

AUGUST
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תשפ"ד

We'd like to wish a שנת הצלחה to all our staff with August birthdays. We are so grateful to have you as a member of our staff. You should be blessed with everything you need materially and spiritually.

Pesach Tikvah's Training Institute Concludes Year with EFT Training

Pesach Tikvah's Training Institute concluded its exemplary year of trainings for therapists June 24-27. The final training was on Emotion Focused Therapy. EFT is an effective mode of couples therapy for treating any issues in a marriage.

The training was led by Debi Scimeca-Diaz, LMFT, LCADC. Debi is a certified EFT trainer, one of the few in the world, trained by the International Center for Excellence in EFT founded by Sue Johnson. Therapists who completed this EFT externship received certification in EFT from the ICEEFT.

Aharon Fink, Director of the 640 Family Center, deserves credit for initiating this training. He himself trained in EFT with Debi and pushed to make it an official Pesach Tikvah training. The training was organized and produced by Lea Scharf, Director of the Training Institute.

The workshop was experiential, meaning that each of the participants went through a transformational process focused on their own development, in which they examined their own blind spots and learned how to sit with a couple while using an attachment lens. Debi brought a Chassidische couple with her to demonstrate the techniques on, which was extremely powerful. She did two sessions with the couple in front of the group. Aharon brought in 5 of the top EFT practitioners to serve as helpers in the training to help facilitate the most effective training.

Following this training, there is an ongoing EFT supervision process group with Aharon Fink. The participating therapists will continue to develop their skills working in this model.

The therapists had to commit to taking on couples as patients after they completed the training, which is allowing the clinics to accept more couples. The therapists' new EFT skills are also being applied to patients who the therapists were already seeing.

A great thanks goes out to Lea Scharf, who has done an incredible job of organizing

this year's trainings. The Training Institute is not just one-time trainings; each training is followed by months of specialized group supervision in the new techniques. Lea Scharf provided tremendous opportunities for our therapists' professional growth and the growth of the clinics via the Training Institute. We look forward to next year's trainings.

Pesach Tikvah Well Represented at Neshumas Conference

On July 18th, Pesach Tikvah sent several representatives to the Neshumas Conference. Our Executive Director Yerachmiel Stern, 926 Family Center Director Aaron Zev Herbstman, 640 Family Center Director Aharon Fink, veteran Pesach Tikvah therapist and clinical supervisor Berish Weinberger, and Board of Directors member Avi Mendlowitz represented the organization. It was a valuable day of חינוך and community involvement.

The Neshumas Conference is an annual conference of Chassidische/Heimische mental health professionals. This year it was held at the Crowne Plaza Suffern-Mahwah (near Monsey). Hundreds of clinicians attended the full day program to learn from experts in the field and to network. Aharon Fink and Avi Mendlowitz were two of ten people featured as industry experts who were there to consult with and advise clinicians.

Pesach Tikvah had a strong presence at the event. In addition to sponsoring the coffee station, which lined the hallway of the conference area and featured Pesach Tikvah branding, and sending featured industry experts, Pesach Tikvah was a strong presence at the networking events. Many young clinicians expressed a desire to work for Pesach Tikvah while meeting our upper management.

Pesach Tikvah's strong presence at the conference showed how much we are there for the community. It was clear to everyone at the conference that Pesach Tikvah is a major player in the Chassidische/Heimische mental health field. Our upper management overwhelmingly received praise from other attendees of the conference for the exceptional work that Pesach Tikvah does.

Focus On:
Joe Bistricher, *Crisis Manager*

Q&A



Each month, we feature an unsung hero of Pesach Tikvah – someone who contributes something indispensable to the organization. This month, we spoke with Joe Bistricher about his work.

Q: What is your position at Pesach Tikvah?

A: I'm the Crisis Manager at the ICF and I'm also Pesach Tikvah's Facilities Manager and Special Projects Manager.

Q: How long have you worked for Pesach Tikvah?

A: 33 years, since 1991.

Q: What do you do in your position?

A: There can be events that happen, mostly in the ICF, that can affect the client's safety. We investigate what happened. Then we write a report, and we submit it to the Office of People with Developmental Delays. We also may submit the report to the Justice Center. The reports explain what caused the event, or possibly that the event didn't occur in the case of a false allegation. If anything happened, we want to determine what corrective actions we can take.

