. He has been a serial entrepreneur in the internet and software industry for more than 20 years, building a number of start-ups, and today, is a long-term investor in several technology companies.

He says philanthropy is a core family value. “Giving and helping others where possible was just something I saw happen within my family and the Durban Jewish community I grew up in. Leaders and philanthropists within the community were always highly regarded and held up as role models. I was fortunate to have many great examples within my own family. “Pirke Avot was my late dad, John Moshal’s, favourite part of the Talmud within which Rabbi Tarfon is quoted as saying, ‘It’s not up to you to finish the task, but you aren’t free to avoid it.’ I believe this applies perfectly to philanthropy. We might not be able to solve all the world’s problems, but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t do what we can to make a difference. It’s about trying to make the world a better place in whatever way we can.”

He hopes his donations will go towards “creating organisations that will gain significant support from the people in the upcoming elections, even to the point where these parties could eventually take control and govern the country. It’s a real possibility – the chances of which can be substantially increased through meaningful donations.” He describes himself as an optimist, and says he wouldn’t be making these donations if he

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Continued on page 4>>
Gratitude in good times

Rabbi Motzi Hadar – Pine Street Shul

When do we think of G-d most? When moments in our lives are we most cognizant of the Creator? And does Hashem ever seem to fall out of our radar?

As rabbis, I’ve noticed a trend among people who come to shul particularly when facing difficult times and in moments of plenty, when we don’t feel an immediate need for divine intervention, our prayers may become more routine, less frequent, and not as heartfelt as during moments of desperation and suffering.

In this week’s Torah portion of Eliezer, we find the commandment to bless G-d after we eat. The Torah explicitly states, “And you will eat and be sated, and you shall bless the Lord, your G-d.”

According to Biblical law, the requirement to bless G-d is specifically after we’ve eaten and are satisfied with our meal. The sages added a rabbinic law to share our blessings with those around us. Instead, it fosters a sense of humility and gratitude, and a desire to share our blessings with those around us.

Let’s take this commandment to heart, and strive to express our thanks and praise to G-d in times of abundance and blessing.

May we be fortunate enough to have numerous opportunities to acknowledge and appreciate the divine gifts in our lives, and humble enough to remember to turn them forward and share them with others.

Torah Thought

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Zambia cements ties with presidential visit to Israel

TALLI FEINBERG

Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema visited Israel this week to strengthen relations with the country, and met Israeli President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. 

“Zambia and Israel have maintained enduring relations since Zambia’s independence in 1964,” Hichilema said. “We aim to strengthen this relationship by tapping into Israeli advanced technology, particularly in agriculture, to bring in investment, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for our people.”

The large Zambian delegation included senior government ministers. Israel’s foreign minister, Eli Cohen, met his Zambian counterpart Stanford Kabugo in Jerusalem on 31 July, where they discussed bilateral relations and establishing Israel as an observer to the African Union (AU) and in the regional arena. They signed several co-operation agreements to strengthen ties in the spheres of medicine, communications, agriculture, and culture.

When Herzog and First Lady Michal Herzog hosted the African president and his wife, Mutinta Hichilema on 1 August, he emphasised this potential for growth, saying, “Zambia is a great country with which Israel has enjoyed outstanding relations for many years. We believe in this co-operation and in the enduring relations since Zambia’s independence.”

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President Hichilema is a man of action – a visionary leader who brings an entrepreneurial spirit to his work,” says Akinin. “It’s clear that he’s not just hoping for a brighter future for Zambia, he’s actively pursuing it. An entrepreneur in Zambia, it gives me a sense of pride and security knowing that the country is in such capable hands.”

President Hichilema’s visit to Israel, I believe, was driven by both personal faith and strategic foresight,” he says. “It marks a new chapter in our relations. This trip serves as a testament to his vision of transforming Zambia into a powerhouse for the continent.”

“This trip will yield numerous positive outcomes for Zambia and Israel,” he says. “For one, the minister of commerce has received a direct mandate from the president to establish an innovation model for Zambia. I’m honoured to be part of the special working committee, alongside the chief executive of a Zambian bank, that will help shape the next steps for this ambitious initiative.”

Isreal has proven to be an inspiring partner, willing to walk the Journey with Zambia in igniting a Future of innovation and disruption.

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After landing in Israel, Hichilema went to visit the Kotel, posting a picture on social media of himself wearing a kippah and placing a note in the wall. “We were profoundly honoured in visiting the Western Wall. Beyond the strengthening of our personal faith, this pilgrimage further emphasised the essence of social justice, peace, and unity for all humanity,” he said.

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TALI FEINBERG

When kosher SA, the kashrut department of the United Orthodox Synagogues (UOS), announced on 28 July that Avron’s Place, an iconic kosher restaurant in Sea Point, would no longer be kosher as of 31 July, the local and international Jewish community was shocked. After demands from the community for greater transparency, kosher SA released a statement saying that the restaurant had been unable to pay mashgichim (kashrut supervisors), and that the Beth Din had assisted it by paying for the mashgichim at its own cost. The statement angered many, who claimed that it shamelessly the restaurant’s owner, Avron Almhelm. It caused an uproar on social media and beyond, resulting in a crowdfunding endeavour for Avron’s Place.

The community was up in arms because Avron’s is an iconic kosher institution, having been operating since 1999, and for many years being the only flexible (meat) restaurant in the Mother City. Many claimed kosher SA’s release was “airing our dirty laundry”, shameing, and “a low blow” (negative or harmful speech). However, Rabbi Matthew Liebenberg, a dayan of the Cape Town Beth Din, told the SA Jewish Report that “in certain instances, Jewish law requires the sharing of negative information. In this case, there were numerous reasons why the information had to be shared and these are set out in a comprehensive Hebrew halachic ruling drawn up by dayanim on the Cape Town Beth Din.”

Granting kashrut certification and allowing production and trade in kosher food is a matter in the public domain, he said. So, when certification is suspended, it means that the halachic authority of the Beth Din is broadcasting to the public that an establishment is kosher. “The credibility and authority of the kosher certification is based on trust of the community,” continued Liebenberg. This means that any establishment certified kosher knows that the kashrut administration has the right to let the community know about any changes or cancellations of this certification, the dayan said.

