

# SHARING WARMTH

by Sally Hoffman

***Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?  
(Ecclesiastes 4:11)***

One of my favorite perks of the weather getting colder is that my dog Sadie often chooses to sleep in my bed. During the summer months, the heat of the evenings relegates Sadie to a cooling mat next to the bed, but as the fall and winter arrive, her willingness to join me is much more regular. On a nearly nightly basis, as I lay in bed and rest my eyes—bundled up in my covers as the cold seemingly permeates the house—I feel the familiar impact of Sadie landing on the bed. She slowly approaches, and delicately taps on my back as if to ask “Mom, can I join?” I lift the corner of the blanket so that she can burrow her way underneath and cuddle up to me. Without Sadie in bed, I am often left chilly, but with her, I feel comfort, warmth, and joy; I would like to think she feels the same.

While not all hospitality comes in the form of Sadie’s cuddles, I believe the idea that the benefit is mutual, and provides a shared comfort, warmth, and joy can be consistent. Thriving independently can be a monstrous task, but a simple helping hand or welcoming invitation can provide a person with the comfort of belongingness, the warmth of compassion, and the joy of community. On the flip side, showing hospitality opens one up for beautiful experiences that they would not have otherwise had. Together we can achieve far more than we can alone.

**GOD, WE THANK YOU FOR THE GIFT OF HOSPITALITY: WHERE HEARTS OPEN AND HOMES BECOME SANCTUARIES. MAY OUR GATHERINGS BE FILLED WITH COMFORT AS WE SHARE WARMTH AND JOY IN EACH OTHER’S PRESENCE. HELP US TO CREATE SPACES WHERE KINDNESS THRIVES. AND LET EVERY SHARED MOMENT NURTURE OUR SPIRITS AND DEEPEN OUR BONDS. AMEN**