



CONFIRMATION SERVICE

June 3, 2022

4 Sivan 5782



Rabbi Anthony Fratello, MAHL

Cantorial Soloist Beth Pennamacoor, MJEd

Lisa Tenenbaum, Director of Lifelong Learning, MEd, RJE

Temple Shaarei Shalom

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Phyllis Weinstein, Accompanist
Jay Levine, President



Our Eighteenth Confirmation Class

Opening Hymn:	Hinei Mah Tov	
Shabbat Evening Service VII : Gates of Prayer		219
Torah Service:		
	The Ten Commandments	431
	Exodus: 20:2-14	
Candle Lighting Shabbat:	Kate Lester Maddy Lester	219
Ark Opening:	Michael and Lisa Bard	
Holding the Torah:	Brian and Bonnie Dektor Laura Pappas	
Aliyah:	Lisa Tenenbaum	
Torah Readers:	Lola Faye Kevitch Carly Emma Sirkin Zoe Rachel Lester Daniel Yonah Elbaz Benjamin Tyler Dektor	
English of the Torah:	Todd and Sandy Kevitch	
Holding & Dressing of the Torah:	Ken Sirkin and Julie Konowitz-Sirkin	
Words of Welcome:	Lisa Tenenbaum	
Kiddush:	Sean and Juliana Lutwin	
Closing Hymn:	T'filat HaDerech - D. Friedman	

At Confirmation, we commemorate that our ancestors were initiated into freedom and responsibility at Mount Sinai.

Please share in our joy as the following students are called to the

Torah as Confirmands:

**Amanda Kay Bard
Benjamin Tyler Dektor
Daniel Yonah Elbaz
Lola Faye Kevitch
Zoe Rachel Lester
Jacob Dillon Lutwin
Brooke Zoe Schwartz
Carly Emma Sirkin**

Our Iyunim:

Traditional Judaism affirms the importance of following Jewish Law, or Halacha. It leaves little room for personal interpretation or choice. Since its beginning, Reform Judaism has taken a different approach. Reform Judaism allows individuals the personal freedom to explore the rules and laws and to adapt them to make them relevant to their lives.

This year in Confirmation, we studied the text Pirkei Avot, the sayings of the Fathers, which include many wise sayings of Rabbis and how they apply to our lives today. The Confirmands were asked to write an Iyun, a personal reflection or teaching about their favorite “PEREK” or verse from Pirkei Avot.

Todah Rabah For Your Generosity:

Lance and Fran Berkowitz for the beautiful artwork gifts, each Confirmand will receive.

Bart and Gerri Seinberg for creating the “Seinberg Endowment Fund.” This fund provides Post B’nei Mitzvah Education to any Temple Member in need.

The Board of Temple Shaarei Shalom for a generous donation in Honor of The Confirmation Class of 2022, into the “Sisterhood Scholarship Fund.”

Thank you so much to our families for their constant support; and to our teachers, Rabbi Fratello, Laura Pappas, Beth Pennamacoor, and Lisa Tenenbaum for their continued encouragement. Thanks to the hardworking staff at TSS for all they do and special thanks to Wendy Alfarone for creating this beautiful booklet.

