



Ora Leah Nitkin-Kaner

Ora's maternal grandparents taught her gentleness and fierce love, and her paternal grandparents offered lessons in strength and grace. Ora's parents, David and Etta, gave her the gifts of stubbornness, moral grounding and a love of learning. Her sister Yael taught her playfulness.

Ora learned Judaism at home, in Hebrew day school and at the University of Toronto, where as an undergraduate she studied Jewish folktales of demonic possession and as a graduate student she studied the intergenerational transmission of Holocaust trauma. Ora fell in love with New Orleans in 2007, and made it her home from 2008 to 2010 as she worked with exonerees and received educations in justice and power and beauty.

Ora began rabbinical school because she knew five years at RRC would help shape her into the leader she seeks to be in the world. Along the way, to her surprise and delight, she also became a Reconstructionist. While at RRC, Ora has been the grateful recipient of the Ziegelman Scholarship, John Bliss Scholarship, Wexner Graduate Fellowship, Or Hadash *D'var Torah* Award, Alice Stein Essay Prize and *Tikkun Olam* Award.

Ora's internships at RRC have helped her grow immeasurably. As a chaplain at Monroe Village, Ora learned to hold stories; as the sabbatical and student rabbi at Congregation Kehilat Shalom, she discovered what it means to love a community; as a chaplain at Bellevue Hospital, she learned how the pastoral encounter fosters healing in patient and chaplain; and as the Bert Linder Rabbinic Intern at West End Synagogue, she found her voice.

Ora is grateful to everyone who fostered her growth and opened her heart these past five years, particularly her family, dear friends, partners, therapist, spiritual directors and the RRC community.



Reb Nachman of Braslav taught:

כל העולם כולו גשר צר מאוד. והעיקר: לא לפחד כלל.

The whole entire world is a very narrow bridge. And the key: to have no fear at all.

As a grandchild of Holocaust survivors, I work to compassionately transcend the fear that has been my genetic inheritance. As a rabbi, I seek to help Jews and non-Jews overcome fear and shame to bloom into their fullest, most God-filled selves. And so although Reb Nachman's teaching is beautiful, I am choosing to reconstruct his words into a new, more expansive prayer:

כל העולם כולו עולם לעולם מלוא. והעיקר: לא לפחד כלל.

The whole abundant world is infinite and enough. And the key: to have no fear at all.

May we leave the confines of narrow spaces to hold a vision of ourselves—boundless—in a boundless world.