I manage the monthly review meetings for Crisis Management. I schedule the meeting and send out notifications to program

directors and a psychiatrist. We review the incidents that occurred. We also must have quarterly meetings on OMH where we have a peer-presentation on issues that could affect client care.

As Facilities Manager, I manage the three sites in Williamsburg and two in Borough Park. We have to make sure that all the sites we operate are in compliance with the Labor Department regulations, the Office of Mental Health regulations, and the OPWDD regulations. I'm always available to hear what the issues are. I manage the handyman and his assistant. Additionally, I oversee the maintenance of the two ICF vehicles.

Q: You were recognized at the 40 Years Legacy event for audit preparedness. Can you tell me how you prepare for audits?

A: Auditors want to see incident report records, and they want to see that necessary actions were followed through on. Carefully keeping those records and making them available to auditors is part of my role.

Q: What do you attribute your longevity at the organization to?

A: My ability to work with others. Also adapting to new roles.

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Q&A

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Q: What do you like about working at Pesach Tikvah?

A: I appreciate the founder's vision. We're fulfilling his vision of providing mental health services to the Williamsburg community and the greater Chassidische community, to individuals, to families, and to youth at risk. I enjoy working in a support capacity to fulfill that mission.

I also like the dedicated people who are committed to providing services to vulnerable people. One of the things this organization does is provide support services to families at risk, and I derive satisfaction from helping vulnerable people.

Q: What are you looking forward to in the future at Pesach Tikvah?

A: Watching the agency expand. We are rebuilding the third floor and fourth floor of this building because we are running out of space. We are expanding, which means that this year we helped more people than we did last year. It's reflected in the need for more space and more personnel.

A great thanks goes out to Joe Bistricher for his dedication to Pesach Tikvah, and the vital work he does. Would you like to suggest an unsung hero of Pesach Tikvah for next month's newsletter? Email ckurtz@pesachtikvah.org to make a suggestion.

From Shared Struggles to Shared Strengths: The Role of Peer Support

By Rabbi Simcha Weinstein

Peer support is a powerful and effective way to help individuals, especially young people, facing mental health challenges like anxiety and depression. This kind of support involves people who have lived through similar experiences offering help and guidance to those currently struggling, creating a unique and empathetic support system.

One of the key benefits of peer support is the sense of understanding and empathy it fosters. When someone who has navigated similar struggles listens and offers support, it feels genuine and relatable. This shared experience helps build trust and reduces feelings of isolation, as individuals realize they are not alone in their journey. Moreover, peer support is empowering. Seeing someone who has successfully managed his mental health challenges provides hope and motivation. Peer supporters

can offer the initial encouragement and information needed to take that first step toward seeking professional help.

Additionally, peer support is flexible and adaptable. Whether through one-on-one meetings or group sessions, it can reach people in various settings and formats. This adaptability makes it accessible to a broader range of individuals, regardless of their specific circumstances or location.

Peer support is an essential component of mental health care. Its ability to provide empathy, empowerment, and accessible support makes it highly effective. By fostering connections and offering hope, peer support helps individuals navigate their mental health challenges more effectively and contributes to building a stronger, more compassionate community. As Proverbs, written by King Solomon, reminds us: "Anxiety in the heart of a person causes dejection, but a good word will turn it into joy."

Rabbi Simcha Weinstein, founder of the Jewish Autism Network, is a member of Mayor Adams' Mental Health Clergy Taskforce and a community engagement coordinator at Families Together in NYS. He champions peer support and assists Pesach Tikvah's new Peer Support Program.



Good News from Pesach Tikvah Programs

Pesach Tikvah does not take the summer off! July demonstrated our wonderful staff's dedication to year-round excellence in mental health care and developmental disability services.