AMANDA KAY BARD

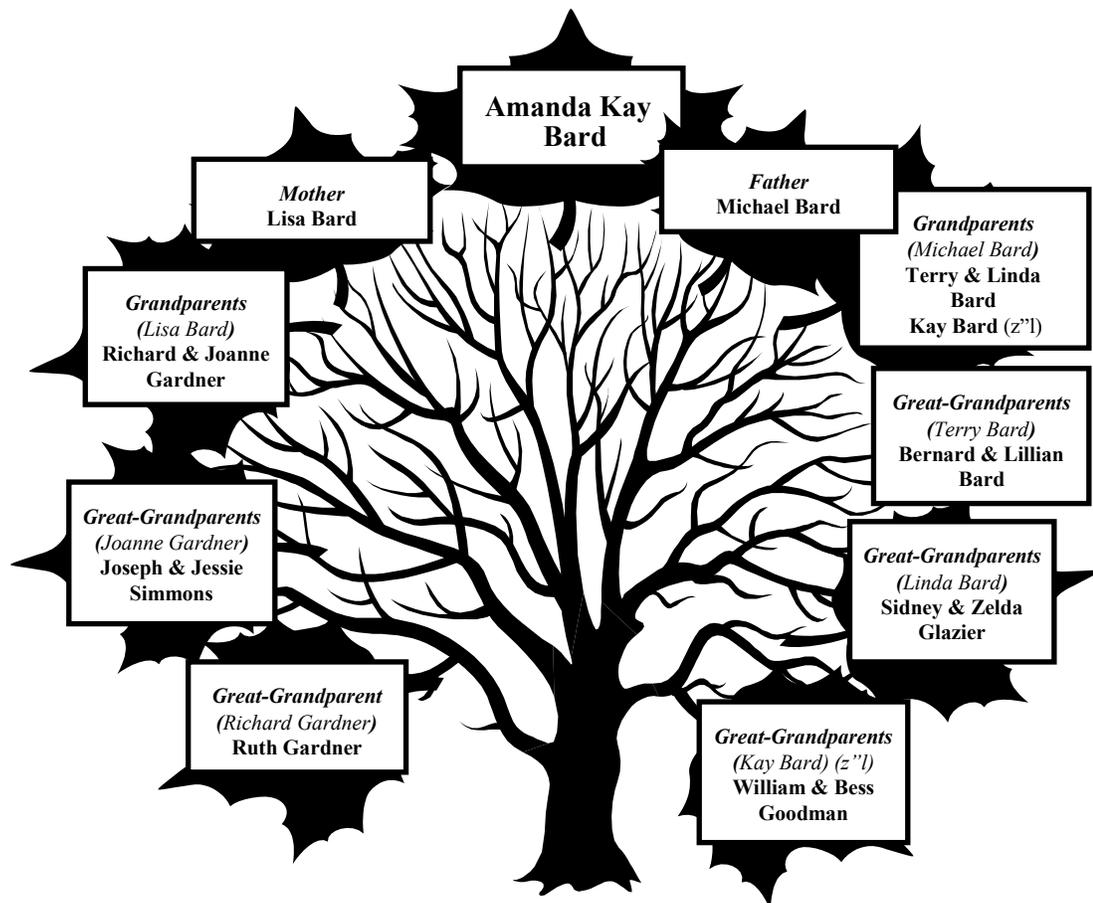
“You are not required to complete the work. But neither are you at the liberty to abstain from it.”

This means that even if you don't complete whatever you are working on, you are obligated to start it, to make your best attempt. If you never even try, the guilt and consequence of your decision would still ride up to you.

I have chosen this one quote as it stood out to me, especially the correlation with my life at school, and I really related to it.

This entire year has been tough for me, heading back to school for in person learning, after two years of barely making it through at home. At first, I only focused on completing my work and getting good grades. I had no plans for anything else, and did not intend to talk to anyone, to avoid having any issues.

The first two months, we were trying to find the right fit and schedule of classes that would work for me. Of course, there were many challenges. However, I persisted, because I know that if I did not try my best in my schoolwork, I could not get into G-star School of the Arts, my dream high school. Today I am still working on it, knowing that each assignment I complete gets me one step closer to fulfilling this dream.

