

FINDING THE *Joy*

TEMMI HADAR

Keep Asking The Questions

“Do I have to get married?” my son asked me earlier this week. “No, my love, only if you want to. You only get married if you want to.” This morning, sitting on the couch sipping coffee, little children, magic tricks, and art surrounding me, I ask him curiously, “Why don’t you want to get married?”

He thought he needed to marry someone younger than him, which for reasons still unknown was disturbing for him.

I ask him if he knows what marriage is.

My boys’ eyes are wide. Now there are two little souls in the conversation.

I explain how marriage is the reunion of two halves of one soul.

They explode with questions.

Deep, thoughtful questions.

I don’t have all the answers.

“What if you go to America, but your other half is here in South Africa?”

“What if you die young? Then what happens to the other half?”

“How do you know if someone’s the other half of your soul? Who tells you?”

The boys bump chests together. “Look! It’s one heart together now.”

I sip my coffee and talk to them about the difference between



hearts and souls, how I don’t have all the answers, but we have to keep asking the questions.

We talk about Hashem. How He helps us to know. How Hashem directs the paths we take in our lives to where we need to be, to the people we need to meet.

It’s deep stuff. Especially for me. It’s 6 a.m., and the coffee hasn’t kicked in yet.

They seem unfazed by the conversation. It’s almost like they talk about their cosmic purpose every morning.

Eventually, they wander away after showing me 34 versions of a card trick. I feign shock every time.

Soon I hear fighting that I ignore.

I’m still processing the conversation we just had. Life, death, marriage, destiny. All the huge topics were covered in ten minutes, with boys in pajamas with chocolate smudges on their faces.

Kids are soulful beings. Talk to them about soulful stuff. About deep stuff. About G-d. About purpose. About values.

Kids get it.

Often more than adults.

Talk to them. Learn from them. Grow with them.



TEMMI HADAR,
*born and raised on
shlichus in Seattle, is
now living about a
million miles away*

in Johannesburg, South Africa. In “Finding the Joy,” she ponders the meaning of life while perpetually sleep-deprived and attempting to juggle the roles of mother, wife, shlucha, teacher, writer, and human being.