

At One Ment (Rosh Hashanah - October 2008)

Jack Lynes, Trustee of RAPHAEL JEWISH COUNSELLING SERVICE

Why do I invite you to consider the relevance of Raphael Jewish Counselling Service to our High Holy Days? One might compare the feeling of comfort that may come about to our clients ('come about to' not 'given to') and to us when you and I join fellow Jews at the Kol Nidre or other services and home gatherings during the ten days of Awe. These thoughts might enable us, this year, to add an extra dimension to our experience. Counselling need not be a last resort, or only for someone else and absolutely not 'for me'. But why 'Raphael' and why 'Jewish' counselling? Raphael is reputed to be the Angel of Healing who defeated the 'King of Demons'. A major benefit when seeing a Jewish counsellor is in the shared awareness that will exist from the start of the association.

As Jews we are privileged, I suggest, to have a special relationship with the Divine. Our prayer books contain passages describing the attributes of the Holy One, and prayer after prayer is address to Him (although in some wordings, references to any gender have been substituted). From time to time we receive answers to our pleas and often words of command and advice. But the Deity usually listens and we, individually or together, speak. As with counsellor and client. We give thanks confessing our sins, individually and collectively. We have an opportunity to reflect, to consider where we are in our life. We make resolutions, put problems into perspective, release stress, ponder relationships, meditate, dream, come to terms with life, our life.

Do we, perhaps, come to pray before The 'Counsellor of Counsellors'? And if so, dare we admit to being 'the Client' at this Holy Time?

Raphael Jewish Counselling Service would wish to be the servant of that 'Counsellor of Counsellors' and invites you to avail yourself of its services or to perform the mitzvah of informing others about us. This could be the at-one-ment of a lifetime.