



## *The Awareness Center, Inc.*

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### **Traditions That Must Be Broken**

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Recently the case of Rabbi Ephraim F. Shapiro has been made public. This isn't a new case, it's one that has been a deep dark secret in the Baltimore Jewish community for over fifty years.

Over the last five years I have spoken to several survivors of this alleged sex offender, many sharing their stories and struggles, yet many were too afraid to mention his name -- even to me, let alone publicly. You see Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro was a highly connected and well respected individual in the Jewish community. Think about it -- who would want to believe a child claiming molestation by this great and powerful rebbe?

Most children who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse never go on to molest other children, yet those who molest children have often been victimized themselves.

Since the 1950's there have been new child molesters named that have had a connection to the Baltimore community (i.e. Rabbi Matis Weinberg, Rabbi Ephraim Bryks, Rabbi Mordecai Tendler, Rabbi Aron Boruch Tendler, Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, Shmuel Juravel, etc.). I am not like many others who have wondered who molested these alleged offenders? Could it have been Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro? It's very possible that he had access to Matis Weinberg, Ephraim Bryks and Aron Boruch Tendler as children. I don't have the answer to that question and I am not attempting to make excuses for alleged or convicted sex offenders. I'm just trying to put a puzzle together that has been playing out in my head for years.

I too am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. One of my offenders was also sent away to a boarding school when he was very young. At one time this offender disclosed to me that he was gang raped several times by a group of older students at his school. I am not unlike the survivors in Baltimore or from any other community. I too am afraid of naming my offenders. I too am still in a place of protecting the identities of those who harmed me.

As strange as it may sound there are times I'm thankful to my offenders for what they did to me. Without them I would not be doing the work I do today. I really doubt that I would have dedicated my life to educating our communities and or protecting others if I wasn't sexually abused as a child. Instead I might have ended up being an interior designer.

I am not unlike many of the survivors of Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro. I too ask myself, what will it take for me to publicly name my offender? I can't expect other survivors to do something that I myself still have not done, yet I totally honor and respect them when they do.

What's most important for us all to remember is that we as a people can stop these sorts of crimes from happening. We need to honor and respect those who come forward and share their experiences. We need to honor and respect those who advocate for the truth to be told. We all need to be honest and caring. We have all been victimized each and every time a child is abused. We all need to do what it takes to protect one more child from being harmed!

#### **Resources**

- **Rabbi Ephraim Bryks**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Bryks\\_Ephraim.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Bryks_Ephraim.html)
- **Rabbi Moshe Eisemann**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Eiseman\\_Moshe.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Eiseman_Moshe.html)
- **Samuel (Shmuel) Juravel**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Juravel\\_Samuel.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Juravel_Samuel.html)
- **Rabbi Ephraim F. Shapiro**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Shapiro\\_Ephraim.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Shapiro_Ephraim.html)
- **Rabbi Aron Boruch Tendler**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Tendler\\_Aron.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Tendler_Aron.html)
- **Rabbi Mordecai Tendler**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Tendler\\_Morcecai.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Tendler_Morcecai.html)
- **Rabbi Matis Weinberg**  
[www.theawarenesscenter.org/Weinberg\\_Matis.html](http://www.theawarenesscenter.org/Weinberg_Matis.html)