



Loss in the Time of Corona

I tried not to think about it. I'm a bit superstitious (a bit). If I think, "What will happen if someone dies-how will I officiate at the funeral?" I tried. But then, nature took its course and a friend passed away. Just a few months shy of 100, he tended his garden a few days before his death, pretty much everyone who knew him would say that he lived a rich, full life.

Because of the Corona Virus and the practice of social distancing we had to have just a few family members present and the service was web streamed and watched by many including family members who could not come in and friends who were told that the ceremony, by necessity was private.

So, thank goodness for technology. In this instance it was a good thing. Allowing people who cared to be present and say their goodbyes.

And yet, I missed the physical presence of a community. As much as we are trying to create community and continue community in the Time of Corona-and yes there are many, many great examples of success. I could not give the family a warm embrace. We kept our distance. And it did not seem fair.

And then I thought of this wonderful soul ...who had fought in the trenches of WW 2. A hero. With multiple decorations for valor. I am sure when he fought his battles he wondered "Is this fair? Why is the world so crazy?" But he did what he did to protect his loved ones. To fight for his country. He did what he did with the hope and promise that some day the distance that separated him and his loved ones would be bridged and normalcy would return.

He survived on hope. Courage. Tenacity. True Grit. And love.

Qualities that are often too rare and in short supply. But perhaps, as we make our way into this war against the Corona Virus, we will find individually and as a society qualities that we never knew we had.

I was taught in seminary that how we face loss, says a lot about how we face life.

So true. So true indeed.

Rabbi Sanford Akselrad

In loving memory of Jerry Countess