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 Ripple Effect
Marty Jacobson

When I was teaching, there was a boy, David, whose father left him at a very early age, unfortunately, he never knew him growing up. His mom, was an alcoholic and drug user and her boy friends were not the kindest to David, to say the least. When David was in the tenth grade his mom burned down the house and she died in the fire. David, thank God, escaped but was now left without a place to live. We took David in, and helped him in many ways, too involved to discuss in this short story,

David went off to college and became a very successful lawyer in San Diego. However, he didn't forget what it felt like to be homeless. He opened a shelter for kids who were on the street. He flew me out to San Diego to see the shelter and to meet the kids whose lives he was saving. David told me, "you helped me and I am paying it forward." I have attended a number of the fund raisers for the shelter and met Bruce Springsteen, who David knows and is a supporter of the shelter. I am so proud of David and all he has accomplished in his life.

The greatest gift we can give is to help another human being.
Rabbi Gellman in his column in Newsday, quoted a survivor of the Holocaust at his grandson's bar mitzvah, "in this life you are going to meet people who need help. If you can help them-help them." David has given me the gift of seeing him giving to others in need.

Marty Jacobson and his wife Claudia have been members of TBT for 26 years. They are regular Friday night attendees and love learning. He was the beloved Physical Education Director at Friends Academy for many years.

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.tbttny.org (media galleries/elul stories).

Temple Beth Torah, 35 Bagatelle Road, Melville, NY 11747