

Shabbat Shalom everyone!  
Great to see you :)

A week ago I got an interview to become a combat fighter in the army. And the truth is, I had mixed feelings after getting this message. For years I grew up with my father in the army, in a senior position, with the knowledge that I also wanted to be in combat just like my father. And maybe I wanted it because I admired him and always saw him as my hero. but I had other reasons for wanting to be in combat , it was always clear to me that the reason I could sit with friends in a cafe calmly, is because there are people who guard the country's borders. I felt that when I go to serve it would be my time to give back to the country, and give other kids the peace to do what they love with a sense of security. And if we talk about a sense of security, sometimes I understand how much it is something that is not taken for granted in Israel, and sometimes it is difficult for people who live outside of Israel to understand that there are people who grow up in the reality that you don't even feel safe leaving your house at all.

In Israel the heroes who defend the country are the warriors. From a young age we learned about them, we saw dozens of people in army uniform walking the streets every day, and we grew up to the reality that being in the army is something that is normal and even a kind of an honor. I remember my grandparents telling my parents "when you grow up, there won't be an army", a sentence that has been passed down for generations but is never really true. Because we live in a reality where we need an army, we need fighters. And sometimes I wonder to myself how ridiculous it is that this is the reality we grew up in.

Although I had a dream to be a combat soldier, I have a very complex relationship with the part. As I grow older, I understand the problematic nature of the role and the fact that the dream I wanted may no longer be my will.

I always knew that this is not a "pink" reality, that being a fighter is a position with a lot of responsibility, hard work and conditions that are not good at all. I knew it wasn't some "shiny" military service, but the desire to contribute to the country, the feeling of Zionism, was greater than the disadvantages.

Until I started to understand how much the position is full of moral and conscientious questions, and that I won't always be that hero that people will admire. Because sometimes reality is simply more complex than that.

My "crisis" with the combat soldier role was very recently, when Israel was one big political chaos. And I found myself asking, is this the country I want to protect? Is this the country I'm willing to risk my life for? But I answered to myself, "Don't think like that, because in the end the country also consists of people who think exactly like me, and still everyone just wants the feeling of security".

Then I got angry, at the world, at the country, at a society that paints the role of the warrior as a hero even though sometimes it is not true. Because in what world is a kid who has just graduated from high school, is holding a gun.

And how my friends are fighting a war before they've even had the chance to fully experience the world. When I told my father about this interview he didn't have much to say, he's the kind of person who really doesn't care that we will do what he did, but only that we be happy with our choices. So his answer was exactly as I expected: "if this is what you want to do, go for it, I support what you think is good for you". And it only confused me even more, because although I always wanted to be a fighter for myself, when I'm doubting it, I need some advice and opinions from other people.

In less than two weeks I am supposed to return to Israel for a visit, and to do the evaluation of female fighters. I know I will do it, I know I want to keep my options open. But with all my heart I am also aware of the problematic nature of the part, and the pain and difficulty that I am not even sure I am ready to face yet.

But my process in the last year was to understand that it's okay to see more than one side. It's okay to want to be a fighter because I dreamed of protecting my country, while at the same time realizing that it's not a glamorous role at all.

It is legitimate to think about the morality of being a fighter, and ask myself difficult questions to answer. And it's okay to not want to do all of that either, and just enjoy life like an 18-year-old girl.

I still have time to decide what to do, but at least I am aware that any decision that I'll make, will be my honest and true choice, and I trust myself at the moment of truth to make the decision that is right for me, even if it is not easy.