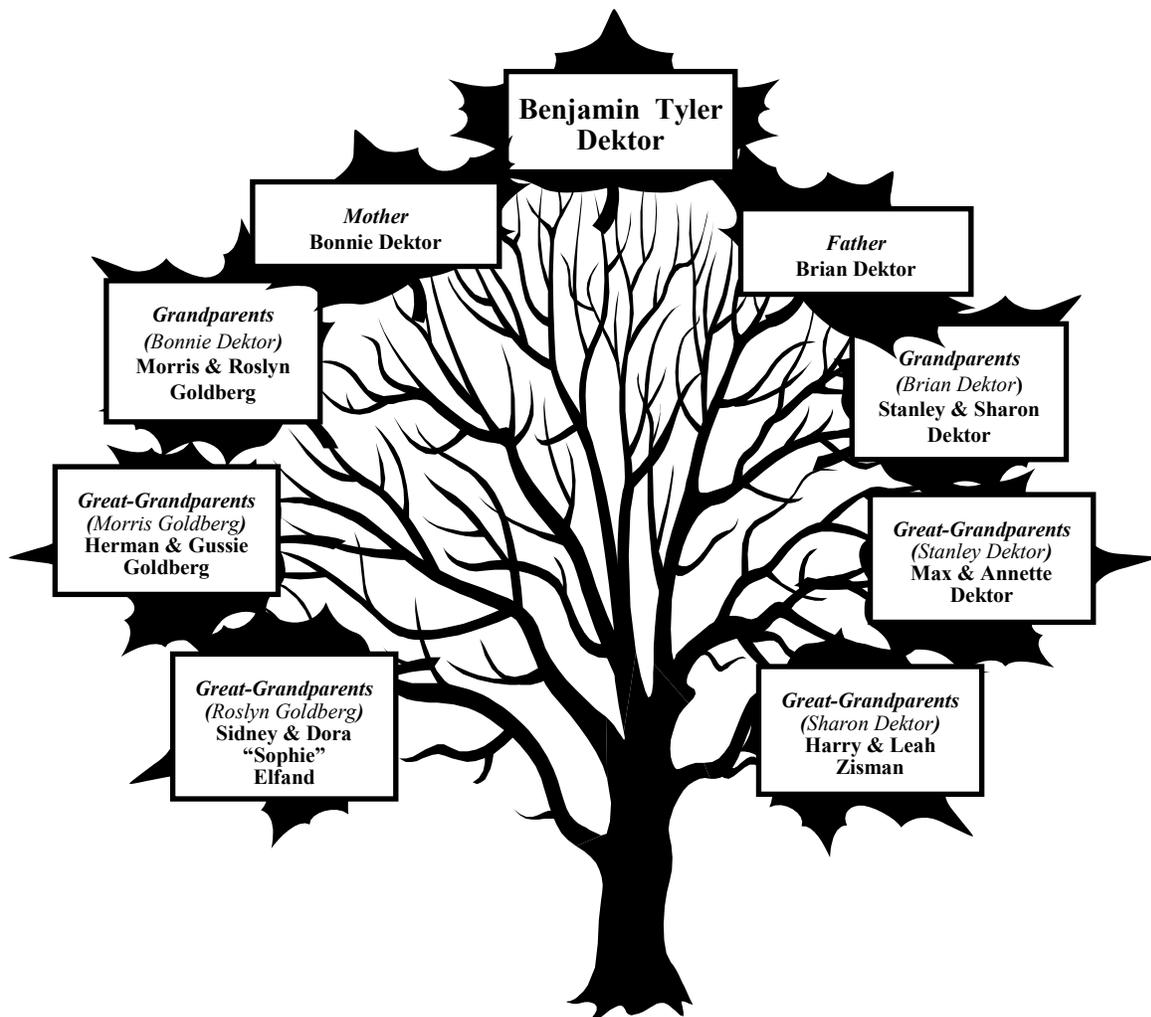


BENJAMIN TYLER DEKTOR

4.27: Do not look at the flask but at what it contains; a new flask may be full of old wine, and an old flask may not even contain new wine.

This relates to the common idiom of not judging a book by its cover. You never know what is going on inside based on what you see on the outside. For example, if you see a wilting and dying rose, it may not look that beautiful, but it can still have a wonderful aroma. You would only know that, if you took the time to get close enough to smell it.

I chose this section because it is especially important NOT to make assumptions about people without knowing what is really happening with them. This applies to my life because I strive to do my best to not make judgement of someone or something until I know them and the situation. I hope that by doing so, I can get to know someone for who they are instead of what they look like. For example, if I were to see a homeless person on the side of the street, I would not judge them because I know that there is good in everyone, even when our circumstances or appearances may suggest something else.

