

The grip tightens.

The young boy closes his eyes and awaits the inevitable. He can't move. He has no one to turn to, not even the one to whom he owes his life, since that very person is holding him down.

If the boy only knew how much pain his father is in. His father knows that no explanation in the world would make any sense at this moment. How can he convey to his son that this vaccination is for his own good?

When it's over, they walk out of the clinic holding hands—one hand filled with unconditional love, the other with confusion. The father knows the chocolate marshmallow sundae waiting around the corner will soften the blow and set things back on course.



We want to be in control, to know all the answers—and right now. Why did she die? How could it have happened? It's scary not to know, because the consequences may not be in our favor, and it might even happen again. We get so involved with the why—and so much more with the how—that we forget we must

now deal with the new reality. Will it change my life?
How about my next few minutes?



I didn't have time for that, as I found our six-year-old sitting next to me. Emuna was more attached to the baby than any of our other children. She held her, changed her, put her to sleep . . . she was in love with her. Whatever the baby needed, if Emuna could provide it, she would.

“How old was the baby?” she asked.

I was never good with ages. They just didn't register.

“You know what?” I suggested. “Bring over the calendar, and we'll figure it out.”

In a second she was back. “From where do we start counting?”

“From here.” I pointed to the box of Tuesday the fifth. “Do you want to count weeks or days?”

“There are more days than weeks, right?”

“Right.”

“So let's count days. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven . . .”

When she got to thirty-one, she stopped.

“That’s already more than a month.”

She continued counting. Ellen was speaking with some friends across the room, but everyone focused on Emuna. The higher she counted, the more excited she became.

“Fifty-nine, sixty, sixty-one, sixty-two. That’s more than two months! Sixty-three, sixty-four . . .”

Every day seemed so special. Emuna was counting up our baby’s life. Where would she end up?

“Seventy-three, seventy-four...”

I put my finger on Sunday the nineteenth.

“Seventy-five, seventy-six.”

Our fingers met.

“Wow, seventy-six days! That’s a long time. She was seventy-six days old.

“Mommy, do you know how old the baby was? I know,” she proclaimed, getting up to go over to Ellen.

How much does every day count? I thought. I did some quick calculations.

What an impact a seventy-six-day-old baby was having on an almost 15,000-day-old father.