

I'm sitting in my office, eating my small and secret stash of Sunkist candy from a recent (hybrid) Bat Mitzvah as I write this piece. My office is a *little* less cluttered than it has been since one early March day in 2020, I unwittingly pulled the door shut behind me.

A Wallstreet Journal article did some entertaining reporting on offices left deserted during the pandemic and what a return looked like: computers that didn't have Zoom installed on them (guilty as charged; I've been using my laptop for the past 20 months) to overgrown jungle-like plants and... snacks left in various stages of... let's just call it 'return to their natural state of entropy.'

As we navigate this new 'normal', those of us who are comfortable and able to gather in-person (with the proper mitigation in place, of course) are finding that there's a fair bit of reorganizing to do. In a sense, the spirit of Hanukkah hovers over our slightly disheveled spaces, be they offices, homes or

unavailable to the Jewish people for two years and so that first Hanukkah on the 25th of Kislev all those thousands of years ago was in fact, a deferred Sukkot.

Hanukkah means 'rededication' and it is actually in the unglamorous grit that we find true meaning and sanctification. Reorganizing, cleaning, tidying, making the space (whatever space that is!) our own is a way of saying 'we're back'. We are taking emotional ownership of what we had lost and embracing it lovingly and passionately, and seeing it in – dare I make the pun? – a new light.

As we move towards Hanukkah this year, we are encouraged to think about 'rededicating' ourselves to what fills us with joy, life, connection and compassion for our world. We may need a little polishing; trim back a few wayward plants and 'install' a few new (or previously forgotten) habits. But once we've kindled our inner light, that light will spread and grow.