

Moments *of the* HEART

Endorsements for
Moments of the HEART

“The book is very powerful and beautiful. It is passionate, spiritual, and well-reasoned—three things that don’t always go together. I love the analysis of the word *matzpun* and its variety of related meanings. I was profoundly moved by the journey Horenstein took.”

–**Rabbi Joseph Telushkin**, author of *A Code of Jewish Ethics*

“I highly recommend this book for anyone seeking guidance and direction for improving one’s life by drawing on the wisdom found in the texts of Judaism. This is a thoughtful and insightful work of an Israeli-American woman which speaks directly from the heart.”

–**Rabbi Joshua Stampfer**, Rabbi Emeritus
of Congregation Neveh Shalom

“Veteran educator Dorice Horenstein brings her passion for learning and healing to each page of *Moments of the Heart*. Everyone will find something new in the connections she creates between Hebrew language, Jewish concepts, and Jewish spirituality.”

–**Mel Berwin**, Director of Congregational
Learning of Congregation Neveh Shalom

“As Dorice beautifully explains in the beginning of this book, the heart is at the core of everything we do. Yet, today’s world moves fast. We react rather than respond. We forget to take a moment and check in with ourselves. *Moments of the Heart* brings us back to center, to what is important in life. The discussions, lessons, and practices shared in this book reconnect us to the core of ourselves and of our community. This book returns us to our heart and is especially relevant to those in leadership who are working, sometimes at great odds, to build a more compassionate and healthier world.”

–**Lisa Berkley**, Ph.D., Councilwoman in Marina, CA

“Dorice has written a book with heart that combines her own modern take on life with that of ancient Jewish wisdom. If you are at a turning point in your life, this precious book most likely will speak to you.”

–**Cherie Koller Fox**, Jewish Chaplaincy Council of
Massachusetts and the Rabbi Emerita at
Congregation Eitz Chayim in Cambridge, MA

Moments *of* *the* HEART

Four Relationships Everyone Should Have
to Live WHOLEheartedly

Dorice Horenstein



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Moments *of the* HEART

Four Relationships Everyone Should Have to Live WHOLEheartedly

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*These moments are what make life worth living.
To my loving family from near and far,
with blessings for health,
both of body and spirit.*

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Foreword

When Dorice Horenstein first showed me a copy of her book, I had no idea what to expect. I was pleased to discover that *Moments of the Heart* was a guide book, not to Israel or any other country for that matter, but a guide book to better living, based on Jewish values and insights.

This book draws upon an extensive knowledge of the Bible and an intimate acquaintance with the Hebrew language. What particularly attracts me is that *Moments of the Heart* deals with the universal human problems we all face in the course of life. Every person encounters problems, resulting in the need to make decisions that can affect the future.

So what do we do? We seek guidance and direction to make the best possible decision. Whether mending personal relationships, confronting medical crises, or dealing with legal complications, we consult with experts in various fields, read books and articles, or

explore every source of information that we can find to ensure the best decision.

Moments of the Heart made me think of Rabbi Kushner's book *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, which has such a powerful impact upon all people who search for guidance in the great problems they face.

Ms. Horenstein opens up a wide door to the world of Jewish thought and experiences accumulated over many hundreds of years of life under all kinds of situations. She does this in a warm and understanding manner, sensitive to our needs and our desires. She encourages our search for peace and truth. She weaves together the courage of Israel, the spirit of America, and, most important of all, the eternal soul of Judaism in our quest for the good life.

–**Rabbi Joshua Stampfer**, Rabbi Emeritus of
Congregation Neveh Shalom, Portland, OR



Author's Note

My Personal Lev Moment

In October 2014, my youngest sister was diagnosed with breast cancer. She was thirty-eight years old and living in Israel. Since I was living in the United States, I could not get up and drive to visit her. I could not hug her or share time together just sitting next to each other, so I had no other choice but to come up with something I could do 10,000 miles away to not only keep in touch, but also to remain positive along the way.

It was a Friday night when I received the news. I recall that day very clearly. My synagogue holds Friday night *Kabbalat Shabbat* (greeting the Sabbath) services and a lovely traditional dinner. Usually, I would look forward to going, but not that particular weekend. I had sadness in my heart and heaviness on my chest; I needed to stay by

myself. I urged my husband to go with our son, and I was left in our quiet home all alone.

For the three hours they were gone, I did not leave my place on the sofa. I did not turn on the TV; I did not look at the news or watch any of my favorite shows. I did not read either. I just stared at the kitchen cabinets in front of me, focused on nothing and lost in my thoughts.

It is amazing what can happen when you empty your mind. New ideas enter. The seed for this book was born.

When my family returned and my husband walked through the door, he saw a resolution in my face. He would tell you that he saw a glimmer of excitement. I say that there was hope! I had made plans to launch a Facebook page called *Lev Moments*, where I would share once each week an uplifting message for the coming week. I combined the Hebrew word *lev*, which means “heart,” with the English word *moments*. I later used these words to create the title of this book *Moments of the Heart*. I designed a logo with my good friend Lisa Berkley, and we were ready to go! The day was chosen. Saturday night was my first night. As we bid farewell to *Shabbat*, as many traditional Jews do on Saturday night when three stars are seen in the sky, my youngest son recorded as I spoke to the world words intended most for my sister. Then, we uploaded the video—that simple.

