

## Tribute delivered by Joy's friend and colleague Deena Fuchs at a Board meeting of AVI CHAI held at Ya'arot Hacarmel in June 2004

When I was fifteen, I read a story in my tenth-grade *ivrit* class titled *Tehilla*. In all honesty, I don't remember who wrote it, or even what it was about. All I remember are the first few paragraphs of the story that tell how Tehilla, an elderly woman living in Jerusalem, never spoke. She believed that every person has a finite number of words to be used in his or her lifetime and she didn't want to squander them with small talk. She had a story to tell and she was saving her words to tell it.

At the time, this concept of the power of speech and of how we use our words had an incredible impact on me, and it certainly ingrained itself into my psyche and my comportment.

I didn't give any more thought to Tehilla. Until three weeks ago, that is, when Joy slipped into a coma. I couldn't get Tehilla or Joy out of my mind. They seemed intertwined. It took me by surprise, but I realize now that it shouldn't have.

Maybe, just maybe, we have a finite number of people we are supposed to touch and impact on during our lifetimes — people that we are supposed to inspire. As many people as the words we are given to speak.

For most people, they can't achieve that in 120 years. And then there is Joy. We have all heard and read the various eulogies for Joy. She was a remarkable woman who leaves behind an incredible legacy of fulfilled dreams. This, though, is not the time to recount her achievements, her very full, albeit tragically short life. But it is appropriate to think about how Joy has touched and inspired us all. It is unfair of me to dictate how Joy has touched each and every one of us in this room, for we all have our own uniquely personal experiences, but it goes without saying that her time at AVI CHAI, as a colleague and as a friend, will leave an indelible mark on us all.

And, if I may, I would like to say on behalf of all of us sitting here that we have been blessed. We only knew her for two short years and yet we have all been enriched. That is in itself inspiring.