Consequently, if there has been a breach in kashrut laws, the public must be informed immediately, and this is commonplace. “The kashrut administration must state the reason for the suspension in the interests of transparency so as to maintain its integrity in the eyes of the community,” Liebenberg continued.

“In this case, the proprietor of the business was also given ample opportunity to send a communication in his own words to explain why his certification was going to be suspended. He was informed that if he failed to do so, kosher SA would send its own communication.

“When the deadline arrived, no communication was forthcoming, and kosher SA was then required to inform the community of the suspension of the certification and the reason thereto in the most transparent manner,” said Liebenberg.

The UOS statement, written by UOS Cape Town Executive Director Joel Merris, explained that the organisation was ultimately stuck “between a rock and a hard place” as it was unable to pay for the UOS for the service of mashgichim, which it deploys to kosher restaurants. While the UOS employs the mashgichim, the restaurants reimburses the UOS for this cost. Having mashgichim is crucial for a restaurant to be certified kosher. “A kosher food service cannot operate without the services of a mashgich,” said Merris. “We have been assisting Avron’s over this period by supplying mashgichim at our cost. This is way beyond the mandate of the UOS Cape Town, and places us in a very difficult financial position as an NPO (non-profit organisation) and a communal organisation.” He said that if the restaurant were to be reimbursed the UOS for the service of mashgichim, "we would be able once again to certify its kashrut." Merris explained that the statement was released “for the sole intent and purposes of transparency on all matters of kashrut in the community.”

The response to the statement was swift and angry, with many messages of support for the establishment and emphasis that Almhelm had gone above and beyond in serving the community. Others suggested that there were alternate ways of dealing with this issue. “It’s unfathomable to me that in a diminishing community with few kosher restaurant options that a more sustainable and responsible methodology couldn’t have been thought up. We’re a people committed to welfare and assistance. In such a vein, I hope that members of our community were approached to mentor or sponsor or open a line of credit for a business in need. We’re only as strong as our weakest link,” wrote one community member.

Others considered the UOS perspective. “People ask for transparency but complain when transparency is shown,” another community member pointed out. “The mashgichim are always the ones who have to fight for pay, benefits, job security, and many other things afforded to regular employees. If there’s no pay, there are no employees. If your employee is not happy, then everything was done to rectify the situation.” Though the UOS hopes to get “more people eating kosher more often”, kosher restaurants have been hard hit by lockdowns, pandemic, rising food prices, kosher costs, and fierce competition. Though some restaurateurs have adapted, others have battled. The outpouring of goodwill resulted in Rabbi Nissim and Ariella Chabab on Campus Cape Town. Many donations came in from beyond the Mother City. By 2 August, the campaign had raised R45 355.78, with its goal being R50 000.

I was happy that something positive could come out of the situation, because tendekol is the greatest merit the Jewish people can perform,” said Bernstein. “And, please G-d, all the wonderful generosity should be a merit, and Hashem should improve my life and the lives of all the people.”

The SA Jewish Report repeatedly reached out to Almhelm, but he chose not to comment. The Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the United Jewish Campaign met representatives of the UOS and Avron’s Place on 2 August to discuss the situation. A joint statement will be released in due course, according to the Cape Board.

TALI FEINBERG

Moshal puts money on better SA leadership

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Moshal...
Desai appeals his judgement, defiant in anti-Israel stand

NICOLA MILTZ

Retired Judge Siraj Desai has formally lodged an appeal against a June ruling by the Judicial Conduct Committee (JCC) that found he was guilty of unbecoming behaviour by becoming involved in a political controversy.

An active supporter of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, he has remained defiant in spite of the ruling and has remained unapologetic for his outspoken criticism of Israel.

The finding by Judge Nambitha Dambuza followed a lengthy complaint by the South Africa Zionist Federation (SAZF) in 2021 relating to the retired Western Cape High Court judge's decades-long criticism of Israel. The actual ruling relates to the signing by the judge in June 2022 of a BDS statement condemning Israel's practice of apartheid, and the planned annexation of parts of occupied West Bank.

“SAZF is currently in the process of reviewing the appeal, and will communicate further in due course,” said SAZF spokesperson Rolene Marks.

Desai’s appeal challenges Dambuza’s findings, and was lodged on the basis that the statements made weren’t controversial, not political, and there had been no finding of willfulness or gross negligence on his part. Dambuza said in her ruling that though judges are entitled to hold political views, they exercised these rights subject to the rigours of their calling, including applicable ethical constraints. “This is one of the sacrifices the judges of this country have made,” she said.

“The reason for stringent ethical constraints in relation to judges has been repeatedly pronounced. The Judicial Service Commission Act and the code seek to maintain and promote public confidence, integrity, and the independence of the office of a judge and the judiciary as a whole.

“It’s therefore not open to Judge Desai to assert the right to freedom of association or human rights activism when provisions of the code are involved,” she said.

At the time of the June ruling, Desai, who is South Africa’s legal ombudsman, described it as a “gagging order”, saying that the order made against him was “surprising to say the least”.

“I’m effectively muzzled from expressing any view on an ongoing crime against humanity,” he said, adding that in granting this order, the judge placed herself “on the wrong side of history”.

“She fails to realise that the violent repression of the Palestinian people by apartheid Israel is the most significant human rights issue of our time. I’m ethically bound to speak out against it, and I intend to pursue the order she made in other forums of the Judicial Conduct Committee,” he said.

The JCC dismissed some of the complaints against Desai. However, it found him in violation of the judicial code for his support of campaigns calling for the boycott of Israel.

Desai was cautioned not to get involved in any political controversy or activity in the future unless it was for the discharge of judicial duties. In spite of this, he has been seen at anti-Israel protests in Cape Town.

The appeal contends that the statement signed by Desai wasn’t controversial or political, and says the question whether Israel is perpetrating the crime of apartheid isn’t primarily political but legal, concerning international law, and nothing precludes judges ethically from expressing themselves on legal questions.

According to the appeal, there’s also no evidence that Desai had been wilful or grossly negligent, as required by the code of conduct to justify a breach finding.

His appeal, dated 7 July, concludes that if the Appeal Tribunal were to dismiss the appeal, it “must declare clearly for all judges that they may never publicly condemn the practice of apartheid or other international crimes, that they may never engage in extrajudicial activities to promote the realisation, and condemn the violation, of fundamental human rights”.

