ELUL STORIES
Sharing our stories, sharing lives, creating community

Elul is the month leading up to Rosh HaShanah. Each day during the month, a different Temple Beth Torah congregant will respond to the question:

What is the best gift you have ever received?

The Best Gift - Special Plaques
Joyce Tisman

A gift is generally not necessarily something you the recipient want, but rather what the giver selects to present to you. A great gift is something the recipient would really like. It demonstrates the giver's knowledge of the individual to whom that gift is presented. It illustrates an understanding of the person and desire to please and bring delight. It can be tangible or intangible, but above all is thoughtful.

Such was the gift Russ presented to me several years ago. Just thinking of it brings tears to my eyes for it means so much on so many levels. My parents both died over twenty years ago a mere five months apart. I think of them daily. A few years ago Russ asked if I would like memorial plaques in their memory for the Temple sanctuary. I became choked up with emotion. I had never expressed this wish for I was not even aware of my feelings, but knew how aside from visiting their graves I needed to feel they would be memorialized where I could see their names, in a meaningful place of prayer, study and learning. They both knew how important their instilling within me a Jewish set of values and way of approaching life would be in establishing a meaningful life
journey. Seeing their plaques together, as they were in life, gives me a certain peace each time to read them.

This gift continues to give me pleasure each time I read their names on the plaques. More, however, it is a symbol of Russ's love in his selection of something he knew would mean so much to me, even before I realized myself.

*Joyce and her family have been members of Temple Beth Torah over 30 years. She has always saved Tuesdays to continue exploring questions about Judaism in the Rabbi's class. She is a proud member of our Choir and Band and volunteers in costume during holidays in the Nursery school.*

Would you like to share your Elul Story? Answer the question: What is the best gift you have ever received? You can interpret the word gift very liberally- a moment, a thing, a find, advice, a surprise. Send it to me at: ravsusie@gmail.com.

If you missed any of the previous Elul Stories you can go to www.tbtany.org (media galleries/elul stories).