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In a world of utter darkness
A world of blurry sight
Suddenly, an inspiration
I see a spark, a hopeful ray of light
No longer do I have to search to fill
The void within my soul
I can fly, I'm soaring high
At **Chazkeinu** now I finally feel whole!

EXCERPT FROM THEME SONG, CHAZKEINU SHABBATON.
LYRICS BY A CHAZKEINU MEMBER



A REVOLUTIONARY PROJECT UNITING JEWISH WOMEN WORLDWIDE

A **PEER-LED ORGANIZATION** STRENGTHENING
JEWISH WOMEN WITH MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

500

AVERAGE CALL-INS WEEKLY

600+

PARTICIPANTS IN PARTNER PROGRAM

1,000+

SUBSCRIBERS TO EMAIL LIST

OUR STORY

the stigma
STOPS
here

It all began when a group of women with a shared vision joined forces to make their dream a reality - a community of mental health support for Jewish women.

Together they founded Chazkeinu, a network of women who share their stories, hope, and faith while struggling with mental illness. Each of our founders contributed her own talents and passions as together they created resources to decrease the stigma surrounding mental illness in the Jewish world and help those affected to end their isolation.

Today Chazkeinu has hundreds of members from around the globe and continues to grow at a rapid pace. As we expand our programs, we keep our founding vision at the center of all we do: **We strengthen ourselves by strengthening each other.**

OUR PROGRAMS

> PHONE SUPPORT MEETINGS Women all across the globe reach for the phone and connect to 'their lifeline'. Our bi-weekly phone meeting has been enthusiastically received. A common reaction is, "This was the first time I felt accepted for who I am. I finally found people who truly understood me. It was so liberating for me to be able to share and not have to feel ashamed of what I have been through."

The peer led meeting begins with an introductory share by a member, professional, or spiritual leader. This jumpstarts a discussion that is open to all participants. Those who prefer anonymity can email or text their input and have it read aloud by a moderator. The sharing generates a positive energy and the feedback has been tremendous.

> CHAT CLUB The chat club provides a chance for women to "schmooze" on the conference line a half-hour before each meeting. The informal conversation offers an opportunity for connection and personal support as the bonds that have been created are reinforced in a natural and comfortable setting.

> ZOOM EVENTS We host bi-weekly zoom meetings. "Our Zoom Chill Room" includes presentations from mental health professionals, personal stories, music, art, dance, drama, interactive games, and more. This relaxed atmosphere offers camaraderie and inspiration. The meetings are well attended and our members count the hours until the next event.

> PARTNER PROGRAM Our Partner Program Coordinators pair up Chazkeinu members who share a similar challenge. This project offers an opportunity to form a personal connection on a one-on-one basis with someone who understands and relates to the individual's struggle. Participants connect via phone, email and text.

> INSPIRATIONAL EMAILS Chazkeinu regularly sends out email blasts containing information about Chazkeinu's constantly expanding programs. We include original songs and poems from our members, educational articles, resources, interactive columns, book recommendations, videos, uplifting quotes, and more.

"I HEARD EDUCATED, SOPHISTICATED, NORMAL WOMEN SHARE THEIR STRUGGLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS... I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS DAMAGED GOODS ANYMORE. I THINK OF MYSELF AS A REGULAR PERSON WITH A TOUGH CHALLENGE."

"AFTER THE FIRST MEETING I JOINED, I WAS ON A HIGH! IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE. I FELT SO CONNECTED AND VALIDATED."

"EVERY STORY THAT'S SHARED ON THE LINE RENEWS MY FAITH THAT I WILL, B'EZRAT HASHEM, BE IN A BETTER, STRONGER PLACE ONE DAY."

"I WAIT ALL DAY FOR THE PHONE MEETING. IT HAS MADE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE."

(see more programs →)



"I SMILE EVERY TIME I GET AN EMAIL FROM CHAZKEINU."

"I HAVE BECOME MORE CONFIDENT, STRONGER, HAPPIER, BECAUSE OF CHAZKEINU."

"THE PARTNER PROGRAM TAKES A BIG LOAD OFF THE SHOULDERS OF THOSE SUFFERING."

"THE COPING TIPS I HAVE PICKED UP OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS ARE INVALUABLE."

"CHAZKEINU IS THE ANSWER TO MY TEFILOS OF 10 YEARS."

"BEFORE CHAZKEINU, I WAS ALONE, LOST IN THE VAST SEA OF MENTAL ILLNESS."

"I WOULD DESCRIBE CHAZKEINU AS A HEARTBEAT; IT IS ESSENTIAL AND PART OF WHAT KEEPS ME ALIVE."

> RISE NEWSLETTER The much anticipated RISE (Reaching out with Inspiration, Support and Encouragement) Newsletter is sent to all members a few times a year. The newsletter features submissions from our members including artwork, poetry, songs and letters. This provides yet another venue for shared experiences, encouragement and coping tips. There is also an Ask-the-Therapist section where readers pose mental health questions to professionals.

> ONLINE FORUM Chazkeinu has an exclusive, anonymous online community, "Chazkeinu Connections" where lively written discussions regarding challenges, support, and inspiration related to mental health take place. The forum is facilitated by a Rabbinic Advisor along with peer moderators.

> OUTREACH MEMBER LIST Our outreach list was formed to create a sense of community outside of the phone meeting. Those who wish to send/receive support calls or emails receive a monthly updated contact list of fellow members who would like to connect.

