

Surrendering

בְּיָדְךָ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי פְּדִיתָהּ אֹתִי יְהוָה אֵל אֱמֶת

B'yad'cha afkid ruchí padita oti Yah Ayl Emet

Into Your Hand I entrust my spirit; You redeem me Yah, God of Truth.

(Psalm 31:6) (Bedtime liturgy)

In the Talmud (Brachot 4a-5b) Rav Abaye suggests that we chant these words from Psalm 31, to amplify the power of the Bedtime Sh'ma. They help us surrender into God's loving embrace at the moment when we are about to give ourselves to sleep. Trusting in that embrace, freeing ourselves from the worries of the day, and committing our lives to the Truth of a wider perspective.

I created this practice for a young man who was dying. The chant gave everyone who loved this courageous soul an opportunity to pour that love into a vehicle of transformation as he made the journey through the portal of Death into Greater Life. At the moment of his Death, I felt his soul expand and be taken into the wide embrace.

We can experience that expansion and that embrace each night, as we surrender the illusion of control and give ourselves over to the greater Truth that has been holding us all along.