

JCFS CHICAGO

A Nightly Chanukah Practice for Dedication and Miracles

Chanukah celebrates rededication and miracles. The word *chanukah* means "dedication": solemnly setting something apart for a special purpose. In the Chanukah story, the forces led by King Antiochus desecrated the Second Temple in Jerusalem, separating it *from the Sacred*. After the successful Maccabean revolt, the Temple was rededicated as a sacred space, and the *Ner Tamid* (Eternal Flame) was lit. Then came the *Nes Gadol* (Great Miracle): enough oil for just one day lasted all eight days needed to purify more oil and keep the *Ner Tamid* burning.

We can think of active addiction as a process in which we become separated from the Sacred, and recovery as the process by which we "recover" our essential holiness. In this way, re-dedication is a core recovery value, and great miracles are the result. The word *recovery* tells us that there is something essential in ourselves that remains holy despite any actions we might have taken during active addiction. Our tradition teaches that one level of the soul, the *Neshama*, sits closest to our internal connection to Divinity and is never sullied by the travails of life. In recovery we are quite literally recovering this foundation of spiritual wholeness, the part of ourselves that addiction did not and could not touch. Returning to our essential holiness allows great miracles to enter our lives and the lives of those around us.

During Chanukah, we might dedicate each night to one of the miracles brought by our return to spiritual clarity. Here are eight suggestions for the nightly naming of recovery miracles to which we can dedicate our attention and awareness. We invite you to take these suggestions or add others that speak to your own experience. May this practice enhance the blessings of Chanukah, the Festival of Lights.

For more information, please contact Beth Fishman PhD, Program Manager of JCFS Chicago Addiction Services.

On this night, I dedicate the light:

1
to a person who has been
instrumental in my recovery

2
to an action I take each day that
strengthens my recovery

3
to a positive *middah*/character trait
I have found in myself in recovery

4
to an act of service by which
I bring light to others

5
to something or someone
I am grateful for

6
to a reading or concept that
I find inspirational

7
to a place in my life where I experience love,
support, and connection

8
to a deeply meaningful
moment in recovery