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It's Not Kosher to Do Nothing Don't Ignore That "Funny" Feeling When One of Your Friends Acts Strangely

By Amy Krakovitz

She's a good friend, a dear friend. But sometimes she acts a little odd. Sometimes she just can't get out to meet you. Sometimes she doesn't have any money to spend. Sometimes she wears too much makeup or her sunglasses all the time.

Maybe she's a little reticent to talk about her life at home. Maybe she's a little overprotective of her kids.

You get a "funny" feeling about what's going on at her house. But ... she's Jewish! Her husband is Jewish! How in the world could there be anything wrong?

What you may not know is that domestic violence strikes Jewish homes in exactly the same proportions as any other community, approximately 20%. The difference in the statistics is that Jewish women take two to three times longer to change their situations.

So the fact is your friend may not do anything to help herself. But you can. How? You can learn

how on Sunday, November 1, at 7 PM in Lerner Center with Rabbi David Rose, who is the Founder and Director of JDiscover and Chairman of the Jewish Women International Clergy Task Force on Domestic Abuse.

"Victims are more likely to receive help from their network of intimate friends and family than any other source," says Rabbi Rose, quoting a result from a survey of the 2004 Task Force of Abuse in the Jewish community in Chicago.

"People need to be sensitive to the signs – not just one thing on its own, but things adding up. Does she need to check in all the time? Does she have access to her own money?" Rabbi Rose hopes that the program on November 1 will help everyone be more sensitive to their friends and families.

"Jews are not immune to this problem," says Caroline Biber, a counselor at Jewish Family Services who specializes in domestic abuse issues. "This

awareness program will help people become allies who will know how to react and support possible victims ... But it's important to realize that this is just as prevalent in the Jewish community as any place else and we have to confront it."

"The greatest problems the community faces are those we allow to be buried under the surface," says Rabbi Murray Ezring of Temple Israel. "Issues that threaten people's lives are the ones that we must bring to light because once we do, we can do what the Torah commands and protect each and every member of our community."

It's a Man's Problem, Too

This isn't just a woman's problem, according to Rabbi Rose. "Eighty-five percent of the aggressors in domestic abuse situations are men," he says. "So it's up to non-abusive men to stand up and be counted."

Clergy Training

The day following the program

for the community, Rabbi Rose will be conducting a seminar for clergy.

"It is very important and very Jewish that our houses of worship be safe and comforting environments for abused women. To accomplish that goal, every person working in the synagogue must be aware of the potential of domestic abuse within families.

"The clergy has the most impact on women in abusive relationships because it is to them that most congregants turn for help," says Carol Sandler, who runs the Shalom Bayit Support Group for survivors of domestic abuse. "So their knowledge of how to recognize, how to respond, how to counsel, and where to refer abused women is paramount.

"The upcoming clergy training with Rabbi Rose will prepare our compassionate Jewish professionals to offer not only a clearer understanding of domestic abuse, but also the hope of a better outcome to survivors."



Rabbi David Rose

The program, **It's Not Kosher to Do Nothing**, will take place in Lerner Hall on Sunday, November 1 at 7 PM. Everyone in the community is encouraged to attend, particularly men, because no community or group of people is immune from this problem.

It's Not Kosher to Do Nothing has been funded by the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and Temple Beth El. Jewish Family Services and Shalom-Bayit NC are co-hosting the event.

The Shalom Bayit Support Group for survivors of domestic abuse meets weekly at a central, undisclosed location. For more information call the facilitators, Carol at 704-609-3120, or Sally at 908-330-5623. ☆

October 24 Evening to Honor Sam Bernstein Features UNC A Cappella Group Sababa

The Levine-Sklut Judaic Library and Resource Center invites you to an evening to honor Sam Bernstein, founding chair of the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library and visionary leader of the Charlotte Jewish community, on Saturday, October 24, from 7:30-9:30 PM in Gorelick Hall in the

Levine JCC. The popular UNC Jewish a cappella group Sababa will perform and a special dessert reception will follow.

Sam, who is Vice-President and General Merchandise Manager for Family Dollar, is well known for the many leadership roles he has held in numerous organizations in

Charlotte's Jewish community. His accomplishments include Past President of Temple Israel, Past Chair of the Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies, Past Chair of the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library, and board member of the Hebrew Cemetery Association. He is currently on the boards of Temple Israel, the LSJL, and is Vice-President of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. Sam was instrumental in the creation of the LSJL as plans were being formulated for the expansion of Shalom Park. His vision led to the creation of the current library in 2005, with its spacious facility and extended services for the entire community.



Sam Bernstein



Sababa

Sababa was founded in 2006 by a group of UNC students interested in sharing Jewish music with the community. "Sababa" is an Arab word meaning "cool" that has made its way into Hebrew slang. The group's repertoire ranges from religious music to secular Jewish music to just good ol' a cappella.

The continued success of the Library is one of Sam's passions. Please show your support for both Sam and the Library by becoming a donor for the event at one of the following levels:

Nobel Laureate — \$500 and up
Pulitzer Prize — \$250 to \$499
Publisher — \$100 to \$249
Editor — \$50 to \$99
Author — up to \$49

To donate and have your name included in the event program, please contact Talli Dippold at 704 944-6780 or tdippold@shalom-charlotte.org. ☆



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