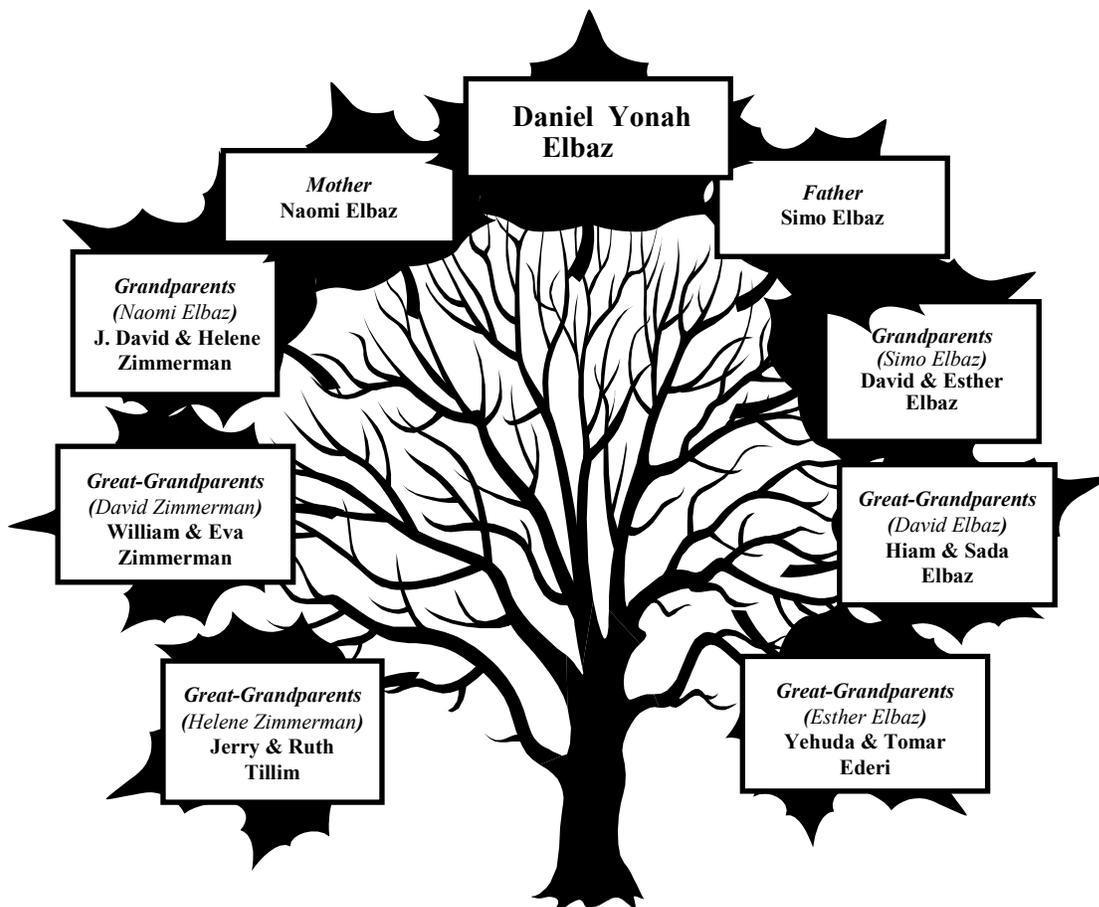


DANIEL YONAH ELBAZ

"Make your study of Torah a fixed habit. Say little and do much and greet all people with a cheerful smile."

The first part of the saying is self-explanatory: that everyone should study Torah and do so regularly and we should not let unimportant things break the habit. The next part tells us about how to display ourselves to others. Instead of telling people our plans and beliefs, we should complete actions that embody these ideas. For example, instead of simply talking about homelessness being an issue, donating to the poor would go much farther. Instead of just apologizing, doing whatever one can to repair the situation would go miles farther. Finally, we should not assume the worst about people. We should treat new people kindly and assume the best. Treating people this way makes them feel more welcome and freer around us. Simply greeting someone genuinely can make a night and day difference in someone's day.

I chose this saying due to it having relevance in real life. It teaches us a practical way to treat other people and tough situations. If people acted this way, happiness and tolerance would be much more prevalent in the world and the saying embodies Jewish ideals like kindness or accepting others. For example, having moved from Israel to the United States, I experienced new cultures and people. Instead of judging people based on how they appeared in my head, I was open to learning about how life was different in this country. I applied these same principles when going from elementary to middle, middle to high, and online to in-person school. I kept myself in check and kept an open mind, something that has brought me happiness and new friendships. To me, it tells us a wise way to treat and approach life, be more tolerant of others, and it can help you to keep calm and in check.

