

The Grasshopper and The Ant

In my mind, summer should be easy. It should be luxurious, sandy, sunny, and calm. But then there is the reality. There is coordination, childcare, dinner planning, preparation for the holidays, and all the incidentals that come up at any time of year. I think sometimes, the ease of my youthful months at camp or on vacation color my perspective. As children, we rarely see the work that goes into making things seem effortless. As adults, we can choose to recognize the care, concern, and toil that might be taken for granted. We see the passion and effort of so many people who make BHSS what it is. We thank our volunteers, our staff, our members, and our students.

Considering each person's role makes me think back to Aesop's fable of the grasshopper and the ant—or a version of it. If you remember the original, it was a story about the industrious ants who worked all summer to make sure they could sustain themselves in the cold of winter when nothing was growing, and the lazy grasshopper who laid around, taking in sun while they were working. Sure enough, as the days got shorter and colder, the grasshopper needed to go to the ants to ask for help because he had squandered away his summer. The original lesson was that there is always work to be done and that if we shirk from our work, we will be in dire straits later.

I prefer to think of this story somewhat differently. I think that while the ants were heave-hoing through the summer, the grasshopper was doing a different kind of work. He was collecting the memory of the sunshine, the warmth of the stone under his thorax. He was taking in the songs on the breeze, and the story of the blue sky. So that while it was true that in the winter, he had no food to contribute, he had something else that the ants very much needed. He had the hope of the spring to come, he had the sound of the rustling of leaves, and he had the story of the sunshine to keep them all warm.

We all contribute to community in a different way. Some teach, some lead, some sing, and some organize. The important thing to remember is that we all need one another. We are symbiotic.

As we learn in *Pirke Avot* from Ben Azzai: "Do not scorn any man, and do not discount any thing. For there is no man who has not his hour, and no thing that has not its place" (4:3). May your summer be whatever your summer needs to be, and may you know that our community will help fill in the gaps of whatever else you may need.