Clinics:

- בן טוב ל Sarah Gold, LCSW, veteran clinician and Director of Interns at the 926 Family Center, on the birth of a baby boy.
- Five interns at the 640 Family Center graduated. טוב ל טוב!
- The 640 Family Center has hired new clinicians: Deborah Jacobs, MSW, and Michael Boyer, MSW. Welcome!
- There has been an uptick in referrals to the 640 Family Center, coupled with much feedback about its professionalism and excellence.
- The 640 Family Center has a new administrative coordinator, Esti Guttman, LMSW and a new intake coordinator, Racheli Dembinsky, MSW.
- The OASAS program is ready to accept clients. If you know someone who could benefit from addiction counseling, feel free to reach out to Penina Glazer at pglazer@pesachtikvah.org.
- Adira Tannenbaum, the new Assistant Director of the 5309 Family Center, deserves recognition for the great work she is doing.
- Welcome to Yafit, a new administrative worker at the 5309 Family Center, and to Penina Glazer, who has joined the OASAS team.
- The 5309 Family Center is adding new supervision groups to ensure that all clinicians feel supported in their work.

The School Satellite Program: The School Satellite Program is gearing up for a new school year. Pesach Tikvah is making a difference for hundreds of קינדערלעך and their families. Children face so much that is beyond their control, but early intervention ensures a bright future. It is expanding into several additional schools in the upcoming school year.

- The program will be operating in over 40 schools in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island.
- A group of new clinicians has joined the program for the upcoming school year.
- Supervision groups will be running.

Senior Services: While several members of the Senior Services team are away for the summer, Shoshi Sobelman, Sarah Blima Gestetner, and Zalman Kotzen have been hard at work enriching the lives of Williamsburg's Holocaust survivors. Thank you, Mr. Kotzen, Shoshi, and Sarah Blima! We look forward to the return of the whole team. A smaller team did not stop Senior Services from hosting two amazing events in July.

- On July 10th, Senior Services held a beautiful event for 50 Holocaust survivors at Park Plaza. The luncheon included very educational programming: A nutritionist presented on summer

health tips, including hydration, safety in the sun, and advice on eating a nutritionally sound diet. She led chair exercise. Everyone loved the lecture and learned a lot from it – so much that many asked for written copies of it. The Senior Services staff mailed out copies of the lecture to the attendees. Shoshi Sobelman and Sarah Blima Gestetner organized and produced the event.

- On July 25th, Senior Services sponsored a trip to the Hobby House for eight Holocaust survivors. The trip included a pizza lunch, during which the attendees enjoyed socializing with each other. The attendees loved painting ceramics; it was a social gathering that brightened up everyone's week. Shoshi Sobelman produced this event.

Health Homes: Health Homes continues to do its excellent work coordinating care for vulnerable New Yorkers. Thank you to Jacob Lichtman and his dedicated team of Care Managers.

COMHAB: COMHAB is consistently providing dignified, compassionate help to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Diana Masri and team deserve much credit.

ICF: Thank you to Izzy Tropper, Chani Schindler, Diana Masri, and Joe Bistricher for their tremendous dedication to the ICF.

- The ICF is in the process of taking in a new resident.
- The annual staff training is taking place now.

CORE: Thanks to Pearl Ostreicher and the CORE team for consistent program growth and delivery of excellent services.

- A new employment specialist, Julien Saka, has joined the CORE program. Julien will be working on networking with community organizations, businesses, and training programs in order to create employment opportunities for our members with employment-related goals. As everyone on our staff has taken the Individualized Support and Placement training, we are all aware of the role that employment, productivity, and structure play in mental health. With סיייעתא דשמיא, CORE will hopefully be able to bring the value of work to those of our clients who are seeking it!
- At this time, the CORE program is open to referrals from other Pesach Tikvah programs. If you know of a Medicaid client who struggles with serious mental illness and needs additional support, please feel free to inquire about eligibility for CORE services by emailing postreicher@pesachtikvah.org.

CFTSS/Simpatico: CFTSS/Simpatico is doing splendidly! They are having a great summer and are gearing up for an exciting school year. A great thanks goes out to Bruchy Endzweig, Gitty Kahan, and their fabulous staff!

- CFTSS/Simpatico has expanded to Rockland County and is accepting clients! Please send referrals to 845-703-5077.
- CFTSS/Simpatico is hiring several new office staff. Please contact Bruchy Endzweig at 718-305-5077 x.1407.
- CFTSS/Simpatico had a rejuvenating luncheon for support staff in July. It was a great opportunity for unifying, and everyone in attendance enjoyed it.
- Simpatico's groups have been very successful this summer.