What Reuven Feuerstein meant to me

NOAMI HADAS-LIDOR ¹

Reuven was like a father to me, a teacher, leader and true friend in my personal and professional development.

I was deeply affected by Feuerstein’s theories and through me his influence is carried on within my students, and through them on many consumers of mental health services and their family members. Feuerstein’s theories have affected us, and will continue on doing so. He instilled in us not just theory, but beliefs and a way of life. The core components of his theory are true love for all human beings and passionate faith in the ability of people to learn regardless of their age, disability and health status. Feuerstein was a pioneer in fighting for the rights of people with disabilities to live life fully with full integration into the community. He was sure in his belief in us, his pupils: Parents, teachers, therapists to be able to carry out the miracle, a miracle performed by human beings.

When I remember Reuven, I mostly recall small, moments, our first meeting and his promise to teach me everything he knew: "half of the universe" as he said then...And for many years I would travel once a week to Jerusalem to study with him, to hear him and watch him interact with children...parents...and always the feeling that won’t take place, and then, like Moses, striking the stone and the water flowing freely out. I remember meeting in his office, with various professionals sitting around the table, from Israel and abroad, impressive people from different cultures, speaking different languages, and his concentration solely on the young boy before him, and together with this he was speaking with everyone in the room, in Hebrew, English, Spanish, French...switching from language to language.

And I remember how during an important meeting one young fellow entered to empty the dustbin, and Reuven stopped the meeting, turned to the young man inquiring how he was progressing and conveying interest in his

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