

WANT TO BE JEWISH FROM THE INSIDE OUT?

“der kolner” (the collar)

“grayzl” (curl)

“aroyf” (upward)

by

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Accessories are the details of a man’s wardrobe/apparel (“garderob”).

Collar stays are quite significant. They are shirt accessories—those smooth rigid strips of plastic (sometimes stainless steel, metal, brass or titanium). They ensure that the collar lies flat against the collarbone, and stays that way. Without these accessories, the tips of your collar may tend to “grayzl” (curl) “aroyt” (upward), which could make you look less dapper...and certainly NOT cool.

Today you can create your own hidden message collar stays. It’s a one of a kind gift, with flirty messages and/or names. The messages range from your name to:

You are on my mind
I will dream of you
A surprise is waiting
A little good luck kiss

And there are even collar stays for those who “Think Yiddish & Dress British.” Swiss Stays is a company that makes adjustable collar stays for men. In 2013 they teamed up with Saks Fifth Avenue to launch a special collection (“zamlung”) called “Think Yiddish, Dress British.” Each stay is engraved with a word in Yiddish, with the English “iberzetsung” (translation).

David Schottenstein, the company head, wanted to pay homage to the Jewish roots of the “malbush” (garment) industry. A stainless steel pair will run \$30; the brass and titanium cost \$40 and \$50 respectively.

Shoppers can pick from the following words:

Bubkes - Nothing; nada; beans

New York City's mayor, Michael Bloomberg said he and his fellow millionaire philanthropists had to be more realistic about what they could do to tackle large problems around the world. "All the billionaires added together are, as they'd say, bupkis compared to the amount of money that government spends," he said.

Judge Judy says, "Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls of all ages--before you wed, joint NOTHING."

William Baldwin says [2006], "For conservative investors worried about inflation and taxes, here's a terrific investment: a bond that earns nothing. The Bupkes Bond."

chutzpa - impudence; brazen gall; nerve. Also spelled "chutzpah" and "khutspe"

Philip Galanes (Social Q's, 11/8/09) received this letter from a reader:

"What should you do at a baby shower when asked to address your own thank-you note? Presumably, this saves the honoree the bother of addressing envelopes. But I find it offensive. In the past, I've said, "No need to thank me. You're obviously very busy." Galanes replied, "File under 'C' for 'chutzpah'...On the bright side, at least she didn't ask for a stamp."

mensch - a special man or person; a person with worth and dignity, one who can be respected. The Forward says, "Find Your Mensch by running your ad here!"

Rabbi Neil Kurshan wrote a book titled, "How to Raise Your Child to Be a Mensch."

The Washington Post columnist, Richard Cohen, saccharinely addresses Ms. Winfrey: "I just want to take off--tip my hat to you," he said. "The year is very new, but I still name you Mensch of the Year, for standing up and saying you were wrong. Takes a lot of courage." [Oprah had promoted James Frey's book, "A Million Little Pieces," and then found out that she had been duped by Frey's lies.]

meshugnah - mad; crazy; insane; out of one's mind. Also spelled "meshugana"

Former Congressman, Anthony Weiner, is planning to open a restaurant in the Rockaways. He should keep in mind that Rockaway residents often shop at the Costco in Lawrence. There they can purchase a hot dog and a 20 oz. soda combo for \$1.50. (FREE refills of soda, too.) Costco is so popular that customers have written to the company's magazine, Costco Connection, with fond stories of longstanding lunch dates, family dinners and kid parties - one including a stretch limo - all involving the \$1.50 meal.

mish mash - mixture; mess; confusion; hodge podge

Groucho Marx wrote a letter to William R. Scranton, Governor of Pennsylvania [1964]:

Dear Sir:

If you contemplate campaigning in any more Jewish neighborhoods, I suggest you learn how to pronounce "mish-mash." It is not pronounced "mash," as you said on 'Meet the Press,' but rather as though it were spelled MOSH.

Sincerely yours, Groucho Marx
("Groucho Letters - Letters From and To Groucho Marx")

schnorrer - cheapskate

When Harry Truman was VP, he was among the cheapest. He had a little office off the Senate floor, with 3 clerks and he didn't even have a Secret Service guard when he first took office. He, Bess, and daughter, Margaret, lived in an apartment house on Connecticut Avenue, where he paid \$140 a month rent out of his \$10,000 salary.

"Shporevdik" is someone who is thrifty.

shvitzer - someone who perspires. "shvitsin" means to sweat. And a "shvitsbod" is a steam bath.

kvetch/kvetsh - to complain; a habitual complainer

A "baklogerte" is a complainer.

"S'helft nisht keyn

"krethtsn!" means "There's no use complaining."

Emuna Braverman (aish.com) says "Complaining isn't just a bad habit. It actually makes the problems worse. We all know what it's like to be around people who complain a lot - a real downer. It's not fun to go out to dinner with them because there's always something wrong with the food and the service. And don't you cringe when one dish needs to be sent back to the kitchen?"

luftmensch - Person who has no business, trade, calling, nor income and is forced to live by improvisation, drawing his livelihood "from the air" as it were. He builds castles in the air and never achieves anything.

Example: "The son....," wrote American author Irving Howe, "is leaving to be a luftmensch --a starving poet, a painter without pictures, a radical leader without followers."

schlep - to pull, to drag

The New York Post (5/23/14) reported that Whole Foods Market is forcing its delivery people to go hungry, charging customers a fee without giving a cut to the employees who actually schlep their groceries, a lawsuit claims.

According to Bonnie Caplane, "shlep" isn't even Yiddish anymore. It's in the dictionary. What other word would you use to describe a woman with a purse falling off one shoulder, ill-assorted papers and book in one arm, a pen between her teeth, glasses slipping off her nose, a cup of coffee in one hand and a basket of bagels balanced in the other, walking to a meeting?"

shlimazel/shlimazl - unlucky person; ne'er do well
In 2002, this ad was placed in newspapers by IDT:

Based on the Wall Street Journal, you have to be a shlamazal to be using AT&T, MCI, Sprint or Verizon.

In “The MeshugaNutcracker,” the plot couldn’t be simpler: Set in Chelm, where shtetl-dwellers fancy themselves wise, a group of eight “actors” with names like “Schnook,” “Shmendrick,” “Schlemiel” and “SCHLEMAZEL” wait for their illustrious director to arrive. (Review by Dan Pine, of the play “MeshugaNutcracker” presented at University of San Francisco’s Presentation Theater.)

schmaltzy - overly emotional; cheesy sentiment; maudlin sentimentality

Ex. Oprah’s selections for her book club are often “schmaltzy.”

Ex. I’m a fan of mega-selling author, Nicholas Sparks’ brand of schmaltzy romance.

Author, Beth Greenfield writes, “Twenty-five years after its theatrical release, the mere idea of Yentl--a vanity production for director, screenwriter and drag-wearing Barbra Streisand--seems much more quaint than it did in the early ‘80s, when the film was in good company with Tootsie and Victor/Victoria. But how could we not giggle at such a schmaltzy stunt (in a musical, no less) in today’s trans-savvy world?” (Source: TimeOut London)