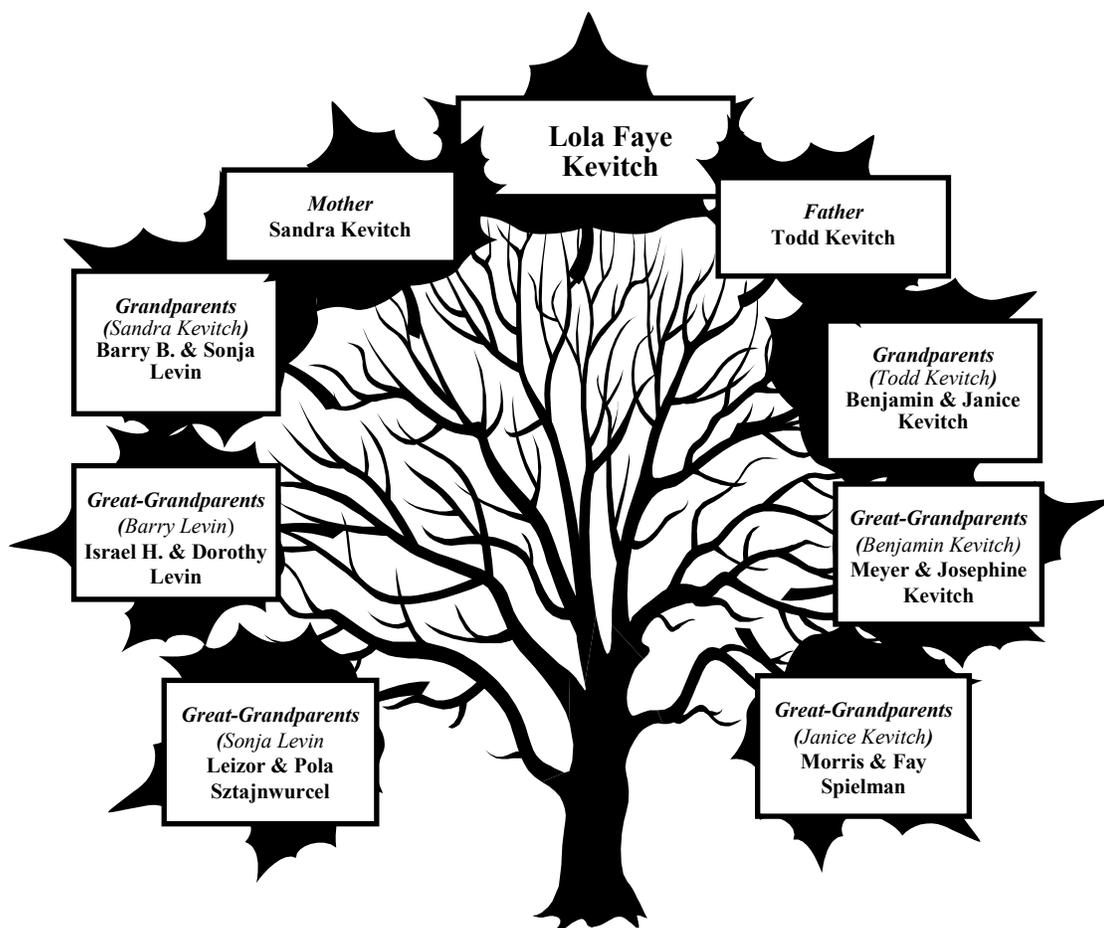


LOLA FAYE KEVITCH

Who are the wise? Those who learn from all people...who are strong? Those who control their passions...who are rich? Those who rejoice in their lot...who are honorable? Those who honor others.

In simple terms, I would describe this along the lines of mutuality; you give into the world positive things and you receive a positive outcome. It reveals that those who are open-minded tend to succeed in all aspects of life. Those who are wise learn from all people, which suggests acknowledging ideas that might not have primarily come to mind. Most importantly, those who are honorable honor others, which illustrates how treating others the way you want to be treated/respected will result in earning the respect you deserve.

In my life, I've experienced having both a positive and negative mentality. Throughout ninth grade, I believed the whole world was against me. As a result, I was rude to others; my friends, family, and peers got to see a miserable side of me. I was stressed, tired, and felt helpless. However, this school year I realized that I had full control over the outcome I was receiving. I saw things from a different view and started to believe in my improvement. I make sure to be nice to everyone, as we have no idea what is going on in another's life. I began to get my grades up, get more sleep, and overall, I was honestly more happy as I now gained back the support of my friends and family that I had so greatly missed. I chose to learn from my experiences as the wise people are, I chose to honor and respect those surrounding me, and I put my energy in places where I knew would benefit me the most. Taking control and carrying out these decisions by giving myself the respect and value I deserve allowed me to respect those surrounding me. Reflecting on the words from Ben Zoma has allowed my life to prosper, and I encourage you all to take these words into consideration when continuing on your journey of life.



