



# HINDA INSTITUTE

Helping Individuals Ascend  
0% Recidivism, 100% Acceptance

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Tishrei 5785

Fall 2024

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## YOM KIPPUR- THE POWER & CHALLENGES OF TRAUMA

The Jews who stood at the foot of Mount Sinai to receive the Commandments were trauma survivors. They were a people who had suffered, had seen their people enslaved and their children killed. The entire objective of Egyptian oppression was to break the spirit of the Jewish people so that they would be incapable of dominating and determining the destiny of their own lives. They were finally yanked out by G-d from the darkest pits of human existence at the last possible moment when they were almost entirely assimilated into the suffocating immoral Egyptian culture. More poignantly, it was orchestrated to be that way. Abraham was given 400 years notice. He was told, "Your children will be strangers in a land that does not belong to them. Their host-nation will make them suffer. And only then will I rescue them and they will be Mine."

Why did G-d choose to give the Torah to a people challenged by trauma? Why arrange that these shattered souls be the channel to bring G-d's wisdom and ethics to the world? Why, if you're going to forge a nation to be a light unto all nations, must you forge this nation out of pain and darkness, and not light and peace? G-d needed a people who were receptive, committed and who could not live without G-d. Not only did he want a people who were capable of empathy and healing the world, he wanted a people who could connect with Him authentically in desperation and unconditional love. They were not interested in the benefits, they were interested in forging a relationship with Him eternally.

They were good people, but they had been broken. Their trauma affected their ability to trust and love G-d and integrate into a new life. Moses said to them, you thought G-d didn't love you, but in truth, you couldn't love him. They fell into the sin of golden calf only 40 days later on Yom Kippur after receiving the Torah. They often returned to the dependent patterns of a people enslaved to their addictions and reacted with fear or anxiety. In fact the males of that generation never entered the Promised Land and wandered for 40 years until passing away. Only their children under a new leader had the right mentality to finally conquer and live in the land promised to them.

As Jews, trauma and persecution seems to be continually part of our history and maybe part of our exo-genetics. We are the children of holocaust survivors and pogroms, and are still dealing with anti-Semitism. We are still dealing with our fight for our land and integration into society. How does our historical trauma affect our decisions and beliefs and our future? Are we able to move forward? Have we become more spiritual and empathetic? Are we courageous enough to reach for our destiny or are we triggered by pain into repeating patterns and the same mistakes like our ancestors in the desert?

**WISHING  
YOU A  
VERY  
HAPPY  
AND  
HEALTHY  
ROSH  
HASHANAH  
AND A  
SWEET  
NEW YEAR**



Our Hinda families understand the effects of trauma and prejudice deeply. They live with regret, ostracism and PTSD in a way no one really understands. They also are authentically open to spirituality and G-d. They recognize their mistakes with humility, want repentance, to return and are empathetic.

This year let's use our trauma and pain, prejudice and even anti-Semitism as a springboard. Let's find coping strategies, have the insight to forgive ourselves for falling short and then forgive others for falling short. Let's reach for a new mindset. It's time to enter the land of Israel with hope and love.

Derived from

[https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/5961547/jewish/Why-the-Torah-Was-Given-to-a-Nation-of-Trauma-Survivors.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5961547/jewish/Why-the-Torah-Was-Given-to-a-Nation-of-Trauma-Survivors.htm)

## HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ANNUAL REPORT - HINDA IN NUMBERS

This year, our casework and counseling services grew by 47%, supporting 440 clients through 2,744 hours of service. Over 61% of our families and 86% of those reentering are below the poverty line, with many in crisis. Half of our clients are families and children affected by crime, and 79% report mental health challenges. We provided mental health counseling or referrals to 254 clients, with 87% noting improved emotional well-being. Additionally, 256 clients attended our education courses, which significantly boosted their confidence, empathy, and coping strategies. We also launched a Peer Support Program, ran four weekly support groups, served 200 clients in correctional facilities, and presented our documentary to 16 key agencies. To sustain our growth and address community needs, we hired consultants to help restructure our organization, build a dynamic board, and better fund mental health services.

