

From: Tomche Shabbos <[REDACTED]>

To: jeevacation@gmail.com

Subject: WILL YOU HAVE THIS CONVERSATION?

Date: Wed, 20 Sep 2017 13:07:19 +0000



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Dear Jeffrey,

Several years ago, I felt that I was not ready for the Yamim Noraim. I wanted to go into the Rosh Hashana davening being cognizant of the essence of Klal Yisrael. I needed it to permeate every fiber of my being. Unfortunately, I'm sometimes exposed to challenging and complicated situations that leave me somewhat dejected.

Feeling that I needed a mental shift, I contacted an outstanding individual, an *askan* who regularly exhibits tremendous *ahavas Yisrael*, and asked if I could visit. After he and his wife welcomed me into their home, I thanked them for their service to Klal Yisrael. As we made conversation, I shared a story of unbelievable *chesed* that I had observed. As soon as I finished, the *askan* countered with his own story about an unusually selfless and generous individual. Before long, the couple and I were engaged in a game of verbal ping-pong, as we took turn sharing stories that illustrated the beauty and greatness of Klal Yisrael.

The stories we shared that day ranged from incidents of outstanding *tzeddakah* or selflessness to that of a family who continued expressing *hakaras hatov* to a neighbor for a single *chesed* for decades afterwards. It was an emotional, charged experience, and by the time I left the *askan's* home, I was in a more positive state of mind. I felt uplifted and awed by the *chesed* and generosity of our nation and ready to face the Yamim Noraim.

And so a tradition was born.

The next year, I contacted a family I know, humble, intelligent people who have faced some challenges of their own. I told them I would be stopping by, though I gave no indication as to the purpose of my visit.

Once I was sitting at the dining room table with the husband and wife, I explained that, as my personal preparation for the Yamim Noraim, I wished to share a story that illustrated the *chesed* of Klal Yisrael and invited them to do the same afterwards. Once again, I was soon swapping stories of great acts by seemingly simple Jews. When I left their home an hour later, I was overwhelmed with love and appreciation for our Holy Nation.

Since then, I've had this pre-*yom tov* conversation with a different family each year. Sometimes we sit on the porch, sometimes at a dining room table, but always I leave feeling deeply moved and inspired.

I truly feel a kinship with so many friends and supporters of Tomche Shabbos and wish that I can have this moving conversation once each year with every one of you. Perhaps the next best thing would be to encourage each of you to start your own conversation. Get together with family and friends, share such stories with each other, and I believe you will find this experience to be transformative. In fact, I welcome you to share one of your stories with me by writing to the email address that appears below.

The *chesed* and greatness of spirit of our People truly knows no bounds. As I look back at another year of thousands of food packages delivered, dozens of utility shut-offs averted, tens of job placements secured, and countless spirits raised and bodies fed, I am humbled by all the generosity that made this work possible.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and wish you a year of health, happiness and prosperity.

Kesiva vachasima tova,
Alan Rosenstock

Thanks to your support, Tomche Shabbos assists 500 families in Rockland County with food, job placements, utility payments, and more. For more information, visit www.tomcheshabbos.org/donate or call [REDACTED].



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