

Israel Crisis - Personal Reflections
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This past weekend, Heidi and I attended Park Ave Synagogue – Friday evening and Shabbat morning, following a rally at Temple Emanuel and at the UN.

Having watched the news of this senseless trauma for hours with difficulty sleeping, feelings of anger, powerlessness, anxiety and fear, over the events in Israel and we have been overwhelmed by grief. We gathered with our synagogue community in packed houses for comfort, resilience and strength. On Shabbat morning, our Temple was having 5 Bar/ Bat Mitzvahs and an aufruf. The horrible events would not negate the joy for these families.

We recall the tragic story of the shul disaster when Col. Ilan Ramon died. He carried into space, a small Torah that was hidden in the concentration camp. It was “a symbol of how a person could go from the depths of hell to the heights of space”. The Torah symbolized that Jews maintain their faith.

We sang “OSEH SHALOM BIMROMAV – “Those who make peace in high places, may they bring peace upon us and all Israel”, with tears in our eyes.

We prayed and we gave to the UJA and other organizations to help families who are in desperate need of services.

Express and acknowledge your feelings, and get support from others. We know that there are things that we don't have control over. We need to take care of ourselves.

Spend time with your family. Do something that you enjoy. Take care of your physical and emotional health. Share your feelings with those who you trust. Stay connected with the Jewish community. Prayer can be your form of spiritual practice. Take a break from the news, meditate, practice gratitude, do something you enjoy. Get enough sleep. Be empathetic and be calm.

Victor Frankel said: Judaism is the core of our lives. When the world was dark, “*G-d created light and said it was good*”.

As we mourn and gather together as a community, our Jewish core value of justice will give us strength. Together we will remain strong.

AM ISRAEL CHAI