

Paperweight Perspective

Don't despair... we're here to help



BY HARVEY SILVER,
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LEADER

"One thing I ask of you: Do not lose hope when things go ill with you; do not give way to despair because you

find yourself drowning in troubles. No immunity of any kind lasts forever but neither is any trouble or distress eternal. (Proverbs 27:24)

There will be many times during our lifetimes when things are not running to our overall plan. Many of us will experience difficulty with for example, debt, housing or relationship issues. At Paperweight our caseworkers are continually trained to assist the Jewish community in their time of need.

Perhaps you are assisting an elderly relative with welfare benefits or are not sure if you are entitled to welfare benefits yourself, we can help, we understand the Jewish community's needs and will always assist in complete confidence.

Throughout our long and varied history, Jews have built strong and supportive communities. Now whenever or wherever

fellow Jews need help, there is Paperweight. The Torah teaches us to take care of those in need, to show compassion and facilitate the needs of the community. We understand the cultural and religious needs of our community and are there to assist through many of life's difficult moments.

I began volunteering with Paperweight in 2020, I had been with The Citizens Advice Bureau for 12 years. One field of expertise that I have is welfare benefits and the minefield of Universal Credit, with the ever-changing law that the Department of Work and Pensions have to abide by. The benefits system is complicated and changes often.

Having the knowledge and experience of the benefits system, Paperweight has helped and continues to help many in our community contest injustices in benefit assessment

decisions. Caseworkers advocate for clients' rights, reinstating people's basic income. Many people feel understandably, that they are not able to navigate the disability benefits system without Paperweights support.

Many people with illnesses or disabilities may find themselves in debt and struggle to have enough money for rent, food and bills. After getting advice from Paperweight, they were able to manage their debt problems more successfully. Many in our community, have said that they would never have been able to achieve the outcome they received without Paperweights assistance.

Contrary to the general perception, a lot of Jewish people are living on a low income, or indeed in poverty, this can and does have an impact on an individual's mental and physical health. Social exclusion, which

often goes hand in hand with financial poverty, reduces an individual's capacity to access support and to engage in activities with therapeutic value to help them towards recovery. The interlinked elements of mental health and poverty and deprivation also impact on the next generation. Research conducted recently confirmed that families living in poverty were more likely to experience brief and repeated mental health problems, and that the mental health of a parent was found to be linked to children's developmental outcomes. Behavioural and emotional development in those children was stunted and often repeated.

When creditors letters or phone calls inevitably make life intolerable, Paperweight can assist by empowering individuals with the ability to negotiate with creditors, explaining and offering the ammunition to process an affordable repayment plan.

The Jewish community are not immune to life's many challenges. If you are experiencing difficulty, please contact Paperweight.

For a free copy of the guide, please email chaniecooper@paperweight.org.uk or call in to our office at 89 Bell Lane, Hendon NW4 2AS.

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Debt-negotiating, court-attending, benefits-advising, law-guiding, tribunal-accompanying, hand-holding, rights-advocating, landlord-challenging and people-empowering.

Your situation may involve any of these tasks, and more. Whatever your administrative, legal or financial problems, our 200 caseworkers, based in London, Manchester and Gateshead, have the expertise to help. And it's all free of charge.

To access our services or to make a donation to support our work, call 0330 174 4300 or visit paperweight.org.uk

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Don't get overwhelmed, get help.

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