## HINDA INSTITUTE ON THE FRONT LINES IN THE FIGHT FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN OUR COMMUNITY

Hinda Institute is on the front lines of the fight for the mental health in our community. There is no dichotomy between mental health and incarceration; 71% of people with mental health issues have encountered the criminal justice system. Sheriff Dart himself calls Cook County Jail the largest mental health hospital in Illinois with ½ of detainees suffering from mental illness; most for nonviolent offenses associated with their unmet mental health needs. Our nation's correctional institutions cannot deal with the large percentage of people with mental health challenges and often their mental health crises are exacerbated while detained.

Our clients give faces and names to these statistics. The Hinda Institute works to break the cycle of the criminalization of mental health and increase investments in mental health care. Over 79% of Hinda clients report experiencing mental health challenges, including trauma, Post-Incarceration Syndrome (PICS), and mental illness; but only 49% are currently seeing a mental health provider. Accessing mental health care in Illinois is increasingly challenging due to workforce shortages, underfunding, and low Medicaid reimbursement rates (45% of our clients are on Medicaid). It is hard for our clients in crisis to find support in overtaxed agencies with limited provider availability and long waiting lists. Our clients and families are often not welcomed in other agencies or feel "judged". They often have nowhere else to go except to the Hinda Institute for support and advocacy.

This year the Hinda Institute has provided over 4,841 hours of casework support, peer support, chaplaincy support, as well as assistance through licensed trauma-informed expert counseling. We also provide support groups and courses on psychosocial topics. This year our casework has increased by 47%. Our dedicated team has pivoted to meet the need, demonstrating measurable results with the most challenging casework in the community. We are committed to providing support to one of the most underserved, vulnerable, and stigmatized populations suffering from mental health issues within the Jewish community. Our miraculously low recidivism rate speaks for itself.

**A big thank you to our dedicated team who deal with crisis and urgent need every day with professionalism and compassion. THANK YOU LAUREN, JAY, BETH, MENDY, DEBBIE, PHYLLIS. Also Rabbi Binyomin, Rabbi Chaim, our LCSWs Stephanie, and Liz. YOU HAVE MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES!**

## HINDA CARES SUPPORT GROUP (COUNSELING, ADVOCACY, RESTORATIVE JUSTICE, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT)

Most people who are detained are men; they leave behind wives, mothers, and children. These families are the innocent forgotten victims or "collateral damage" of crime. These families struggle with tremendous psychological issues, financial stress and also prejudice because of a loved one's incarceration. The Hinda CARES group gives emotional, financial support and counseling to these families. In addition, over half of our casework supports these mothers, wives and children (163 women and children). Children suffer even more as they deal with prejudice, poverty, and disrupted family support systems. Weekly, we hear these families share their poignant stories and pain. They are bravely sharing their testimonials.

## HINDA HEROINES REAL STORIES REAL PEOPLE\*

**Rebecca:** “The Hinda Institute, and Abby in particular, helped me face the devastating aftermath of my husband’s shocking incarceration. My sweet daughter and I became collateral damage of our very broken justice system. Although totally innocent, we were left without a home, without our savings, without a husband or father. Abby and Hinda were recommended to me, and the moral and emotional support that she, the caseworker and the others in our support group gave us, really helped us on the road to rebuilding our shattered lives. Abby would constantly check in. How were we? Did we need anything? How could she help? When so many had turned their backs, she stepped forward. I will never forget her kindness and grace... it has meant the world to us.”

