

Hello-----

How many people here use email?

How many people here email friends or associates?

How many people sign those emails love???

Sonia Weitz does.

Let me read you an email from Sonia that was the Genesis for today's event:

Dear Cliff,

I am wondering if you are available for a meeting with me and Harriet next Friday morning, January 29 at The Holocaust Center.

You once asked what you could do for us and we would like to discuss this with you.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest possible convenience.

Love,

Sonia

This small gesture had a very profound impact on me, maybe it is because I send and receive about 200 emails a day and I can assure you that none of them ever end with love, or maybe it is because I am a bit squeamish telling people I love them, or maybe it is because Sonia Weitz bore witness to the darkest evil ever perpetrated by mankind, such unspeakable atrocities so incomprehensible by most of us that you can only imagine that G-D forbid had we experienced even a fraction of this, we would surely shut down emotionally, detaching ourselves forever thinking how cruel life can be and questioning humanity, yet she signs her email ...love.

Needless to say, when Sonia asked to see me, of course I said yes. She wanted to ask for my assistance with supporting the legacy partners program at the Holocaust Center Boston North. Instead of writing a check, I suggested that she allow us to honor her and raise funds that way. This would not just raise money, but let everyone show her how much we admire, respect, and love her. She was reluctant because she is so modest, but Neil, myself, Debbie and Harriet did some arm twisting and she reluctantly agreed. Solely I believe because it raised funds for the holocaust museum and the Temple, not because she actually wanted any recognition.

About 2 weeks after she agreed to allow us to honor her, she was diagnosed with brain cancer. For a moment, we all thought maybe we shouldn't go forward, then it became pretty clear that having agreed to do this event a few weeks before she was diagnosed, was B'shert, destiny, meant to be. We also found inspiration and courage to move forward thinking of Sonia and how strong she has been throughout her life. We knew we needed an opportunity to show Sonia how much we care for her and how much she has meant to all of us. We wanted to show her how many lives she has touched with her books, lectures, warmth, and by the example of how she has lived

In her book, I promised I would tell, Sonia tells a story of how she returned to Poland in 1986, some 40 years after the Holocaust. In the 1930's, there were 3.3 million Jews in Poland, my grandfather incidentally was one of them. When she returned, there were 5,000 left. She goes on to say that she actually returned to the house that she grew up in Krakow ( let me read from her book)

Sonia, just as your father planted a tree for you and your sister some 70 years ago, and just as your sister gave you that tree as yours, we at Temple Ner Tamid also want to give you something. Something that will stand the test of time, just like you have. Sonia, on behalf of Temple Ner Tamid, we present to you a diamond the Ponn Family Pathway . It reads, Sonia Weitz, women of courage. We hope that this gift will be part of your amazing legacy, and that it will inspire Temple members and those in the community for generations to come.

Years from now people will walk up to the Temple and see the diamond, they will ask who is Sonia Weitz, and why was she a women of courage...and what a story it will be!

Please join me in a toast to Sonia, the Holocaust Center Boston North, and Temple Ner Tamid.  
May G-D bless us all. L'chayim