**A Point in Time**

As New Year approaches we become more aware of the passing of time. Where has the year gone? What have I achieved? Am I satisfied with where I am right now? Did I imagine even ten years ago that today this would be *me*?

And in these deeply troubling times we could be forgiven for asking “Is this all there is... is this the new normal, forever.......

I learned a very long time ago as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor mother and a broken father wounded in WW11 fighting the Japanese; the world I lived and played in was not a perfect place. No “Fantasy Land “in my Elwood home.

As a small child I learned to live in the shadows of a past I was never actually witness to.

I’m not sure when I started to reflect on injustice, to notice people in our neighbourhood who were different; disabled, polio victims in those days, the very poor and the elderly survivors wearing an expression so sad I felt a pain in my chest.

At an early age I decided to try to make life better for all children and their families; I knew things were tough at my house but I still felt fortunate.

In my late teens I started volunteering, working with mentally and physically disabled children. I didn’t feel better about life’s injustice to these precious children; somehow I hoped I had made a difference in the time we shared together.

My mother’s fear of bringing her children up Jewish was a distinct disadvantage in my early teens; I decided to explore the Jewish religion myself walking to Elwood Talmud Torah Shule, working my way upstairs knowing no one and having no clue about what was going on.

I felt the need to connect spiritually with my religion, my father’s family was from Israel after all and I felt my roots must be there. Over the years I picked up and put down various books on the “Meaning of being Jewish”.

My “awakening “moment came when I learned about Tikkun Olam *Repair the* *World.* Tikkun Olam is a Jewish person’s obligation to see injustice and strive to make it right. Surely this was everything I had believed all my life.

 Finally I felt I belonged. I had come home. The lens through which I saw the world was a “Jewish” lens. Finally I knew why I was here and understood what I needed to do for all the years ahead.

And here you are questioning again and rightly so, what is this life all about, what is the answer?

Right now in the middle of a “once in one hundred years event”, you may decide to connect with your own sense of Tikkun Olam. This New Year your thoughts might stray to reflecting how a newly mended world would look if we all learned the transformative ways of Tikkun Olam.

Right now we must hope and believe our Tikkun olam actions will have long term value for generations to come.

Shana Tova!

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