

The Amen Effect: Ancient Wisdom to Mend our Broken Hearts and World

Chapter 6 Hold the Healers

1. Threshold Moments

Purpose: *Mark the transition from daily life to sacred encounter.*

- Greet people with soft music, low lighting, and a visual centerpiece a photo of your loved ones on a table next to a lit candle.

- Opening prayer: *Let us pray.*

Loving God,

You are the Source of all compassion and strength.

We thank You for those who care for others—therapists, ministers, nurses, doctors, social workers, volunteers, and loved ones.

*In a world where pain runs deep,
they carry the burdens of others.*

Bless them, renew them, and surround them with care and grace.

Help us to see them, to hold them, and to be a balm for their weariness.

In Your Holy Name, Amen

2. Sacred Sparks

Purpose: *Create curiosity and open hearts.*

- Pose this provocative question.
- When was the last time you, like the angels visiting Abraham, entered an uncomfortable or difficult space to support someone in need? What moved you to show up, and what was that experience like for you?
- Have people whip around the circle with their answers.

3. Chambers of the Spirit

Purpose: *Share lived faith experiences in sacred listening circle.*

Invite everyone to share the answer to one or more questions.

1. Have you ever wanted to take on one-sixtieth of someone else's pain? Please describe the situation. Have you ever wished you could give away your own pain?

2. Rabbi Brous says, “We cannot heal ourselves.” Whom have you helped to heal, and when have you experienced being a healing presence for another?
3. Rabbi Brous quotes Henri Nouwen, suggesting that all of our crosses may help another carry theirs. Do you have a cross you’ve carried that could help someone else through their suffering? Describe that cross and how you might have—or already have—used it to help another.
4. If you could find it in your heart, what “one-sixtieth” of someone’s pain would you take on? Would it be for the homeless, the immigrant, the sick, the brokenhearted... or someone else?
5. Have you ever experienced fatigue from walking alongside someone in their struggle? What did that look like, and how did it affect you?
6. Rabbi Brous speaks of shoulder pain, sharing a story of a healer who helped her realize she was physically carrying others’ pain. Have you had a similar experience—realizing you were holding pain that wasn’t yours?
7. Rabbi Brous’ husband made her stay in bed after a miscarriage, reminding her: “You cannot take care of others if you’re not taking care of yourself.” This is a truth we all *think* we know—or do we? How does this apply to your life?
8. Rabbi Brous writes: “When we allow ourselves to be held—when we embrace our own vulnerability—we can be revitalized not only with greater humility, but also with deeper compassion for ourselves and for those with whom we share our love.” What are your thoughts or experiences with this idea?

4. Intentional Sending

Purpose: *Leave inspired and committed to live the faith.*

- Use a ritual action:
 - Relight the candle
 - Invite everyone to share the one word or phrase they would like to take into the next week/month (depending how often you are meeting).
- Close with a prayer of sending... May God bless the healers. May those who carry the world’s grief find moments of rest. May we see one another with tenderness and act with compassion. And may we become a community where no one gives without also being held. Amen.