I began to feel better. I began to feel connected to my sister who was so far away. The two of us conversed about the *Lev Moments*, and I even surprised her four months later on her birthday by arriving in Israel and accompanying her to her weekly chemotherapy appointment.

I created these weekly videos for an entire year. During that year, I saw my sister go through hardships no one should ever have to experience. I saw her lose her hair and gain weight from the chemotherapy. But I also saw unexpected positive changes. She regained her inner strength and grew into her new self. I saw her

husband and her children striving to be strong for her. I saw my mother and sisters pleading to God with questions unanswered. Why her? And all the while, I was recording and taping positive messages and putting them out to the universe. I initially started this project to benefit my sister, but I received much more in return.

These moments of the heart benefited me, and they benefited the people around me—those I worked with and those I lived with, those I liked and those I liked less, those I knew and those I didn't. Creating the weekly *Lev Moments* made me a better person. I used Hebrew, the magnificent God-made language, to illustrate different points and new ways to look at commonly used words. I learned a great deal as I created this deep library of material and wisdom—wisdom from our Jewish ancestors, making our life relevant and meaningful today more than ever.

At the end of a year, in the winter of 2015, I had recorded over fifty episodes, and I thought “What now?”

Now it is time for this book to be born. In the last year, I have composed, arranged, rewritten, and polished what has become the treasure you now hold in your hands. I have separated the book into four chambers, each one giving us a glimpse of different aspects of our relationships.

So sit back and take the first page into your hand. Don't rush through it. Do one entry a week, or however you feel led. Explore “Your Personal Lev Moments” with your children, with your partner, with your parents, with your colleagues, or with your boss. Create a book club for the year; offer the guidance within this book to a class of B'nai Mitzvah students. The possibilities are endless.

Each one of us brings to this life wisdom that is waiting to be discovered within ourselves. Discover yours and share your wisdom with others. Write in the spaces within this book wherever you see fit and let your answers be your guiding principles.

“לב טהור ברא—לי אלוהים ורוח נכון חדש בקרבי.”—“Create for me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalms 51:12). This verse highlights how, at times, we need guidance, help, and inspiration from a higher source. I know I needed that so I could not only create the videos in 2014 but bring this book to fruition now.

I have learned through the process of writing this book that what we hold inside our hearts—our thoughts, our feelings, our attitude—shapes us. If we become a manifestation of our hearts, let’s take heed. By writing this book, I was given the gift of a fuller and more grateful heart. The process was not easy. At times, I had to dig deep and hold on to a lifeline to keep my head in line with my heart and my mind focused on being the best I can be. May it be for you, too, a reminder of who you want to be always. May this book open your mind to the right thoughts to put in your heart and the right actions to be manifested by your being.

My hope is that this book will help you become the best version of yourself possible.



“If you don’t know what you’re living for, you haven’t yet lived.”¹

—Rabbi Noah Weinberg



A NOTE FROM MY SISTER

Part 1

A Facebook post from when she began her two-years-long battle with cancer.

“So... Today I began the journey of my life. Some of you know, and for those who don't... I have breast cancer. Yes... This disease... it does not know who it chose to mess with (and it's clear to you, my reader, that it will regret it). Today was my first chemotherapy session out of 16... The war on my life has begun.

Last night I initiated my bolding ritual... For those who don't know this ritual, it is the shaving of my head... It was very emotional. My brother and all my sisters... yes, all of them (through Skype my sister Dorice from America was able to join) were with me. And my two older nephews and a couple of dear friends were there as well. That was very empowering and demonstrated to me the amount of support

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I have. So thank you all: to my extended family who is always interested and always willing to help, to my community, and neighbors. Here we go! To victory! To life! The fight for my life is beginning!



Bruria's message on Facebook to mark the shaving of her head and the beginning of treatment.



Gratitude

This book is the work of many. Without each and every one of these people, this book would not be in your hands today. I would like to mention all of you by your name and contribution.

First, I thank my youngest son, Yaniv, who recorded my original *Lev Moments* videos diligently for an entire year at the age of eleven in 2014. Not every child would assist his mother every Saturday night, but he did. He recorded the videos using a cell phone and then uploaded them to Facebook. I am so grateful. My heart and endless love go to you, Son.

To my daughter Hadas, who patiently read and provided wisdom and brilliant suggestions for every single word, concept, and theme—you provided guidance and priceless wisdom that I will forever treasure in my heart. I love you.

To my husband, Bob, and my son Matan for reading the manuscript more than once and providing insightful observations and

grammatical changes as well as patiently looking up sources—I am forever thankful. I love you both.

My heartfelt and sincere gratitude and thanks are also due to my editor, Jennifer McGrath, for her patience in leading me through the process of how to put together a book worth reading, for her keen eye and attention to every single detail, word choice, and extra space throughout this book. You have taught me much. I am blessed our paths crossed, and I cannot thank you enough.

