Alanna Michelle Jacks Sklover

Alanna grew up in Washington, D.C. She comes from a vibrant and pluralistic Jewish family that encouraged her to develop a lifelong love of Judaism. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in theater and religion at Goucher College.

A proud product of a Jewish youth group, Alanna has a passion for experiential education. She worked as a youth group advisor, spent three wonderful summers at Camp JRF, and worked for No’ar Hadash. While at RRC, Alanna cultivated her identity as a rabbi-educator through a variety of internships: at Reconstructionist congregations Or Haneshamah, Or Hadash, Mishkan Shalom, Beth Hatikvah, Shir Hadash and Reconstructionist Synagogue of the North Shore; at congregations Beth Or and Germantown Jewish Centre; at Camp Ramah; and with RRC’s Transformative Text Project. She is grateful for these learning laboratories and the mentorship she received.

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One must go from one level to the next in prayer, so as not to spend all of one’s strength at the beginning; one should begin moderately, and in the middle draw close in great God-loving fervor (d’veikut)... Even if, at the beginning, one cannot pray with so much d’veikut, at each stage s/he should say the words with deep intention and strengthen herself bit by bit—until God helps her achieve great d’veikut.
—Dov Baer of Mezhirech

I believe that Jewish wisdom has much to teach us—both as Jews and as good people. As we pour our strength and heart into every task, may we remember that, as in prayer, we must work our way up to full-hearted fervor in stages.

When it feels like we are not completely “there”—that we cannot muster the right intensity or intention in our work, relationships and encounters in the world—may we recall that we have a Divine Partner (and, hopefully, human ones, too) to help us harness the energy to get the rest of the way there.