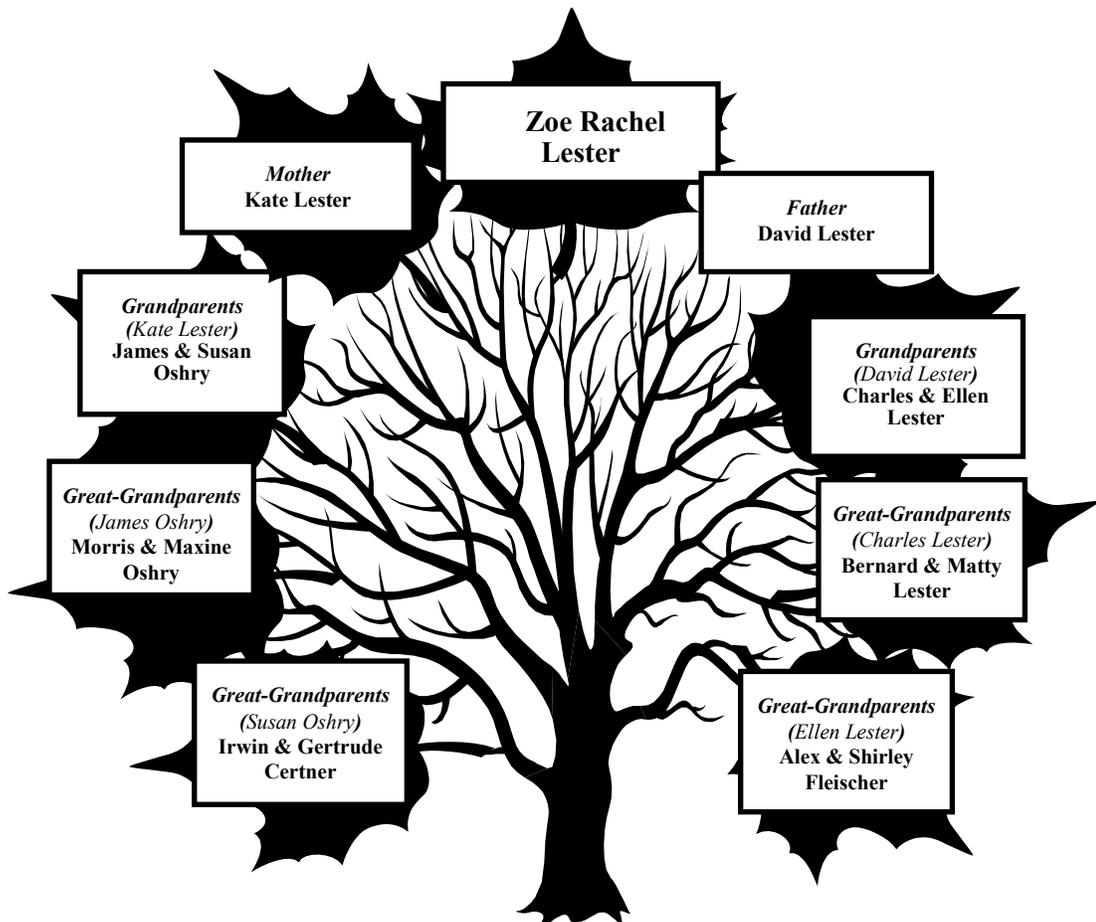
ZOE RACHEL LESTER

3.12: When deeds exceed learning, learning endures; but when learning exceeds deeds, it does not endure.

When a person focuses on committing acts of service or completing activities, the knowledge, wisdom and skills are acquired. However, when a person only focuses on reading or studying, and does not have the opportunity to apply the knowledge or practice what they learned, one does not master the information or skills. Application of skills, or in this case lessons, is what sticks with a person. For example, if a person was attempting to show compassion, they made it by volunteering at a shelter or a soup kitchen. Reading a text about the purposes or effects of these said lessons is almost purposeless.

As a dedicated student, I can relate to this not only in the religious aspect, but in my everyday life. I often find myself staring at textbooks or studying flashcards repeatedly. In this dangerous cycle, the information I studied so meticulously may be forgotten because it has no real meaning in my life. However, when applying the knowledge learned through activities such as social action and community service, it stays. As a Jew, this phrase explains to me how I do not have to read the Torah each day to learn, but if I apply the Jewish values learned in Religious school, Jewish sleepaway camp, and the lessons with the Rabbi, I can ensure that the values, the most important thing to me, are upheld and practiced.

For example, at URJ Six Points Sports Camp, one of the main values discussed is Leadership. Listening to lectures from adults, coaches, and counselors are not what made this value real for me. The application and practice of this skill became real for me when I became the Varsity basketball captain and when I decided to seek the position of President of STARY, our youth group. It has helped to shape me into who I am. I also enjoy applying these skills by being a role model for my younger cousins. I aspire to be someone who lives by the values I have learned and will strive to share Jewish values to help educate and inspire others. I will continue to demonstrate my learning through my deeds and to continue to demonstrate the wisdom of this saying from Pirkei Avot.