The appeal has yet to be set down for hearing.

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A battle for Israel’s very soul

It’s a balmy night in Tel Aviv. At 21:00, the temperature hovers above 30 degrees and the humidity clings to you like nylon. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis are marching with flags to Democracy Square, the renamed Kaplan Street of Tel Aviv. Along the way, at the base of the Fivier building, the Israeli left start up “unicorns”, a loudspeaker broadcasts the voice of David Ben Gourion, Israel’s founding father, reading Israel’s Declaration of Independence.

But times have changed, and today, Israel is at war with itself. Two hundred thousand people gather in Democracy Square and another 300,000 demonstrators in 149 other locations around the country for the third week of pro-democracy protests. Each week, the crowds get bigger and bigger.

The protesters are loud, patriotic, frenzied, and jubilant. Almost everyone carries a flag, and when Netanyahu, the putative leader, is played, the crowd jumps in proudly, boisterously, and defiantly. This is a battle for the very soul of Israel!

Bands perform, and the audience joins in singing “Ein e retzach etzeh” (“I have no other country”). That evening, the national anthem, is played, the crowd joins in proudly, boisterously, and defiantly. That’s the anthem of the nation, the source of quality content, news and insights.

As the protesters taught me – “Ein li eretz acheret” (“We have no other land”). We have to make this right!

On the streets of Tel Aviv, to keep alive the Zionist dream of 2000 years of dispersion. It’s the national liberation and republicanism, and ideals. It’s the ingathering of the exiles to their historic homeland. And it’s the realization of our ancestors.

For this reason, power is split between the executive (president and/or prime minister and cabinet), legislature (parliament), and the judiciary (independent courts). These three centers of power balance each other in a careful dance meant to reflect the will of the people and guarantee that transient radicalism or political expedience doesn’t derail society.

In more normal societies, citizens’ rights are guaranteed in a nation’s constitution, a document that has Israel yet to draft. Israel’s courts have ruled for the protection of individual rights on the principles enshrined in Israel’s Declaration of Independence, and a limited form of a set of semi-constitutional parliamentary acts known as, the “Basic Laws.” These basic laws allowed the Israeli Supreme Court to test government decisions for reasonableness and rationality.

But Netanyah and his cabinet, some of whom were even denied the right to serve in the Israeli Defense Forces because of their radicalism, don’t wish to be encumbered by a law that can question the will of his coalition and majority.

For them, reshaping the political landscape would be easier if state institutions were hollowed out and the government destabilized in its path to lesser democracy followed by Vladimir Putin in Russia, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey, and Viktor Orbán in Hungary. It’s a path to a strong man view of the world, an unfettered authoritarian world, an unfettered democracy.

So, why do I care? I’m not Israeli, I don’t hold an Israeli passport, and don’t live in the country. Why would I spend so much of my vacation attending protests?

As a Jew in the diaspora, I represent my values, aspirations, and ideals. It’s the ingathering of the exiles after 2000 years of dispersion. It’s the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, that defeated British and Turkish colonialism and re-established the third Jewish state in the land of our people. It was a democracy in a sea of Arab dictatorship, it was a liberal country that protected women’s rights, minority rights, that regarded school books as the road to not just Jewish immigrants but also Cambodia boat people and refugees fleeing Europe. It represented me and my beliefs.

Israel was a symbol of what we as a people could achieve in the aftermath of the Holocaust.

Much of my adult life has been spent supporting Israel and defending it against delegitimization from a group of antisemites who have usurped the Palestinian cause to target the Jewish people rather than attempting to solve the Palestinian problem itself.

But Israel no longer represents my values, when it comes to democracy, when Israel slides into racist, bigoted politics, unfettered democracy, and a lack of respect for human rights, and the rights of the Palestinians.

I’m privileged to have joined hundreds of thousands on the streets of Tel Aviv, to keep alive the Zionist dream of democracy.

As Howard Sackstein, chairperson of the SA Jewish Report, writes in his personal capacity.

"I must be honest, I’m not sure who the right leaders are, but I no longer believe they are in this country than any government can do, or is doing. And she does it all because she’s determined to help people and has found a way to do it.

Last week, we wrote about Dr Andy Kuper, another person that believes money is only worth something if you can help others. His original idea for his business, LeaPfrog Investments, was to build a company dedicated to changing lives at scale in Africa and Asia. It’s that simple, and that’s what he has done.

The investment companies it has invested in have reached 450 million people with healthcare, financial services, or climate solutions. Yes, that’s 5% of the world’s population. I could go on, but you get the picture of who he is and what he does with his money and time.

I understand that we cannot all be Martin Moshal, Sivan Yaar, or Andy Kuper. They are few and far between, but just like them, we can all do something good.

We have a country wide open for people who want to uplift others. We even have a community in which there are so many who could use a little or a lot of help.

Look at Saul Fox, who is writing matric this year at Yeshiva College. This teenager is creating 3D printed prosthetics, which are already changing another teenager’s life. And, I have no doubt that this is just the beginning for Fox. He’s clearly a determined person and will change the lives of many along his chosen path.

There are so many within our community who do the most incredible work to help others.

But there are also many who love the idea of doing good, but have difficulty finding the time. Or it could be that we believe that we don’t really have much money or energy to spare. It gets us. Our lives are hectic, and so many of us have far more mouths to feed, and far more money than we did in the other way around. It’s the little gestures that count.

And the truth is, it’s difficult to be angry at loadshedding and potholes when you’re helping people. We uplift ourselves when we give a hand up to someone else.

*Shabbat shalom!* Peta Krost

Editor

From the outside, it may be difficult to understand why hundreds of thousands of Israelis are marching on the streets of Israel. Netanyah and his far right extremist government have taken the opportunity of their new majority in parliament to re-draw the political landscape in Israel. They do this without broad consultation or support. Polls indicate that 62% of Israelis oppose the judicial reforms, only 38% support it. As protests have continued, opposition parties have gradually increased their ranks and their strength.

Independence.

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Last week, we wrote about Dr Andy Kuper, another person that believes money is only worth something if you can help others. His original idea for his business, LeaPfrog Investments, was to build a company dedicated to changing lives at scale in Africa and Asia. It’s that simple, and that’s what he has done.