**Myrna:** “I have a son who was incarcerated in May of XXXX for 3 years. He had been fighting mental health and addiction issues since his divorce. During, that time, I spoke only with my daughter and my husband about the situation. I told no other family members or friends as it was too hard to discuss the situation with anyone. Fortunately, I was contacted by the Hinda Institute. They gave me support when I needed it most. Hinda reached out to me with the help I needed to get through the pain and worry concerning my son. Hinda provided me with a social worker to discuss the situation which made me less worried and tense. This gave me an outlet for my concerns and questions. Hinda also provided get togethers for the various holidays with other families. I was very comfortable at these gatherings. The Hinda specialists offered me real support and advice. I was able to cope and to move through these extremely hard times. I received great value from the weekly Hinda zoom meetings where we focused on the situations of the struggling families. My son is no longer incarcerated; however, I still attend the Hinda meetings as they continue to be an invaluable tool for my mental health and peace of mind. My son has received visits from Hinda Rabbis and books and information concerning the Jewish Holidays while detained. Hinda has also offered valuable resources for when he left prison and for his return to life out of prison. He continues to speak with a Rabbi social worker weekly. Hinda thank you for giving me my son back.”

**Susan:** “I became acutely aware of how even strong intact family systems can become affected when our own daughter a University student and Fulbright scholar experienced a relapse of bipolar symptoms and was incarcerated for repeatedly texting. After 18 months in jail, my daughter was released as innocent in mental health court. However, she was deeply traumatized by her experience and ended up serving a longer period than she would have had she actually been charged. There was no exit strategy once she was released. Hinda visited my daughter with an open heart throughout the process and supported me without judgment individually and through the CARES group.”

**Debbie:** “My adult son was incarcerated X yrs. ago in X. I was devastated. I couldn’t eat or sleep, was anxious, shaky all the time and had no one to talk to because of the humiliation of the situation. Then I reached out to the Hinda Institute. My caseworker was able to calm me down and I found she really understood what I was going through. Abby suggested I join the Hinda support group with other families going thru similar circumstances. Each week we met I learned more coping mechanisms. I learned how cruel the criminal system can be, how terrifying long-term incarceration is and how to deal with the never-ending issues of reentry. These issues are frightening for everyone in the group; this has become a life changing experience for all of us. Hinda’s Cares group makes these challenges more manageable and the support received is priceless.”

\* fictitious names used to protect our clients

### In the News

#### ★ UPCOMING COURSES - CHECK OUT [Hindahelps.com](http://Hindahelps.com)

- Seeking Safety – Understand Trauma and Addiction and Develop Healthy Coping Mechanisms.
- Join our Legal Panel - Nationally-recognized legal experts help navigate the criminal justice system. CLE credits offered in conjunction with the DECALOGUE SOCIETY
- New Finance course - practical advice on managing finances under stress.
- Need help with computer skills – Contact us.

#### ★ JOIN OUR NEWEST SUPPORT GROUP – PICS (Post Incarceration Syndrome)

- Rebuild your Life Connect with others who understand your journey and find guidance on your path forward.

#### ★ JOIN HINDA FOR THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS

- Contact us for a warm welcoming and inclusive place for the holiday meal or services. Nobody should spend the holidays alone.

## HELP A FAMILY TRULY CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS THIS YEAR



The Hinda Institute wants our families to feel that they are not alone and that someone cares over the Jewish holidays. Over 80% of the clients we serve and over 68% of our families are beneath the poverty line. Of those 53% are food insecure. Your small gift of 36\$ can help us make a family’s holiday truly joyful. We provide 70-80 holiday packages to families each holiday. Please donate at [www.hindahelps.com/donate](http://www.hindahelps.com/donate). Note this year, we also disbursed over \$24,000 in direct financial assistance for crisis and emergency services, providing vital support that was otherwise unavailable to our clients. This crucial funding helped address immediate needs and stabilized situations when no other resources were accessible.





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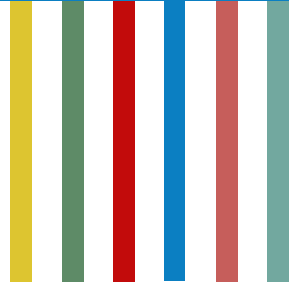
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