

LEADERS IN THEIR FIELD

- Psychology

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What did you study?

I have my Masters in Clinical Psychology

What work do you do and why did you choose this path?

I work as a psychologist in private practice and knew from the age of 12 that this is what I wanted to do. I have always been intrigued by people – what motivates and shapes them as well as what can cause issues and problems. Getting to the root of it and helping the client grow and develop is hugely interesting and rewarding.

How has this been impacted by Coronavirus?

At the start of the Coronavirus, my practice was quiet as clients were adjusting to the 'new normal' and Zoom was an unknown. Thankfully since then, Zoom is our new best friend and my practice is once again busy. People are really struggling with all the changes and uncertainty so many of these issues as well as their own personal issues have surfaced.

How have you innovated to overcome life challenges?

When the Medical Aids changed their funding structure so that psychologists no longer had their own separate allowance but were put together with other professions, my practice took a huge knock as funds were now limited. I love my work and was desperate to find another way of being in the field. At that time, I had gone through struggles parenting two of my ADHD children and had been learning different ways of parenting them and relating to them which were paying off. As a result, I had the idea to develop and write a parenting course for parents of ADHD/ADD children. I ran my first course seven years ago and have been running it ever since. I have also spoken on Parenting the ADHD Child at various organizations, schools etc.

What challenges have you faced as a woman?

Sadly, in January of this year, I was widowed. I think women often face multiple challenges due to their many roles and responsibilities - being the wife, parent, home maker and often having a job/career as well. Being widowed added on extra responsibilities of having to work more, learn a lot about the intricacies of maintaining a home vs the general daily stuff, learning so much about estates, policies etc and most importantly of all keeping it together for my children to manage emotionally as well as maintaining a routine for them so that certain things carried on as usual. Thank goodness for so much love, support and input that I also received from family and friends. I think above all else I have unquestioning faith and belief in Hashem that guides me in my daily life

What King David experiences or Jewish values motivate you?

The Jewish values of Chesed (kindness), doing Mitzvot and Tsedakkah are beautiful and give a magnificent framework by which to live. Gratitude is something that features strongly as we are meant to start each prayer request with a thank you and this helps me to always focus on what I do have and all the amazing blessings in my life.

What drives you to make an impact?

My children and my work are huge drivers for me. Seeing the wonderful feedback that I receive from my ADHD work and the difference it is making to many parents and children is incredible. I know how I felt when lost and alone in my parenting struggles and knowing that I am hopefully making an impact on others so that they don't go through it and have more skills and understanding is an enormous driver for me. Showing my children that we can make an impact in others' lives as well as how rewarding work can be is an unconscious driver.

What do you do to relax?

Weird as this may sound, I love learning in my field, so I love listening to different talks on areas of psychology, doing courses etc. and this is what I do to relax! My first love is reading but Netflix tends to be hijacking it a bit these days!

Tell us about your family.

I have 3 children - 2 sons and a daughter. My eldest son is 20 and was at UCT last year but due to our loss he has come home and is now doing a law internship. My other son is 18 and in Matric which is not easy with Corona and my daughter is 13 years old, in Grade 7. I am so proud of them and how they have handled the adversities of this year. The most important family members are our 4 dogs, especially my pug who is the love of my life!

My words to live by:

This too shall pass