



# Congregation Ner Tamid

on the Greenspun Campus for Jewish Life, Learning, and Spiritual Renewal

## **An Ode to My Mother in the Time of Corona**

I count myself lucky. My mom is still with us. At the age of 91 she has slowed down quite a bit. Her memory isn't what it used to be. And she needs a bit of help each day. Even so, every day she talks to me or my sisters. She has learned to facetime so she can see us. And despite the virus, she wants to still be part of our world even if we are distanced.

Over the years, many of you have heard me speak of my Dad. Perhaps that has been an easier course for me to take because we share in the rabbinical tradition. And of course he was a strong role model for me growing up. But if truth be known, my mother displayed unwavering strength through the years. She was always there to support my father and had great patience with the rabbinical life which meant my father was often gone quite a bit. Raising four children then (or now) could not have been easy. At times she would say, "the complaint department is closed". She wanted then, as she wants today, something very simple; that each of her kids (and yes even in our 60's we are still her 'kids') would be happy.

Towards this goal she provided a constant caring ear. An abundance of advice. And the comforting knowledge that no matter what, she had our backs.

The time in which we find ourselves lends itself to a lot of time for reflection. I have found that I have reached out to old friends in ways that I hadn't before. And I have also found that my sisters and I have talked more than we ever have. This too has made our mother very happy. For if there was a close second to her life's desire that her children would all be happy, it would be that all of her children would be close.

I count myself lucky. Not just because my mom is still with us; but because no matter what I *know* she will *always* be with us. Indelible memories, the shaping of character, courage and determination; love when it has been needed the most. All of this and more is why my sisters and I know that we have been blessed.

Just knowing this, is also a reason I count myself as lucky.

To my Mom, and to all of the wonderful mothers in our lives, words cannot express our love enough; so let our deeds honor you each day.

Rabbi Sanford Akselrad