To my dear friend Lisa Berkley, thank you for believing in me when I was unable to envision what could be. Thank you for helping me design my Facebook page which one day became this book.

To my brother-in-law Michael Horenstein, of EZWriter Documentation Services, whose detailed proofreading of the completed manuscript was nothing shy of genius. Thank you so very much!

To Rabbi Stampfer, I extend to you a special heart-felt thank you for our bi-weekly meetings, for advising me along the way, for providing resources so that this book could see the light of day, and for being my constant inspiration of what a rabbi is. I am humbled to call you my rabbi.

To Cantor Ida Rae Cahana, Mel Berwin, Allison Fowler, Dale Foster, Sharon Erez, Shirona Lurie, Barbara Slader, and Rabbi Joseph Telushkin for taking time out of your precious and busy schedule to read part or all of my work and encouraging me to keep on going—you all provided insightful suggestions that helped make this book as strong as it is. I am deeply grateful.

To Yael Dassa for spending valuable hours combing through all the Hebrew and the transliteration to make sure all were correctly written and doing so with proficiency and willingness—I thank you and I cherish your kindness!

To Keith Berne who sat by me to help find citation and bibliography information for different *midrashim*—thank you for being a dedicated friend.

To Rabbi Motti Wilhelm, Chabad Lubavitch of Oregon, who verified citations for different Talmudic sources—thank you so much for your dedication and time!

And my daily gratitude and thanks to God who works this universe with wonder.

”ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם

שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.”

*“Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu, melech haolam,
she’hecheyanu, v’ki-y’manu, v’higi-anu lazman ha-zeh.”*

“Blessed are You, *HaShem* our God, King of the
universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us,
and brought us to this season”

(The Complete Artscroll Siddur, pp. 230–231).



Knock! Knock!

Who is it? Hello, this is Dorice. Dorice Horenstein. Thank you for inviting me in. I know I am not your friend yet, but I want you to know me. This will make your reading of this book so much more enjoyable and meaningful. Let's prepare a cup of tea, and let me share who I am and why I am writing this book, my first book.

I came to America from Israel at the age of twenty-one. I grew up in a wonderful family, with four other siblings and two terrific parents. We were not financially wealthy. I remember my mom worked three jobs at times just to keep the family afloat while my dad built homes as a contractor. I remember wearing hand-me-down clothes (which, by the way, I love doing with my girlfriends nowadays). I shared one room with my three sisters growing up, and I fondly recall talking late into the night, sharing secrets and crushes on boys as well as heart-wrenching love stories that went as quickly as they came. This sisterly

intimacy affected how bonded we became, and there is not a week that goes by now without a phone call to my siblings or my parents.

I have always loved and felt proud of my homeland. At the age of eighteen, I enrolled in the army service. I was serving in the Israeli army when I met my husband. It was not love at first sight, but at second sight, as we often joke. Looking back at that time period, I can wholeheartedly say that my role in the army solidified who the young girl from a small town in central Israel would become. Through my service, I began to understand the complex fabric of the different personalities around me. I learned what makes a leader and what causes a leader to stay a leader. I experienced the great feelings of teamwork and togetherness, and I also saw the results and consequences of being alone and rejected from the group. Today I am the product of the experiences of that young soldier from decades ago.

Shortly after I arrived in America, with only a suitcase and \$600 to my name (and with no coat in the middle of December in Portland, Oregon), it was obvious to me that I would need to do something related to my background. I earned my bachelor's degree in English literature because I love languages (as you will see shortly) and a certification to teach English as a second language. Despite this, I actually began my professional career by teaching Hebrew and all aspects of Judaism to both children and adults.

One of the accomplishments I am most proud of is that I have three wonderful children and a supportive spouse. My husband and I raised our children (who are now more adults than children) to become independent, healthy, and contributing members of the communities in which they all live.

For the last sixteen years, I worked as an education director at a synagogue. This experience provided me with fertile ground to explore issues of ethics and morality with blossoming teenagers prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvahs as well as with their parents and other adults. I

have taught classes and led group discussions about various works by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, Rabbi Harold Kushner, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, and others. I was fortunate to help families with their existential life questions, daily struggles, and successes! I took situations that happened to me, my children, students, parents, and other congregants and viewed them through the lens of Judaism—what would our rabbis say? Rabbi Akiva, Maimonides, Rashi, Nachmanides, Rabbi Gamaliel, as well as Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis, Nechama Leibowitz, Rabbi Netter, Rabbi Joshua Stampfer and so many others were the teachers in my classes and at the *Shabbat* table with my children and my husband, a table we often shared with dear family and friends.

Living in America, I also have been privileged to learn from forward thinkers such as Oprah Winfrey, Gabrielle Bernstein, Brené Brown, and so many other spiritual teachers and mentors. I treasure the feeling that I stand on shoulders of giants—Jews, as well non-Jews. All of these individuals contributed to who Dorice Horenstein is.

And with that, I come to you with a new suitcase this time—this one full of advice from what I have learned by watching, doing, reading, and hearing. My suitcase full of experiences is now my gift to you. Let's open it!