



# *Silent Thoughts*

Today is the big day. We're taking our precious new baby Brocha home from the hospital. After remaining in the NICU for 2 weeks, she is finally ready to come home. She's dressed in a beautiful pale pink outfit with a bonnet delicately tied around her soft, pink face. Her blanket rests gently on top of her and she sleeps peacefully.

It is me who grapples with the whirlwind of emotions storming inside. I am grateful for the new branch of our family tree. Another daughter to treasure. She joins six excited siblings who can't wait to see her and hug her close.

Yet I'm also nervous. I am still so shocked and shaken. I had no idea about the diagnosis before she was born, and the news is still fresh and raw. I just can't believe my daughter has Down syndrome.

How will I hold strong when inside I feel like collapsing? Will I have the courage to keep on repeating the mantra that this is our precious neshama that Hashem chose specifically for our family, and we will raise her like all our other children? Will the tears threaten to spill in front of my other children, or will I have the strength to hold them back until it's just me and my pillow?

I know that the coming days, weeks, and months will test my resilience. I daven to Hashem to give us the fortitude to begin our new journey with faith and optimism.

I am fortunate to have a wonderful network of close friends and family. I know that the news of Brocha's diagnosis shook them as well, and they all wish they can make everything all better...but alas... they cannot. Their unwavering support means so much to me. Their friendship helps me feel that I'm not alone. Warm mazel tov wishes do so much for us. Their expressions of hope, positivity and belief in us empower us to do what must be done.

I didn't think this would ever happen to our family. I could never have imagined us in this situation. But deep down, I think we can do it. I hope we'll rise to the occasion and be an inspiration to our families and Klal Yisroel.

But it will take time. An unknown timeline where we take each day as it comes and accept all the emotions and thoughts that accompany it. Our comfort is that we know and see other families who were in our situation some time ago, and now they seem to be thriving and living beautiful lives. We hope we'll get there too one day. We daven. We dream.

But until then, it's just one day at a time.