



Muscle Memory in the Time of Corona

For most rabbis, myself included, about a month prior to High Holydays we spend a lot of time reading, reflecting and writing sermons! So, those nice “self-care” items such as exercising the body often get short-shrift. I returned to the gym and started lifting weights again. My inclination was to start where I left off. After all, what’s a couple of months away from the gym? And of course, it didn’t work. 35-pound curls turned into 20-pound curls. Frustrated, I tried to push myself, but I just didn’t have the strength. I realized I had to build up to it again.

Wouldn’t it be nice if life’s accomplishments never diminished? If once we achieved something of import it just always remained forever untouched and unspoiled? But even the prettiest of flowers need water...

It is easy to get discouraged. But it is important to retain our sense of optimism and focus. While often life’s accomplishments are cumulative, they are not without the need of maintenance. A lesson given to our children must be repeated again and again. (How many times have we told our children to brush their teeth or clean up their rooms?!) A good marriage isn’t a series of one-off events such as the celebration of a birthday or anniversary. While those moments of acknowledgement are important, it is the care and feeding of the day-to-day relationship that leads to marital success. It is often the “little things” that add up to the “big” things. Likewise, our health is not the result of eating healthy for only one day, but of constantly watching what we eat, exercising and having a positive mental attitude.

I wish there were shortcuts in life to success. I would be the first in line. But wishing doesn’t make it so. Muscle memory reminds us of where we were once upon a time. But it takes the actions of today to build upon that memory, and to move beyond yesterday’s success.

Life Coach and author, Shannon L. Alder has taught, *“The only real conflict you will ever have in your life won’t be with others, but with yourself.”*

May we find the courage to grow stronger. May we find the strength to grow wiser. And may we find the wisdom to remember who we were and who we want to become.