The investment companies it has invested in have reached 450 million people with healthcare, financial services, or climate solutions. Yes, that’s 5% of the world’s population. I could go on, but you get the picture of who he is and what he does with his money and time.

I understand that we cannot all be Martin Moshal, Sivan Yaar, or Andy Kuper. They are few and far between, but just like them, we can all do something good.

We have a country wide open for people who want to uplift others. We even have a community in which there are so many who could use a little or a lot of help.

Look at Saul Fox, who is writing matric this year at Yeshiva College. This teenager is creating 3D printed prosthetics, which are already changing another teenager’s life. And, I have no doubt that this is just the beginning for Fox. He’s clearly a determined person and will change the lives of many along his chosen path.

There are so many within our community who do the most incredible work to help others.

But there are also many who love the idea of doing good, but have difficulty finding the time. Or it could be that we believe that we don’t really have much money or energy to spare. It gets us. Our lives are hectic, and so many of us have far more mouths to feed, and far more money than we did in the other way around. It’s the little gestures that count.

And the truth is, it’s difficult to be angry at loadshedding and potholes when you’re helping people. We uplift ourselves when we give a hand up to someone else.
'Israel has answers for SA', say unrepentant political leaders

NICOLA MILTZ

P atriotic Alliance (PA) President Gayton McKenzie is unfazed by criticism from Israel haters over his party’s recent visit to Israel and is calling members of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement “shysters.”

The controversial politician and former bank robber turned motivational speaker said he was unafraid of a backlash from critics of Israel including the ruling African National Congress which condemns Israel as an apartheid state, describing himself as a “friend of the Israeli people”.

“I will be restoring the status of the South African embassy in Israel when I form part of a national coalition here as a condition of whoever wants to be in partnership with us. I will agitate for stronger ties between South Africa and Israel without any fear of any backlash,” he told the SA Jewish Report.

His remarks follow heavy criticism from the South African BDS Coalition, which accused McKenzie and the party’s deputy president, fellow ex-convent and socialite Kenny Kunene, of being “reactionary ideologues.”

The pair travelled to Israel on 23 July to learn about coalition governments and water management and wastewater treatment. Their visit coincided with widespread protests in Israel over the government’s decision to pass the controversial judicial overhaul bill.

BDS SA condemned the visit and criticised the politicians, saying, “Convicted bank robber McKenzie resigned as mayor of the Central Karoo District after questions were raised about millions of rand that were meant for the eradication of bucket toilets in the area. Kunene, his rubber side-kick and a convicted fraudster, is a notorious misogynist, hosting parties in 2011 where guests ate sushi off the bodies of half-naked women. These are Israel’s new South African friends.”

It further accused the PA of “reproducing the disingenuous claims of Israeli propaganda for its management of water resources and other technological innovations”.

In response, McKenzie told the SA Jewish Report, “BDS SA should go and find day jobs like the rest of us. Their gig is becoming irrelevant as more and more Muslim countries are starting to work with Israel and not these shysters calling themselves BDS.”

He said his party’s decision to visit the Jewish state was correct. “Israel has many of the answers to the problems being faced by South Africa, and we need to work with each other. South Africa needs friends, not enemies,” he said.

Kunene was misunderstood and unfairly criticised when he said the late President Nelson Mandela had received no criticism when he visited Israel. “He wasn’t comparing himself to Mandela, he was pointing to the fact that Mandela showed the example of building bridges and opening dialogue, which we also believe in doing. Being pro-Israel doesn’t mean you have to be anti-Palestine. That’s a false dichotomy that will take us nowhere. We cannot – and should not – wish for Israel to stop existing, which unfortunately is the starting point for many of those who are ostensibly on Palestine’s side. That cannot, and will not, happen. What’s important is to look at solutions to improve life for Palestine and everyday Palestinians. That cannot, and will not, happen. What’s important is to look at solutions to improve life for Palestine and everyday Palestinians.”

He said Israel’s lessons on water management were “eye-opening”, he said.

“Israel democracy is loud and fractious, but it’s robust. It was eye-opening to witness the anger against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s coalition government and its decision to rein in the power of the courts. The protests made me feel right at home, and the constant electricity made me realise I wasn’t at home,” he said.

Benji Shulman, the director of public policy at the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), said, “The SAZF welcomes the PA’s recent trip to Israel and encourages all political parties to engage regularly with their Israeli counterparts. Israel remains a dedicated and committed partner for sustainable development in our country and as such, we should seek to leverage the best that Israel has to offer South Africans today. To date, Israeli innovation, technology, and organisations have been mobilised to provide access to clean drinking water to more than half a million people in our country. There’s absolutely no reason to inhibit our collective access to life-changing resources from the holy land of Israel.”

Their visit included meetings with various politicians including Ruth Wasserman Lande from the Blue and White Party and Tzachi Hanegbi, the head of the National Security Council of Israel in the prime minister’s office.

“I had an incorrect perception about Israel before going there. As a Christian, my visit gave meaning to the Bible. I have no regrets about visiting, I will be going back with my family and friends,” McKenzie said.

“I am a powerful lesson for South Africa, whatever your politics may be,” McKenzie said.

He said Israel’s lessons on water management were “appropriate for South Africa”.

“Israel has never had one party get a majority on Palestine’s side. Israel stopped a real minority party, coalition-driven democracy, and we learnt a great deal about coalitions such as the kinds of agreements that need to be signed by different parties, how coalitions with vastly different aims can be held together for a full term, and the compromises that have to be made on all sides. It was truly enriching for us as PA leadership.”

He said Israel’s lessons on water management were “appropriate for South Africa”.

“So many of our towns and cities are losing half of the bulk water before it even reaches our residents for consumption. In Israel, they lose 2% at most, and process all the wastewater in a truly cyclical system. The sewage gets turned into fertiliser for farming, the wastewater is used for irrigation, and the sludge processing produces methane that powers 80% of the needs of the water treatment plant. Israelis don’t waste anything. That’s a powerful lesson for South Africa, whatever your politics may be,” McKenzie said.

Being in the country during the widespread protest was “eye-opening”, he said.

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“The first thing we do is, let’s kill all the lawyers.” So said Henry VI.

Shakespeare insightfully realised that disposing of lawyers is a step in the direction of a totalitarian society.

"Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." We must never take democracy or democratic values for granted. They don’t self-regulate. In every political system, the people have the responsibility of the government which holds a majority in the Knesset. It’s the responsibility of the people, not the government, to guard against the potential disintegration of democracy, and the rule of law on the pretext that a governing party has enjoyed international respect and recognition for its democratic values. They don’t self-regulate. In every political system, the people have the responsibility of the government which holds a majority in the Knesset. It’s the responsibility of the people, not the government, to guard against the potential disintegration of democracy, and the rule of law. Only a government which holds a majority in the Knesset should have the power to strike down laws passed by the Knesset.

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Remarkable Israel more than news headlines

The successes of the state of Israel are often overshadowed by the challenges it faces. However, Rabbi Dov Lipman, the grandson of Ethel Kleinman, a Holocaust survivor, shares a story of hope and optimism.

**Rabbi Dov Lipman**

I had to call my grandmother to tell her that we were moving. Though I don’t negate that Israel is facing significant security threats and diplomatic difficulties, I believe that the very existence of the state of Israel is an open miracle. I often wonder what my great-grandparents would have been willing to give up to breathe the air of Jerusalem for just a few minutes. And yet here we are, with Jerusalem and all of Israel available for all Jews to visit or to move to whenever they choose to do so. Yes, there are challenges. And yes, we must learn from the past and never allow ourselves to be so polarized, we cannot govern and function. So, let’s zoom out from the minia of the daily news and remind ourselves of what my Bubby saw and knew - that the God of Israel is “working overtime” on behalf of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel. He promised He would. And then, let’s work to find solutions to our problems and challenges with positivity and the confidence behaving a special people, living in a special time, in the most special of places.

**Subject:**

1. A daily integrated Umzimkulu Kadshu offering.
2. A General Studies curriculum that promotes critical thinking skills.
3. Competitive Spot offerings for Boys and Girls.
5. Affordable Jewish education in Illovo, Sandton.
Time to celebrate the heroism of SA women

STAFF REPORTER

As we step into Women’s Month and the very last chance to nominate for the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards, we celebrate the power and bravery of South African women.

Women are so often unsung heroes as they quietly get on with what they have to do, whether it’s running companies, saving lives, bringing up children, or a combination of these and others.

The Absa Jewish Achiever Awards has honoured women in leadership since 2015, ensuring that we recognise women in our community who have made a real difference as leaders.

These women are role models and, in most cases, they had a tougher rise to the top than their male counterparts because the leadership world isn’t close to being an equal playing field. At this point, less than 10% of executives on JSE-listed companies are women.

“We have been reared to be nurturers and caregivers, but in the process, they often don’t feel entitled to recognise their own needs and ambitions,” says clinical and organisational psychologist Dorianne Weil, who is one of the judges of the Europcar Women in Leadership Award.

Because of this, Weil says, it’s vitally important to recognise women who have stepped into their power, women who have understood that they need “to take care of the needs of their husband’s wife and their children’s mother”.

Weil longs for the day when we no longer need to have an award specifically for women because “there’s complete egalitarianism, however that day is yet to come. “So, we seek out those formidable women who have risen to the top and coped with lots of obstacles and set the bar higher and higher,” Weil says. “Our women in leadership are the epitome of possibility, and act as an inspiration for those to follow.”

Former Europcar Chief Executive Dawn Nathan-Jones was behind her company originally sponsoring this award when it was launched saying, “I’ve been nominated twice for a Jewish Achiever award for leadership of a listed company and both times, I was the only woman in the running. It occurred to me that women weren’t putting themselves forward for this, nor were they being noticed. I wanted to give women a platform to be noticed for what they do.”

“I wanted to give women leaders the self assurance they deserve and a sense of confidence. This award has done just that for its winners,” Nathan-Jones says.

In the past eight years, as a judge for the Europcar Women in Leadership Award, Nathan-Jones says she has been “blown away” by the calibre of women nominated, and how people don’t know who they are or what they have achieved.

“I’ve seen the strength and resilience of women, and how they achieve as leaders against all odds,” she says.

“We women so often go under the radar, but they don’t give up, stay out of politics, and are action oriented.”

“I wanted to give women leaders the self assurance they deserve and a sense of confidence. This award has done just that for its winners,” Nathan-Jones says.

She says she keeps thinking that every year, they will run out of women nominees and every year without fail, the numbers of nominations increase and the women nominated are even more impressive.

“She’s powerhouses in their own way. They don’t make a big noise and they aren’t looking for accolades, which is why it is so satisfying to bring them to the fore and recognise them,” she says.

Some of the women we have honoured in the Europcar Women in Leadership Award are:

• Judge Sharise Weiner (2016). Weiner is now a judge on the Supreme Court of Appeal, the second highest court in the country. She told the SA Jewish Report that when she was selected for the position, it was “satisfying knowing that I’ve shattered a few glass ceilings and all my years of experience have been recognised”.

• Professor Bonita Meyersfeld (2018). Meyersfeld was honoured for her efforts to promote human rights and fight gender-based violence. She’s a human rights lawyer, activist, and academic and was also named a Knight of the Order of Merit by the president of France for her work.

• Advocate Carol Steinberg (2022). Steinberg won the award after arguing before the Constitutional Court in the Bongani Masuku antisemitic hate-speech case and winning. Steinberg said on winning the award, “You can’t mean from the sidelines. Put on your armour, and try and do what’s right.”

Nominations close at 17:00 on 4 August, so if you haven’t nominated that woman you know deserves to win the Europcar Woman in Leadership Award, do it now. Go to: bit.ly/jaa23nom

Nominate to Win

Each nomination could win you two tickets to this year’s Absa Jewish Achiever Awards

Recognise the extraordinary and remarkable in our community.

Go to bit.ly/jaa23nom or nominations@sajewishreport.co.za

Nominations close: 4 August 2023 at 17:00 SAST

Photos: Ilan Ossendryver

“I wanted to give women leaders the self assurance they deserve and a sense of confidence. This award has done just that for its winners,” Nathan-Jones says.
The philanthropist who is opening taps for Africa

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

“The solution exists, it’s time to act,” says Israel-born social entrepreneur Yaari, the chief executive and founder of Innovation: Africa, an organisation addressing Africa’s crippling water crisis village by village.

