

First and foremost, I hope that my words are a nechama to the Belsky family. My grandfather has utmost respect for Rabbi Belsky. He was a true Chaver and was even his shomer on his wedding day. My grandmother loves her first cousins and Rabbi Belsky meant so much to her.

Three summers ago, I went to camp Agudah when I was in 11th grade for the Masmidim program. I went because it was described as a Geshmake time with the opportunity to spend time with a gadol hador. I went knowing that Rabbi Belsky was my grandmothers first cousin. My Zaidy prepared a chavrusa shaft for me with Rabbi Belsky. I had never met him before. I went over and introduced myself and mentioned our proposed learning. Rabbi Belsky got excited when I mentioned the family and told me to come back in a couple of days when camp settled down. I didn't go back to him because I saw that he was a busy man. Three days later, he motioned for me to come to his table and said - we have to make a chavrusa shaft - and we did!

I wanted to have the opportunity to play paddle ball with Rabbi Belsky. Truth be told - I wasn't much of a player. The guy in charge asked me if I knew how to play. Of course I said YES!! I got to the court and the first shot I hit was over the wall. Rabbi Belsky turned to the other player and said - "see - my cousin is good "!

Family meant EVERYTHING. One Shabbos I left the seuda to daven early mincha. Someone came running in and said - Gobioff, Rabbi Belsky needs you. I waited till mincha was over - and I ran to Rabbi Belsky and I said Rebbe - I heard you were looking for me. He was in middle of his seuda. He said - yes, yes - you must come meet your cousins! There were 3 little kids from Eretz Yisroel - he needed me to meet! He felt it was important for me to know my 3rd cousins.

I bought his Sefer and Rabbi Belsky inscribed it for me. He asked me to read it back to him. I got stuck on the acronym. He said - I didn't think you would know what this means. He tapped me on my arm and said - WE ARE COUSINS!

On the bus to Niagra - he asked me - do you have your guitar with you? I said yes. He said – let us play together. He took out his harmonica and we played together all of Rabbi Belsky's songs.

It's a Wilhelm thing - to never EVER go off key!

Rabbi Belsky was makpid that a song be sung the right way. If it was done the wrong way, he would stop the singing and teach it the right way.

This past summer, I went for a Shabbos to Camp Agudah. I was on crutches because I had just had foot surgery and so there I was in Rabbi Belsky's office talking surgeries. He said let me tell you a story. Two weeks ago, he said he had a surgery. He pointed to his hip / thigh and said he had a pain for two years and the doctor said that there was no reason for the pain. He told the doctor open me up and you will see something there. The doctor said it's not medically worthy to operate. He told the doctor to do it anyway. The doctor acquiesced. The surgery was successful. With tears in his eyes - Rabbi Belsky said that he has to thank Hashem for taking away the pain that he had for two years.

Rabbi Belsky taught us to always be thinking in Torah. On the way to the pool one time, he said to me - do you know where we are going? I said - yes to the pool. He said do you know who Pool was? He was one of the Kings in Tanach!

This past Shabbos I was reading articles about People wondering where Rabbi Belsky knew astronomy from. He told us in camp that when he was a little boy, he was in the mountains and he would go out with a red lantern and a map of the stars and he figured it all out.

Rabbi Belsky told us a story at a bonfire before tisha bav- and we went on to say tikun chatzos right after the story. He was a counselor in camp Agudah many years ago and for some reason there was no food. He hadn't eaten in some time (a couple of days) and was starving. For some reason all food was used up and the waiter told him that there was no food left. He ran and ran to the forest and started to cry. Then he thought to himself - am I crying for food - I should cry for Hashem and the bais Hamikdash. And that is what he did.

When we did the tikun chatzos we had an extra feeling for the bais Hamikdash.