

Thirty two, thirty three and thirty four.

Exercising. I run around the track at Gold's Gym thirty-four times. Not thirty-three. Not thirty-five, but exactly thirty-four. Why? Well on that specific track, there are eleven laps to the mile and so thirty-four laps comes to just 3.1 miles or about 5K.

And why do you care?

This note is about routines. From the neurological point of view, our brains are deluged with stimuli, from internal as well as external sources. We ignore almost all of it. We find a comfortable pattern and stick to it and in this way we gain control over our lives. But close your eyes for a second and you'll find that years have gone by. And we're all still running around that track ... thirty-four times.

It is difficult to get someone to change a routine, to re-think a decision, to reconsider a lifestyle.

In the musical play "A Catered Affair" a woman tells of riding the roller coaster at Coney Island. She's petrified and at the top she closes her eyes tightly shut. The song goes on to say, "You paid your money, took the ride, but missed the view."

This month consider opening your eyes. Enjoy the view! It goes by quickly.

If you open your eyes you'll see Shir Chadash moving into the future, jumping into the future, leaping into the future(?!), building a community, helping our neighbors and caring for each other, in fact, learning to care for each other by helping our neighbors, raising our kids, teaching our kids, learning with our kids, trying to make them a better world. We're on our way. Come along for the ride.

See you next Shabbat at 7:30?

Michael