“The main challenge in much of Africa is lack of energy, which means electricity in medical centres or schools,” says Yaari. “Most importantly, because there’s no energy, there’s no access to clean water. Yet the sun exists, the water exists, and with only a few solar panels, we can make a change.”

Yaari, through her organisation Innovation Africa, provides access to clean water throughout Africa.

With this in mind, Yaari set out to address the challenges she observed while working in Madagascar as a quality controller for renowned clothing company, Jardache Jeans. Though she grew up in Israel and France and studied in America, it was Africa where Yaari found her calling. “I reached the continent, I spent time in the villages, and really, I’ve never left,” she said at a Young Presidents’ Organization breakfast held in Sandton last week.

Visiting villages in Madagascar, Yaari quickly realised two things: children weren’t going to school, and medical centres had no refrigeration to safely store medicines and vaccines. “I continued travelling across the continent to Jardache’s factories there, and in all of them, I saw the same situation – no electricity,” she says. “Even today, more than 600 million people in Africa don’t have access to electricity.”

Determined to bring electricity to the continent, Yaari set out to further her education and applied to Columbia University in New York. Here, she returned her masters in energy. Asking a professor for input on how to help provide electricity to African villages, he told her she would need only two solar panels. Attaining a grant from the university, she returned to Madagascar armed with the panels, and installed them at a school and medical centre.

Powering 12 light bulbs and providing a small refrigerator to safely store medicines and vaccines, she observed an immediate impact and knew she had to continue. Yaari found a donor, who advised her to open a non-profit organisation, and so in 2008, she set out to address the challenges she had recently installed a solar system, I was told that the school would need only two solar panels. Attaining a grant from the university, she returned to Madagascar armed with the panels, and installed them at a school and medical centre.

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Yaari deeply regretted not being curious enough to find out why the children weren’t going to school when she first observed this in Madagascar. “If I’d asked, I would have understood that the source of the problem was that they had to collect water. This was often not safe for drinking, and they’d get sick,” she says. Yaari now knew that she had to provide access to clean water. Investigating solutions, she thought of Israel’s pioneering water and solar technology.

Today, through this technology, Innovation: Africa has delivered access to clean water and electricity to more than four million people across 10 African countries. “From working in Madagascar to running this very large organisation with a $20 million [R362.2 million] budget, we’re now providing water to 250 villages a year,” says Yaari. “What shocked me the most in South Africa’s villages were the women’s stories,” Yaari says. “They said, ‘We’re scared, we’re being raped at night when we fetch water.’”

As in the rest of Africa, South African women, often together with their daughters, wake up early to reach water sources so they can be home in time to send their children to school. On the way, they’re often attacked.

Seeing the impact of these and other harrowing stories takes its toll, but the ability to make a change keeps Yaari going. “Knowing that I can do something about it, that it won’t take too much to provide clean water, and that their lives will be transformed just motivates me to move faster,” she says.

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Theatre on the Square, Sandton
8 – 19 AUGUST 2023

Directed by LIA KOENIG

Written and Performed by ROY HOROVITZ

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Learning from Poland – Holocaust Centre gets new director

T he incoming director of the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre (CTHGC), Jakub Nowakowski, may not be Jewish or South African, but he comes from Poland, the country where much of the Nazi genocide took place, and has a passion for the Holocaust education and learning from his country’s past.

Nowakowski, who goes by the nickname Kuba, was born and raised in Kazimierz, the former Jewish district of Kraków. Coming from a non-Jewish family that has lived in that region for generations, he feels compelled to research its history from an early age. This led to a lifelong quest of trying to understand the Holocaust and educating about the tragic consequences of prejudice. Now, he has chosen to bring his expertise and passion to Cape Town, and by extension, the South African Jewish community.

It has been a long journey to get to this point. “When I was brought up in post-war Poland in the 1980s, no Jewish story was present,” he says. “There was no pride in the fact that the oldest synagogue in Poland was around the corner, and that some of the most important Jewish scholars, rabbis, philosophers are buried in the cemeteries [in Kazimierz]. Poland is unique because for centuries, it was a centre of Jewish civilisation. At the end of 18th century, about 75% of all Jews lived in what was then the Kingdom of Poland. And then, 200 years later, it became the ground zero of the Holocaust.”

Growing up, “We lived in this ‘Atlantis’, not knowing what surrounded us,” he says. “At some point, I discovered fragments of that past. I realized what these were things that somehow survived the Shoah and had somehow found a way out of our lives. Since then, I’ve been looking for answers. To be honest, I’m still looking for answers, perhaps to different questions, but it’s something that has always pushed me forward.”

Nowakowski graduated from the department of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in 2007, where he wrote his thesis on Jewish resistance in Kraków during World War II. His interest in Jewish history and Polish-Jewish relations led him to become a student volunteer and member of the Polish American Jewish Alliance. He worked in action, creating dialogue between young Poles, Jews, and Americans.

In 2005, Nowakowski joined the staff of the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków, which opened the previous year. In 2006, he joined the museum’s education department, where he worked as a section manager. In 2010, after an international competition, Nowakowski was appointed the Galicia Jewish Museum’s director. He has curated exhibitions, written books, and given lectures internationally on the Holocaust.

Speaking to the Cape Jewish Report from Kraków shortly before he and his young family made their way to Cape Town, Nowakowski said, “I’ve been the Galicia Jewish Museum director for 13 years and it’s been an amazing time. They’ve been intensive years. In 2010, we had about 20,000 visitors. In 2019, just before the COVID-19 pandemic, we had more than 70,000 visitors to the museum. On top of that, we’ve worked with more than 40,000 people across Poland. Then the pandemic and the war in Ukraine hit, with thousands of refugees coming to Kraków.”

“My wife and I thought it might be time for a change, and we’ve been looking for a place where we can make a change. In Poland, we were able to change how non-Jewish Poles perceived Polish-Jewish history and Polish-Jewish relations.”

He has worked with Holocaust educators in South Africa over the years, had exhibitions curated for South Africa, and was hosted groups from South Africa in Poland. “I’ve been interested in the context of South Africa – how to teach the Holocaust in a place that has so much history and pain. When I learned about this opening at the CTHGC, I thought perhaps this is the next place.”

