

## Wedding Charge - Havi Elkaim & Michael Searles - November 12, 2016

Havi and Mike, it is truly unbelievable that we have reached this moment. Havi, I think back to the days of making “dirt” in your parent’s old home in Fox Run, of blasting Dave Matthews Band or Dispatch as we drove down Jersey roads, always coming to you for fashion advice or encouraging you with your latest artistic endeavor (and certainly you with mine - be it rock music, or...well, the cantorate). For seventeen years we have shared the special bond that only girlfriends can - and when we talked about our futures - could we ever have imagined this moment?

And Mike. Havi - you totally nailed this one. From the moment Mike entered your world he changed your life and everybody in it for the better. Thank God for the day you connected through friends (of friends of friends) to watch the 7 Nations Rugby game. It may have taken a few group hangs before that cold New York day when Mike stole your scarf so that you would have to come back and keep talking to him. But it worked. And even though he may have forgotten to ask for your number the first time you met - he managed to track you down through a careful investigation of past group email threads and asked you if you could continue talking.

When work brought Mike from New York to Boston, a mere two or so weeks after you began dating, you offered to help him move. Mike recalls how kind of you that was, but that he didn’t want your assistance in helping him move further away from you. A short six months later, Mike was ready to return home to New York and who was there to help him pack up his life and move again, but you? He said that this time he would accept your help - for you were helping him move back closer to you.

A short while later, the two of you were ready for cohabitation and once again, you helped move Mike - into your tiny SoHo apartment. You both made sacrifices to be together - whether it was traveling from NY to Boston at 5 am on a Monday morning after a weekend together or having to move a lot of clothes down to your mom’s home in Margate to accommodate your boyfriend’s entirely plaid wardrobe. You made it work and you did it supporting one another.

Mike recalled to me privately all of the times you helped him move and the way you did it with such grace and kindness. What I heard in Mike’s words is that you do truly **move** him.

You move him with your selflessness, the way you drop everything to be there for the ones you love - which extends to his entire family. You move him with your creativity. You have taught him that being creative enables a person to have more fun in everything you do. He says, “even calling something ‘fun’ is such a ‘Havi-ism.’”

You move him with your determination and passion to be the best at everything you do from baking the perfect cookie to costume designing an entire film on an aggressive budget. You move him with your standards - always setting and MEETING the highest expectations of yourself. Mike has even found a new term for how you work: “PRE-crastinating.” When you want to get something done - you do it - and way ahead of deadline. He admires this so much about you.

You move Mike with your wacky love for having fun and for your ability to be completely silly with him - like dancing in public at the grocery store or randomly bursting out into song. You move Mike with your ability to laugh and to make even the simplest of tasks seem like incredible moments.

Mike takes pride in what a great team the two of you make. He wrote, “At the end of the day, I love how simple and easy it is to be with Havi. I don’t need anything fancy or exciting to have the best time ever with her. As long as we’re together, I know everything we do is going to be an absolute blast, and I don’t want it any other way.”

Speaking of “pre-crastinating,” when I asked both of you to separately share with me reasons you love the other - Havi simply could not wait. I think I had an email from her within 48-72 hours of assigning this task. Mike - Havi’s love for you is pure and enduring. She said, “When I say I love everything about Mike, I don’t mean to be cliché, it’s just truthful. I am so lucky that I get to wake up everyday to Mike - not just because I love him, but because when Mike gets up in the morning he is the happiest morning person I know. It’s infectious. It makes me start everyday with a smile on my face. I’m so grateful I get to spend the rest of my life getting up every morning to happiness.”

Mike, Havi loves you for your supportiveness. No matter what she does, you are always by her side and she knows she couldn’t accomplish half the things she does without your support. She describes you as the yin to her yang: when you think logistics, she thinks artistics,

when you think Dunkin Donuts, she thinks Wawa (the debate of all debates, honestly). You balance out the other in a way that offers utter completion.

Havi admires your work ethic. She says that when you set your mind to something you give it 100%. Watching you work hard pushes her to work harder. Moreover, Mike, you drive Havi to be a better person, allowing her to soar to unimagined heights.

Havi loves you for the comfort you bring - and not just to her. She recalled to me a time when the two of you were walking in the city and saw a blind man trying to get home. There was scaffolding surrounding his building and because of these new obstacles, he couldn't find his way. Without hesitation Mike, you asked the man if you could help. Not only did you physically assist the man home, you talked and comforted him all the way into his building. Havi loves you for being so loving, caring and kind. She wrote something that I believe so many people in this room feel: "I don't just love Mike, I aspire to be more like him."

Over the past few years, I have gotten to know the two of you as a couple. You are considerate, kind and giving to one another. You are welcoming and warm to everyone else in your lives, as well. Over the past six months, we have spent a lot of time preparing for this very moment. You both work so incredibly hard. It is truly inspiring. I just want to tell everyone that Mike worked tirelessly at learning the language and customs of the ancient Jewish wedding ceremony that he would come to many of our meetings better versed in Hebrew and traditions than most Jews I know. Havi, your eye for detail, your easy-going nature and the joy you bring to every occasion has made this preparation process such a blessing.

I stand before a beautiful couple humbled by the love that emanates from you both. A Jewish legend upholds that, "From every human being there rises a light that reaches straight to the heavens. When two souls are destined to be together and find each other, their streams of light flow together and a single brighter light goes forth from their united being." May we all benefit from the glow of your shining light and may that light forever serve you.

We sanctify this union with the ancient "Sheva B'rachot" or seven blessings which I now offer to you. Translations of the Hebrew can be found in your programs.