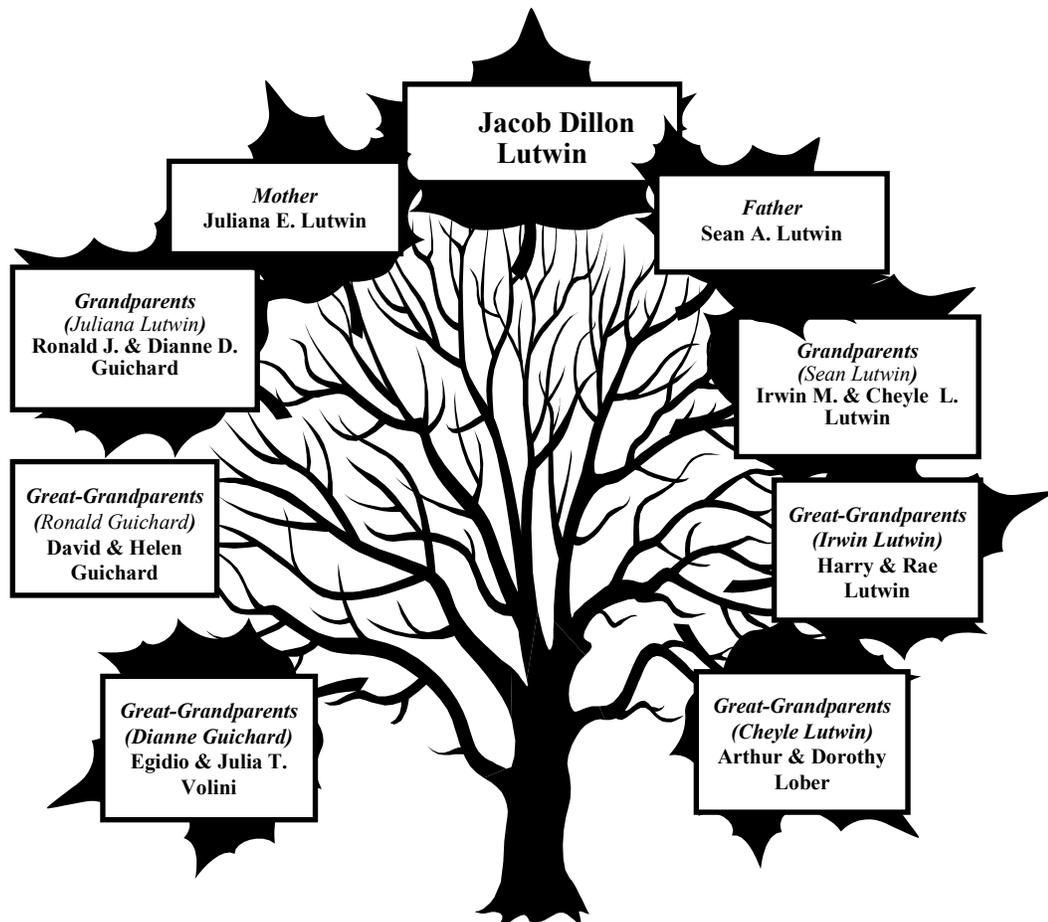
JACOB DILLON LUTWIN

“Be as strong as a leopard, swift as an eagle, fleet as a gazelle, and brave as a lion to do the will of your divine creator.”

What this little line means to me is when you are as strong as a leopard, you have the will and fight to be strong. To be swift as an eagle you can be very slick and smooth. To be fleet as a gazelle means that you are fast or quick, to be able to escape predators. To be brave as a lion means that you can be a risk taker. Lastly, to do the will of your divine creator is to respect God and never disobey God, follow the commandments.

The reason I chose this quote is because of the references to these animals' attributes and what they can represent in human life. This applies to my life because I take risks. I am fast and mentally strong. I am fortunate, because unlike many of my friends, I live a relatively drama free life. I get along well with my family, even my sister, and enjoy time with my friends.

I am also thankful that, in Judaism, if I should go astray, I can ask God for forgiveness. Unlike animals, I can use my mental strength to figure out how to use my varied talents and abilities to be the best I can be, always striving to be better and better.