He’s excited about many aspects of the new role. “One of the highest questions we’ve been asking ourselves is why non-Jewish Poles should be interested in Jewish history and the Holocaust. I guess this is the same question that people are asking in South Africa: why non-Jewish African people that often haven’t met a Jew in their lives and are far away from Europe, Poland, and Auschwitz should care? And, what are the universal lessons of the Holocaust that are important for people all over the world?”

“This is one of the challenges, and it’s also one of the things that excites me, that we’ll be able to try to find answers to, and work within this new context.”

“Believe in evolution rather than the revolution,” he says, “and he’s not rushing headlong into making changes. Certainly, the first months will be for me to learn, soak in everything, and get to know everybody. The centre has been a cornerstone of的形式s and its educational programmes are impressive. What I’ll be able to bring with me is a bit of a different context, coming from Europe and having worked with so many institutions from Europe and the United States.”

“In many ways, the centre is different from most others around the world,” he says. “Most of the people that I work with or have worked with in the past have been in Europe and the United States.”

He has visited South Africa, and from what he’s seen so far, “the community is strong and proud of its identity. I find it fascinating and impressed that we got married. I feel like the infrastructure of life – schools, synagogues, museums – is all very impressive, especially when one comes from post-Holocaust Eastern Europe. We’ve been taken with how engaged and friendly people have been, both Jewish and non-Jewish. We’re excited to be coming to Cape Town, and we hope we’ll be able to become part of this wider family and community.”

Cup runneth over for mighty duo in Morocco

Sha nehshen’s octogenarian Roz Bernstein and her younger bridge partner, Sharon Lang, are heading to Morocco next month in the hope of becoming the first South Africans to win the Venice Cup at the biennial World Bridge Team Championships.

The 84-year-old Bernstein, who works as a bookkeeper, and her fellow South African, Lang, are two Jewish players in a South African team of six that will represent the country at the Cup, which is taking place in Africa for the first time.

The championship is being held at the luxurious Movenpick Mansour Eddahbi Palace in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 20 August to 2 September.

South Africa’s three pairs, one being Bernstein and Lang, will each play an equal number of the three two-hour matches that the team will play on each day for seven days.

Eight countries qualify for the knockout stages after the seven days. “It’s a bit like a soccer league where they have a round robin and then quarterfinals, semifinals, and finals,” Lang says.

Morocco, as the host nation, as well as South Africa and Egypt will be three of the 22 countries from across the world at the championship.

The winning country will lift the prestigious Venice Cup trophy, which has been awarded to the winners on 22 occasions since the first edition in 1974 in Venice. The Bermuda Bowl is awarded to the winners of the open event and the O’Halloran Senior Bowl is awarded to the winners of the seniors’ event.

Bernstein competed at two previous championships, in Shanghai and Bali, and Lang is gearing up for her debut at the tournament.

The pair made the South African team for the 2020 championship in Italy, but it was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lang and Bernstein, who have been playing together since 2015, played in two sets of trials, first to qualify for the South African Ladies Team in February, and then to qualify as one of the two countries to represent Africa in the open championships.

In the latter trials, they came up against Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Kenya, and Réunion in June. “We played against those countries online, as has been the case since the onset of the pandemic, but monitored at the bridge club in Lusaka,” Bernstein says.

At the championships, the players will be seated at tables in a very large hall, Lang says. “It’s quite strict. The players will be subject to drug testing and won’t be able to eat or smoke inside the venue. No cellphones are allowed either.”

Bernstein and Lang have been “very successful” as a pair, the former says. “We’ve won three out of the four times we’ve participated in the trials for the South African team – in 2017, 2020, and this year before the pandemic, we played mainly at the club. Now, we play probably three or four nights a week online and once a week at the local bridge club.”

Bernstein’s late husband, Michael, was a good bridge player and taught her how to play the game in 1960, the year they got married. “We played a lot together, although not as partners. It takes a long time before you really play serious bridge. At that stage, I was young and I had children. I would say I probably started playing seriously in 1980. After Michael passed away, it became more important for me to play.”

Lang started playing the game seriously in 2000 after working as a secondary school French teacher for 10 years. “When I stopped teaching, I became a desperate housewife and was bored, so I took up bridge to be able to socialise with my friends and keep myself busy,” she says. “I found it very difficult in the beginning because I hadn’t studied since university and it was difficult to retain the knowledge. But it’s become easier as I’ve gone along. It’s certainly a game that wakes your senses.”

Lang has “tremendous admiration” for Bernstein. “She’s the most phenomenal person in terms of stamina and the knowledge she maintains. She’s older than me, but by the way she conducts her life, you wouldn’t think so.”

Bernstein says she doesn’t feel her age. “I’ve just carried on playing and fortunately, I’ve been able to. I’ve put a lot of effort in. One has to at this level.”

She says the game has “progressed enormously” over the years. “It has become a science almost. It’s just not the same game that I started learning 60 years ago.”

Lang says you learn a lot about yourself as a bridge player – how competitive you really are, and how resilient you are, “because there are a lot of disappointments in bridge, and you have to learn how to handle them”.

Bridge is a game you never master, Bernstein says. “However good you get, you’ve always learning and there’s always someone better. You can play it for fun. You can enjoy it at any level. That’s what’s incredible about the game. You can play it at any level. When you take a break, you need to put a lot of effort in, work with your partner, and have stamina.”

She says team spirit is important. “We’ve realised over the years that the best team doesn’t always consist of the best players. It consists of the most harmonious mix of people.”

It’s crucial to find a “congenial” partner, she says. “They don’t have to be your best friend, but you need to have some kind of rapport with them at the table.”

Playing bridge gives you “a massive social passport in terms of meeting people in your own city and from overseas,” Bernstein says. “Somehow, you just know somebody wherever you go. Bridge is such a worldwide preoccupation.”
Yeshiva school reaches out with 3D prosthetics

HANNA RESNICK

When 15-year-old Owethu, a pupil at Hope School for the physically disabled, was for the first time able to hold something with the 3D printed prosthetic hand that Yeshiva College matric pupil Saul Fox created for him, he was overwhelmed. He’d been about six years since he was able to hold anything with his left hand.

Owethu, whose surname has been withheld to protect him, hasn’t been able to do much with his limbs since he had to have his left leg amputated in grade seven. “For him, it was about six or seven years ago,” says Saul, who was inspired to create something to help Owethu after he became involved in a network of volunteers.