> DAVENING (PRAYER) GROUP Chazkeinu members connect in a spiritual way by davening for each other. Members submit their Hebrew name or that of a loved one. A bi-weekly email is sent out with a list of names, and members have one another in mind in their prayers.

> SHABBATON The Shabbaton provides an opportunity for participants to leave their pain and loneliness behind for a weekend. Inspiration and insight from professionals and peers combine with stimulating activities in a fun, relaxing atmosphere. Women from all walks of life, ages, and religious backgrounds come together with a shared bond. Differences fall by the wayside as each woman feels validated and understood.

> CHAZKEINU GATHERINGS Chazkeinu members living in the same community gather together for evenings of togetherness and light entertainment. This gives members a chance to renew connections and forge new ones.

> EMPOWERED A NON-EMERGENCY SUPPORT HOTLINE A team of licensed clinicians are available bi-weekly by phone to the entire Jewish community during specified hours for non-emergency questions. They speak one on one to callers, providing education and guidance.

> CARE PACKAGES When someone is going through an especially hard time, nothing says "I care about you" like a personalized care package. Whether it's inspirational reading- material, cleaning help or a self-care gift card, we want our members who are suffering to know we care.

> HOSPITAL VISITS In the event that one of our members needs to be hospitalized, we will set up a visit from a fellow member. Hospitalization can be an isolating experience and we want to be there, providing peer support. There's nothing like a visit from someone who's been there.

> RENEWAL RETREATS A two day retreat, a real 'getaway'. A chance to enjoy meaningful workshops, self care activities, delicious food, and more. A rejuvenating experience in an atmosphere of warmth, connection, and acceptance.

A LOOK AHEAD

We have accomplished so much until now. Chazkeinu is unique in establishing a safe community where participants feel empowered to share and own their stories. This revolutionary movement replaces isolation and self-stigma with a sense of belonging. The individual can then rise above her challenges and thrive. We fill a void in the greater Jewish community and with your help, we can expand to include these and other programs.

> CHAZKEINU CHILL HOUSES We want to continue our mission of empowering and strengthening Jewish women world-wide. Our goal is to create a safe place in different cities for our 'Chazkeinu Sisters' to feel less alone, host live support groups, offer recreational activities, workshops, events, offices, and more. A true "home away from home."

> LIVE SUPPORT MEETINGS This project will connect women with similar struggles. Communities around the globe will have their own live support meetings facilitated by therapists or trained peer counselors.

> COMMUNITY AWARENESS EVENTS Large scale events geared to the greater Jewish community will educate the public about mental health. This is in line with our vision to end the stigma surrounding mental illness.



"IF NOT FOR CHAZKEINU I WOULD STILL BE WALKING AROUND WITH THIS HORRIBLE COMPLEX ABOUT THIS THING CALLED BIPOLAR. NOW, I CARRY IT AS A BANNER."

"THE SHABBATON WAS SO INSPIRING AND HEALING ...WITH WOMEN WHO ARE SO ACCEPTING OF OTHERS AND OF THEMSELVES BECAUSE WE'VE HAD TO DEAL WITH SO MUCH."

"IF ONLY WE COULD BRING THIS TO THE WHOLE JEWISH WORLD... TO BE THIS KIND AND LOVING AND ACCEPTING NO MATTER WHAT SOMEONE HAS BEEN THROUGH OR IS FEELING..."

"CHAZKEINU HAS BECOME MY GO-TO PLACE TO CONNECT AND FEEL LIKE A REAL HUMAN BEING."

IN OUR WORDS

A SAMPLING OF SUBMISSIONS TO OUR NEWSLETTER BY CHAZKEINU MEMBERS

A POEM BY: ESTI

When hard times suddenly come your way
When your world does crash and all does sway
Please remember that alone you are not
Others around you share this challenging lot
It doesn't matter what the name may be
Bipolar, Postpartum, or OCD
Many others know just how you feel
The agony and searing pain so real
At **Chazkeinu** you'll find a place to be free
To be YOU, exactly how G-d meant you to be
No condemnations or judgments found here
Just empathy, warmth, and strengthening care
And because of all your active participation
We're paving the way for the next generation
So a heartfelt thanks to all for joining us here
For making the effort and showing you care

"There is absolute admiration
and no words for appreciation
Only G-d can repay for such
a special, outstanding organization."

"To the best organization in this world, thank you for
all you do to end this loneliness."

A SONG BY: ROCHEL

Deep depression,
Oohh in such a state
One can't imagine unless it's their fate
Searching for support,
No one in sight
Feeling too abandoned,
I pray with all my might
A postcard I get from Heaven
You're not alone in this depression
Women who possess such strength
Acceptance of the test
Stares me in the face.

Chorus:

Chazkeinu we strengthen ourselves
By strengthening each other **Chazkeinu** the stigma ends here
We are here for one another arm in arm when the sun has set
Darkness all around, I see a faint glow
The light bursts through yes, **Chazkeinu** that's you
I lose the battle at times but we will win this war together
Lifting our eyes in prayer we ask you Hashem to grant us
A Refuas Hanefesh, Healer of the soul
L'cholei Amo Yisrael to all the Nation of Israel
I lose the battle at times but I will win this war together
With **Chazkeinu** at my side.