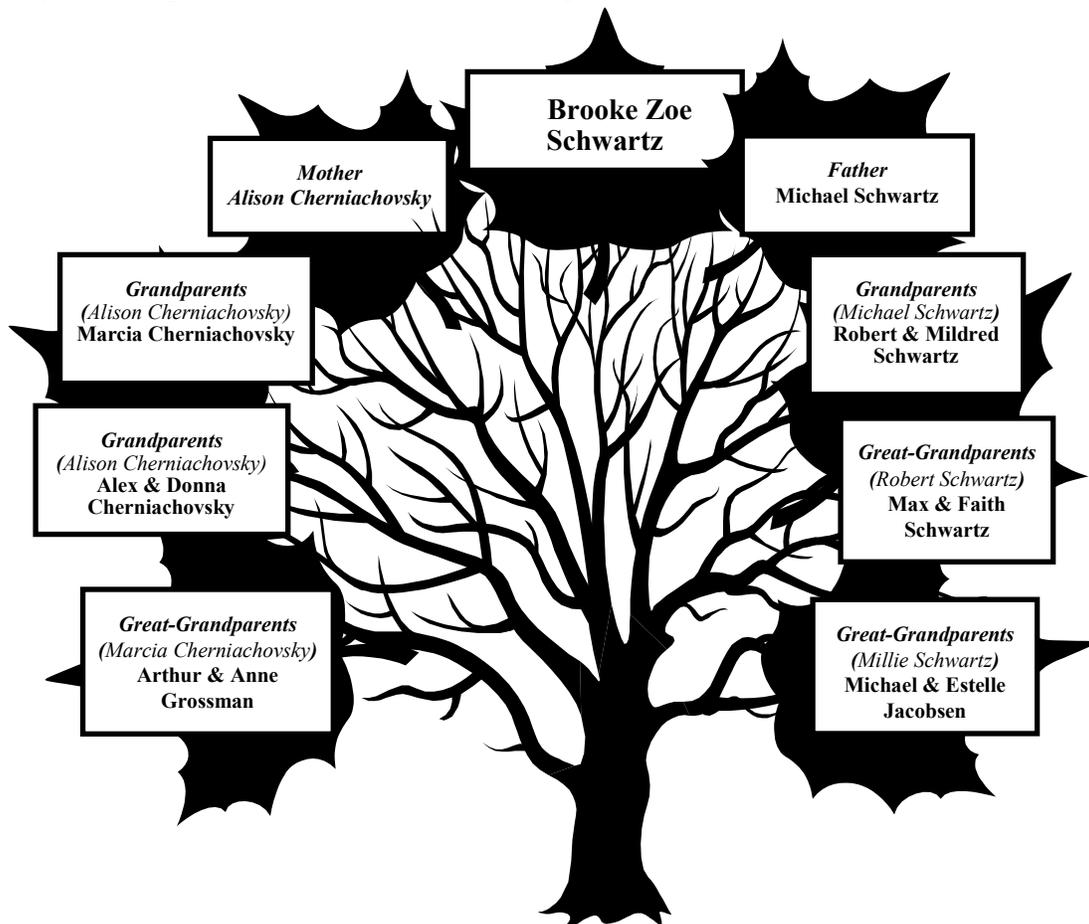


BROOKE ZOE SCHWARTZ

“You are not required to complete the work, but neither are you at liberty to abstain from it.”

In modern terms, this quote is related to educating ourselves, for example about Judaism. There is no way to know everything about all the facets of being Jewish, but that does not mean that one should not see learning as an impossible task and merely give up. Instead, one should learn what they can at their own pace rather than giving up on learning at all. One could study the Torah, or history of our people, the language, the culture, the cuisine, the modern politics of Israel or Jews across the world. To try to “know everything” about all these topics is overwhelming. As a young person coming up in the “tribe” the task of learning seems daunting. But this quote from Pirkei Avot is a reminder that one is not responsible to know everything but do bits and pieces at a time. Have you ever heard the question: How does one eat an elephant? Answer: One bite at a time. My goal in studying Judaism is to do what I am capable of, in whatever amounts I am comfortable with, if I never stop learning.

I chose this quote because sometimes I can get overwhelmed and start to shut down and feel like I want to give up. This quote taught me that when I start to feel like that because studying, or schoolwork, or any task that is in front of me, feels like too much; I just need to take it one step at a time, but not give up. I have a remarkably busy schedule and always have. The way I manage everything is to plan things out. Even though these tasks look daunting before I start, or a week looks too busy, I take a step back from the big picture and focus on one assignment, one task, one day at a time. I think people can learn from this, especially other students who often feel overloaded with the number of assignments they receive. You just push through and do what you can at your pace and not give up. People in the world can relate to this. As the saying says, you should put your best effort to get something started, but do not avoid it, because you are afraid you will not finish. For example, although one person cannot solve the issue of global warming by themselves, they can learn ways in which they can personally improve their own environment, and then how to teach others to do the same. We should not say, “I am one person I won’t make a difference,” it is impossible. If we only look at “impossibility” one step at a time, then it can become possible.



CARLY EMMA SIRKIN

“Do not separate yourself from the community; do not be certain of yourself until the day you die; do not judge another until you are in his position... and do not say: ‘When I have leisure I shall study’—you may never have any leisure” (Hillel, 2.5).

To me, the segment “do not separate yourself from the community” means don’t isolate yourself. Your community exists to support each other, yourself included. Whatever you are going through, you should never have to fight your battles alone. Even if they do not understand your situation and problems entirely, your community will always be there to love and comfort you. Also, the segment “do not judge another until you are in his position” means to me that you should not judge others until you understand their situation. You have no idea what struggles they may be facing, so you have no right to make critical assumptions before trying to empathize.

I chose this saying because the values presented are concepts I personally struggle with. As a naturally anxious person, I struggle with communicating with others, even my parents sometimes, about personal issues. I fear that they will not understand the problems I am dealing with, so I often isolate myself. When I read this saying, it instantly became a comfort to me, a reminder that I will always be loved and accepted by my community. Also, I feel that everybody could use a bit of empathy right now. In a society and culture where extreme conflict can occur from simple misunderstandings, it is important to keep in mind that we are all people. We are all struggling against our own demons and are dealing with the rest of our lives at the same time. The more we try to understand each other, the better the world will be for it.