When the pupil found himself using a prosthetic hand, a network of volunteers (e-NABLE) got in touch with him and they were keen to help him.

“Saul is the first person I’ve come across locally that makes upper-limb prosthetics. So that in itself is quite unique,” says Ramessar. “What’s also amazing is how quickly it’s made, although it also makes it a little bit more fragile than a metal prosthetic.”

Saul’s dream is to get more people involved in this, but the point of it is to work with them. “He came in, measured them, looked at what they would need, asked them what kind of prosthetic they would benefit from, and then offered them a whole range of colours and graphics to choose from. I thought that was nice because for younger kids, if it’s exciting, they want to wear it,” Ramessar says.

After doing some research, he found an organisation called e-NABLE, which encourages people with 3D printers and a network of designers to come together and help improve the lives of those with limb differences, people who have lost limbs.

“We’re still on the first patient because we’re trying to be careful and go slowly because if we start giving five people prosthetics and then we can’t keep up with repairing and maintaining them, it will be an issue,” says Fox.

During the first visit, he identified about five or six pupils, but since then two have left the school because they matriculated. He’s working with the younger kids for now so that he still has time to work with them.

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In her 12 years of physiotherapy, she has worked only with lower-limb prosthetics. “Saul is the first person I’ve come across locally that makes upper-limb prosthetics. So that in itself is quite unique,” she says. “What’s also amazing is how quickly it’s made, although it also makes it a little bit more fragile than a metal prosthetic, so that’s something to consider. He has also made adjustments as he needs to because he’s also finding his feet, learning, and growing. He lets the kid wear the prosthetic and then, if something breaks, I send him a picture and tell him what happened or how the injury occurred, and then he makes the necessary adjustments and brings it back for the kid. It’s a learning experience for all of us,” says Ramessar.

“He’s going to go really far, especially once he identifies the flaws and makes the adjustments. A lot of people will approach him, even privately, to get a prosthetic made.”

Fox’s dream is to get more people around the country involved, and to have a network of volunteers. “They aren’t my designs. I wasn’t the first person to come up with this idea, but the point of e-NABLE and its community is that if you have a 3D printer and you can find someone who needs a prosthetic, you can print them a prosthetic. You don’t need a ton of time or a ton of qualifications, you just need a little bit of patience and dedication.”
Debbi Rozowsky has just released a book, *Having to Step Up*, that focuses on dealing with trauma. The book is aimed at empowering readers to overcome their traumas and move forward with their lives.

Debbi Rozowsky was a victim of a bomb blast in Johannesburg in 1989, which wrote about in her book. After the incident, she developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and sought help, but in South Africa at the time, there was hardly any professional who knew about PTSD. She moved back to her home city, Cape Town, and through a psychologist, she learned about other therapists that could help. She joined, and later in training by psychologists from the Trauma Centre for Violence and Torture, she learned about other therapists that could help. She joined, and later in training by psychologists from the Trauma Centre for Violence and Torture, she learned about other therapists that could help.

A crisis, in a way, can step up, step aside and pretend it’s not happening, or fall down. I am by nature someone who’s faced in my life, but I changed names and somatic responses that we share as human beings. Having experienced a great deal of these, I can relate, and most importantly, I can offer my clients insights and knowledge that I might never have gained otherwise through clinical learning.

When we have traumatic experiences, what do we do? If we’re equipped with an innate survival mechanism that tells the conscious mind exactly how to survive the trauma while it is happening. We can fight, physically or verbally. We can flee, we can freeze and become obtunded and go to sleep. We can also fawn, which is people pleasing. All these options aren’t conscious, but once the unconscious has selected the most appropriate reaction to the circumstance, we go with it for our usual. I once thought that people who were feeling so for whatever reason in their work or in their relationships, we can achieve this only through sharing the trauma.

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Nominations close: 4 August 2023 at 17:00 SAST

Go to:
bit.ly/jaa23nom

or
nominations@sajewishreport.co.za
In a democracy, when a political party wins an election, it means that the majority of the voters in the country voted for it. And it has the legal right to govern until the next general election. In a democracy, if you win by one vote, you have won. If you lose, you go back to the drawing board and plan to win the next election.

In a democracy, you don’t take to the streets, block highways, disrupt people’s lives, and harm those that won the election. That’s anarchy. And when you don’t get arrested for transgressing, something is amiss with those who are supposed to keep the peace.

Anyone who thinks that Israel today is a democracy is seriously misguided. The so-called left-wing, which has behaved like right-wing thugs, has ruined Israeli democracy. From now on, when a political party loses an election, there will be chaos. The people who have been demonstrating should be ashamed of themselves. They have ruined democracy in Israel for the foreseeable future.

For those soldiers and airmen who have wondered out loud what she was going to do when she got back, she said, “I do wrong?” and she says, “Honey, I know that as much as I meant it when I said it, there’s a great likelihood that I’ll do exactly what I said I wouldn’t do. We went to a wedding a few weeks ago. The couple were young and in love and radiated the optimism only found at weddings. The groom, a lovely young guy, in addressing his almsy new bride, thanked her for (already) teaching him to be “sensitive and vulnerable”. That she had achieved this in the few months of their courtship and engagement is remarkable. But I do wonder out loud what she was going to do with the next 50 years, being the overachiever that she clearly is.

When I posed this question to my wife, she rolled her eyes and suggested that maybe I could learn a thing or two from the couple. Fair comment, considering that she has been giving me sensitivity and vulnerability training for more than 30 years now – and isn’t convinced she has succeeded with either.

And so, of course, I apologised. And, of course, I promised never to do what it was that I did again. And being of kind heart, she graciously accepted my apology even though deep down she knew that as much as I meant it when I said it, there’s a great likelihood that I’ll do exactly what I said I wouldn’t do. We went to a wedding a few weeks ago. The couple were young and in love and radiated the optimism only found at weddings. The groom, a lovely young guy, in addressing his almsy new bride, thanked her for (already) teaching him to be “sensitive and vulnerable”. That she had achieved this in the few months of their courtship and engagement is remarkable. But I do wonder out loud what she was going to do with the next 50 years, being the overachiever that she clearly is.

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