

Feb. 2, 1976

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Dear Rabbi Lamm,

Two things are true - 1) I'm not as they say from the letter writers and 2) I wanted to wait a bit before writing to you in order to be able to base my observations on a little more than first impression and intuition.

Feb. 25, 1976

Dear Rabbi Lamm,

This letter has been in the writing since I got here - this time I'm going to give it a real go and hope to actually send you something. My life is so one dimensional here that it shouldn't be hard to know what to write about and yet everything gets so muddled and complicated when looked at closely. School is the center and basically the only element of my life. The learning is excellent - the course of study has been very well thought out and the program includes enough variety both in terms of material covered and the inevitable slant or perspective on it by the individual teachers that I don't get bored or find the classes tedious. Also I've been very fortunate - my roommate is a wonderful person and we've become close friends. As it happens she's also my hevrisa and has helped me adjust to the learning as well as the living here. Actually we're a threesome - a third friend completes our group. We share a lot and right now a major part of our energy is involved with developing a puppet theatre. It began as a Purim spiel but is now taking on much greater proportions. I'll let you know just how successful we are in this endeavor as time goes on. Time has become an interesting phenomenon to me - in so many ways I feel as though I've been here from always and yet I feel as though the time is passing very quickly. At first I was on something of a high - everything was perfect - it was the best of all possible worlds a la Candide. That of course could never last and was followed by an inevitable down period. I think right now things are stabilizing out and I'll be able to live on more neutral ground. I've been bombarded with such a multitude of concepts and the attempt to comprehend them + their subtleties and their subsequent relevance to myself has lead me to some very uncomfortable, I mean painful confrontations with myself. I had somehow thought that my doubts about committing myself to a Jewish life would be removed once I'd been decisive + definitive in closing the option of returning to Spain. Not only do I continue with the weight of doubt and a very disturbing lack of J.I.N.K. but in addition I can no longer visualize myself in any future tense - not in Spain, not in New York + probably most unfortunately not in Israel. Not in religious Israel in any case. It maybe I just haven't been exposed to enough but one thing I do feel strongly here is how crucial it is for the existence of the family unit in order to even carry out the mitzvot let alone feel amplified by it. It may be my own paranoia but I think there's a certain stigma attached to being single at my age + socializing within the yeshiva world is difficult if

not impossible. Also I'm the oldest single adult I've met here. The women my age are not only married but often have families with 3 or 4 children. I don't know how well I could function socially here even if the opportunity were to present itself. Another problem I still face and had hoped to resolve is my inability to daven. I want to but I feel hypocritical when I do and uneasy with the content of the Tefilah itself. I suppose in time - and hopefully in Hebrew - I'll master this guessness and this will become a source of expression rather than one of consternation for me.

I'm afraid this letter has become somewhat sketchy - I don't want you to feel like Anna Landers but I think you know by now how much your support and advice has meant to me. If I'm not leaning too hard on your friendship I'd appreciate some word of your perspective on all this. Whenever I see Ruth we talk about everyone at the Lamm family. Please give Mrs. Lamm, Chaya, Josh, & everyone is well. Love of you - I hope

expéditeur·sender·השולח

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