



Dear Editor,

I read the article "Breast Cancer: A Personal and Professional Crisis" by Marian Maram, in the Winter 1999 edition of *Reflections* with feelings of wonder and amazement. This is an article that is both inspiring and eye opening. It reveals a woman with tremendous self-awareness, who can describe a devastating experience without self pity, a skilled social worker who is able to write and describe her perspective in a way that has the potential to have a profound impact on the reader.

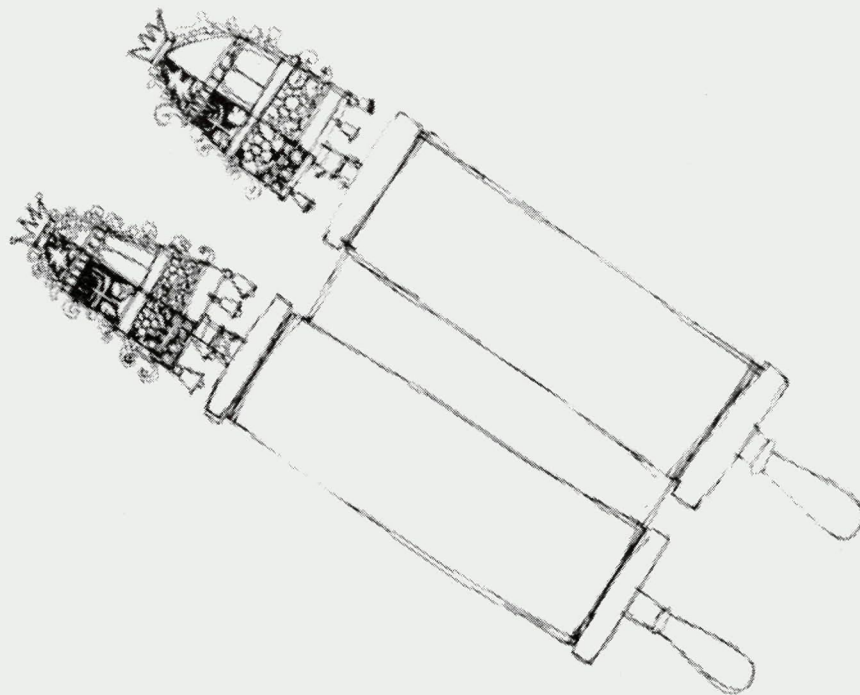
I read it the day before I left for San Francisco and the Council on Social Work Annual Program Meeting, but I wanted my physician husband to read it. I left it for him with a short note recommending that he read it. The next evening he called me in San Francisco to say that not only was he extremely impressed (and as a veteran of 30 years practicing, teaching and studying medicine he doesn't impress easily) but he had forwarded the article to the physician who heads the Memorial Breast Center in Long Beach, California. This pleased me enormously as this more than anything can have a real impact on how women are treated in the future. If we, as social workers, by sharing our own experiences, and when necessary, our pain, can alter how others are treated, then this journal has done more than perhaps even the editors ever expected.

I have found the journal to be a constant revelation, always interesting and providing insights into the remarkable ex-

periences of other social workers. According to Judaism there is a belief that states that the purpose of Jewish existence is to "perfect the world" or "the ethical bettering of the world". I believe that Sonia Ables together with her husband Paul, by creating and seeking writers for this journal, have shared in the process of *Tikun Olam*, the repairing of the world. I feel a profound sense of loss that Sonia will no longer edit *Reflections*. However, I am sure that whatever she does she will continue to leave her mark. To both of them, my best wishes and my thanks.

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The concept of *tikkun olam* or repairing the world through social action, is one of the traditional categories of *tzedakah* (righteousness and justice). The word "*tikkun*" first appears in the book of Ecclesiastes (1:5, 7:13, 12:9), where it means "setting straight" or "setting in order." The most notable early rabbinic source for the phrase *tikkun olam* is the aleinu prayer, where the phrase expresses the goal of repairing the world through the establishment of the kingdom of God. -ed.



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