

## Think Again - Coping with death

This Sunday 27 November it will be my sad duty and task to officiate at the consecration of Benny Glattstein. For those who did not know Benny; Benny was the son of Dr. Nathan and Hanna Glattstein; a member of our Synagogue having had his Bar Mitzvah with us and an ex Moriah boy, living in the states, living his dream of becoming a pilot. Last year on the 25th November Benny was killed flying a solo flight back to Australia. He was an individual that lived for excitement and he spent his 28 years visiting every continent rarely with his feet touching the ground. He loved mountain climbing and sea diving but his greatest passion was flying. He was one of those magnificent men in their flying machines and competed in aeroplane acrobat competitions. On his grave is etched the epitaph "To most people the sky is the limit for those who love aviation the sky is home."

Benny was a passionate lovable character; he was admired and respected both as an instructor and as an individual at the Embry Riddle University of flying. After his death, the autumn flying competition in Florida was named the Benny Glattstein Competition. And will be so named for perpetuity. Benny's family was able to spend time at this inaugural competition, and they were able to accept an award and view a plaque and lecture room named in his memory. I was moved to learn that Benny went to shule on the High Holidays and Pesach whilst on Campus in Florida.

It is at moments like these that it is most difficult to find the appropriate words to convey comfort and empathy. It is in fact impossible. I will say words like "celebrating his life rather than his death and that he was killed doing the things that he loved ; that he was treasured and cherished by all and had amazing friendships and experiences, experiences that most of us wont get to in a life time". Most of all however I will try to convey that he is alive in our collective consciousness that his spirit radiates with in all of us, and that he will add to our desire to seek adventure and rekindle the spontaneity of exciting journeys. We will not be forget him. My personal memory will always be as the kid with the blond curly hair in shule and who would always seem to glide along the turf of the touch football field.

In 1997 I had to officiate at the funeral of a dear friend Sheryl Gutman ; Sheryl passed away at the young age of 41 from breast cancer ; it was terribly confronting; she was a most wonderful human being. in our Synagogue she lives on with an epitaph on a glass window **אל יתן החיים** the living shall take to heart - every time I walk under the glass entrance of the synagogue I am imbued with her spirit of belief; to try harder, not to despair to make a difference and to live life to the best of my ability.

Benny's life made, and makes a difference to the many people who he touched.  
**ברוך זכרו תהא - לבו אל יתן והחי** May his memory be blessed

As always see you in shule  
Good Shabbos  
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