



Silver Lining

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

Recently, someone I am close to was struggling with some work that needed to be done and that frustration could be heard and seen in the tears streaming down their face. Honestly, tears are often one of **my** go-to emotions. Reasons range from frustration, sadness but more often than not, just an overwhelming sense of emotion and typically because of pride, happiness and awe. But I digress. So, here this individual is feeling frustrated and crying. After some coaxing, they told me why and what was going on.

So in typical fashion, I laid it out. What is the challenge? What needs to be done? Will the crying help? (Sometimes it totally does!!) And how can we move forward?

I am an emotional person. For those who know me, the correct response is, “Tell me something I DON’T know!” And crying can often be cathartic, helpful, necessary and important. But something that I have learned and try to share with others, is that when the crying is done, as it will be, what happens now? Do I continue to focus on the sadness or do I find that spark and move forward?

My mantra for a long time is focus on the good. Even during the pandemic (especially during the pandemic), I chose to focus on the positive. “Look at these amazing walks I get to take and enjoy the weather” (when the world shut down) “No Makeup Monday (Tuesday, Wednesday, etc)” because of the masks. You get the picture.

This is the go-to strategy I want to instill in my daughters and those I meet. Things can be bad or don’t go your way. But what are you going to do with it? Are



you going to stomp your feet and scream? Will this change anything? From experience, I can tell you, that no, it won't. It might give you a headache and it will definitely make your face red and possibly hurt your throat. But once the tantrum has ended, nothing has changed. You can work to solve the problem and that is constructive. But of course, some things won't change and that is reality.

Soooooo, my steps that I go through and encourage my daughters to use (and I am absolutely sure they do it ALL the time)

First and foremost, feel your feelings, Cry, scream, weep, sob and then....

1. What is the challenge, problem, frustration? Will the crying help? If not, move to step 2
2. What needs to happen to fix the problem? Lay out those steps
3. Who can I turn to for assistance? Do I need assistance? Probably more importantly, do I want assistance?
4. Where can I learn, practice, look for the tools needed to fix the problem?
5. Let's get started!

Most of the time, this really does work. But coming from an expert on being emotional, you have to feel those feelings first. Nothing else can happen next until you accept, embrace and listen to those emotions.

And once you can move forward, and again, the problem or challenge or frustration, might still be there. But, hopefully you have a plan in place. So now, what is the last step?

6. What do I have to be thankful for? What is something good that is happening right now that can give me that inner peace?

When I think of those silver linings, those sparks of goodness, they are often small but meaningful to me. And your silver linings should be the same for you. It doesn't have to be an all expense-paid trip to Israel or a week at a spa. Although those things might be nice.



I will share with you my silver linings, some of them anyway.

- Hearing a favorite song.
- Listening to my daughters sing at our Shabbat table on a Friday night.
- Seeing a sunrise or sunset.
- Dancing with my husband while he is grilling in our backyard.
- Seeing recent pictures of my daughter with relatives back East.

Look for them. They are there! I would love to hear some of yours!

Shabbat Shalom.