THE RENFREW CENTER FOUNDATION

Renfrew is a women's mental health facility that specializes in the treatment of eating disorders. Renfrew recognizes the diverse biological, social, and cultural contexts that can contribute to the psychology of women. The process of treatment is collaborative rather than imposed, interactive rather than passive, and personal rather than distant or neutral. The Renfrew Center offers acute residential, day, evening, transitional living, and outpatient treatment programs. The Renfrew Center Foundation provides information about women's mental health to the public, sponsors a variety of educational workshops and a national conference, and supports research for publication. For information, call 1-800-RENFREW or visit our website at www.renfrew.org.

Kolot (Voices) — The Center for Jewish Women's & Gender Studies of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College — Kolot is a training center for rabbis and teachers in traditional and contemporary studies, and a resource center for local and national communities. The Center's mission is to advance scholarship in the area of Jewish Women's and Gender Studies, recover women's history and traditions, and encourage innovations in Jewish liturgy and ritual. Programs address urgent concerns such as domestic violence, self-esteem of Jewish adolescent girls, recording stories of our women elders, and the strengthening of positive Jewish identity. For information call 215-576-0800, ext. 47.

Conference Planning Committee:
Coordinator: Alison Adler, MA
Co-Chairs: Lori Leikovitz, PhD and Karen Smith, MSS, LSW
The Renfrew Center Foundation: Judi Goldstein, LSW, Vice President of Professional Relations and Education; Samuel Menaged, JD, President; Lana Weinstein, Director of Marketing.
Kolot: Lani Moss, Assistant Director.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of:
The Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education
The Federation of Reform Congregations (UAHC)
The Women's Division of The Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia
Hillel of Greater Philadelphia
Congregation Keneseth Israel
Jewish Family and Children's Services
Congregation Mishkan Shalom
The Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
Jewish Women International

Cover art by Mindy Sue Shapiro.

Hebrew translation: “Blessed are you, God, sovereign of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

Kiddush cup and bread adapted from Betsy Platkin Teutsch, from The Jewish Holidays and Kol HaNeshamah: Nashir Unetzeleh. By permission.
A7 Jewish Bodies, Jewish Selves: Shame & Self-Development in Adolescence — Michele Reimer, PhD. Adolescence is a time of dramatic bodily change and heightened self-awareness. Using film, literary texts, and experiential exercises, participants will explore what is particular about body image and shame in Jewish adolescent development and their consequences for self-esteem.

12:50-1:50 LUNCH - Nourishment for body and spirit (kosher, vegetarian).

1:50-2:10 BREAK

12:45-2:00 AFTERNOON REGISTRATION

2:10-2:20 Afternoon Welcome — Samuel Menaged, JD, President of The Renfrew Center Foundation.

2:20-3:15 Keynote Speaker — Catherine Steiner-Adair, EdD. Bagel Politics: Jewish Women, American Culture, & Jewish Culture. Since the 60's, eating disorders have exploded in our culture at large and in the Jewish community in particular. Jewish women must confront mainstream images of beauty and messages about good and bad foods. Additionally, within Jewish culture, food, the body, and starvation have special historic and religious meaning. As family, friends, professionals, and activists facing this crisis, what do we do?

3:20-4:50 PM WORKSHOPS

P1 Teaching Jewish Children About the Body, Food, & Sexuality — Shoshana Silberman, PhD. What does Jewish tradition teach about these issues and how can we present them in a way that can help our children grow physically and spiritually?

P2 From Temple Offerings to Everyday Bread: How Do We Make Food Holy? — Rabbi Arthur Waskow.
A1 Mothers & Daughters & Eating Disorders: Understanding & Transforming the Relationship — Judith Ruskay Rabinor, PhD. A preoccupation with food, weight, and the body often plagues mothers, daughters, and their relationship. Through lecture, case material, and experiential exercises, this workshop will help you understand the development of your own body image, and will offer tools for healing and renewal.

A2 Eating Disorders 101 — Karen Eelson-Belding, PsyD. What are the signs, symptoms, causes, and treatment of eating disorders and what can you do to help as a parent, friend, referral source, or clinician.

A3 Ani Tefillati: I am My Prayer, Body & Soul — Myriam Klotz, MA. We will explore through yoga, movement, and study of relevant prayers and Jewish texts, a body-based, body-affirming approach to our spiritual lives and Jewish identities.

A4 The Orthodox Community: Eating Disorders — Fact or Fiction? — Ira M. Sacker, MD & Rabbi David Goldwasser. This workshop will focus on how the Orthodox Jewish community is affected by eating disorders, and unique challenges in education, prevention, and treatment.

A5 Confronting The Holy Sparks of Food: Text Study & Hands-On Workshop — Joel Hecker, PhD & Frani Pollack, RD, MSW. We will study Jewish mystical texts that teach methods for relating to food contemplation, eating, and even how we taste. Eating exercises will help us examine associations with food and imagine ways we might change them.

A6 Chopped Liver & Chicken Soup: Soothing Food for the Traumatized Soul — Talia Iserstein, PhD. This workshop will explore the relationship between “Jewish” food, Jewish identity, and body image/eating patterns in women, especially in World War II survivors and their children.

Drawing on blessings, text, and ritual, we will consider historical Jewish ways of sanctifying food, and their implications for our generation.

P3 Zaftig Women in a Barbie Doll Culture — Harin Felish, LSW & Jane Shure, PhD. Jewish women in 90’s culture must either accept our full-figured “tush and hips” or struggle with self-hatred and shame for not measuring up to our “perfect” sisters. We will explore how we reject our traditional love of food and how we turn to obsessive dieting, body-hatred, and eating disorders. We will also look at embracing traditional wisdom to create healthy models for parenting our children and reparenting ourselves.

P4 Spiritual Tools for Recovery: Food, Judaism, & the 12 Steps of Overeaters Anonymous — Rabbi Yaakov Kravit, EdD. This workshop will explore how Judaism can enhance a 12-step program for those with food addiction or eating disorders. We will discuss problems Jews may encounter with these programs and Jewish approaches for mastering the steps.

P5 Beyond the Bat Mitzvah: Jewish Spiritual Resources for Adolescent Girls — Alison Adler, MA, Rachel Gartner, & teen girls from the Philadelphia area. Food anxiety, body shame, and eating disorders are rampant in teen culture. We will discuss the issues openly and present alternative, Jewish models that incorporate sacred space, ritual, and relationships.

P6 A Community of One: Anorexia Nervosa as Private Religious Ritual—Jan Goldman, PhD. We will explore the heart of ritual and ritual performance, whether communal or private. When we compare communal rituals, such as kashrut, with the ritualized eating of anorexics, we may see similarities as well as important differences. Case studies will serve as illustration.
Resources for Change

P7 Text as a Healing Tool: Finding Nourishment in Tradition & Feminist Theory — Rochelle Robins, MA & Meredith Barber, PhD. We will explore Jewish texts, feminist criticism, and psychological theory as compatible partners in our own healing process.

5:00-5:30 Closing Ritual – Led by Judith Ruskay Rabinor, Ph.D.

Accreditation: The Renfrew Center Foundation is approved by the American Psychological Association to offer Continuing Education Credits for psychologists. The Renfrew Center maintains responsibility for the program. Attendees can earn 5 credits for psychologists for full day attendance. Credit is awarded based on full-time participation and completion of all required documentation. Continuing Education Credits for social workers have been applied for, and are pending approval by the Pennsylvania State Board of Social Work Examiners.

Workshop credits towards licensure for supplementary school teachers are available through the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education. Contact Sallie Olsen, 215-635-8940.