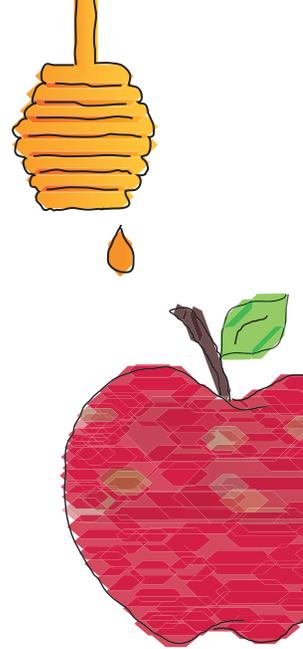


Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur

No matter where you have navigated, searched or browsed throughout the year, the High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur give the Jewish people an opportunity to come home, to return to who they really are or who they want to be. This process is called *teshuvah*, renewal or return, and is the belief that people can reflect on their behavior and continuously commit to being better people. Many of the practices of the High Holidays help us wake up spiritually and morally to live up to our highest personal and

communal ideals. The blast of the shofar is the New Year's spiritual alarm clock, waking us from the slumber of apathy. Eating symbolic foods during the holiday's festive meals, such as apples and honey, reminds us of the possibility of always being able to bring sweetness and joy into our own lives and the lives of others. Fasting for 25 hours on Yom Kippur lets us 'refresh' our spiritual systems for a clean start to the next year.



Doing *Teshuva*: Four Habits of Highly Reflective People

Many of us are sincerely interested in being better people, in doing *teshuvah*, but knowing where or how to start the process is difficult. With this in mind, the great Jewish thinker Maimonides developed a four-step practice of self-reflection and improvement:

1. חרטה - Haretah - Remorse One should identify and reflect upon those actions which negatively impacted themselves and others in the past year.

2. איבה - Azeivah - Resolve One who wants to act differently should do just that—begin acting and speaking towards themselves and others in accordance with their highest values.

3. וידוי - Viduy - Recognize One should attempt to express remorse for their prior behavior to those it has affected and ask for forgiveness.

4. קבלה לעתיד - Kabbalah l'Atid - Reaffirm One should confidently accept that their desire for self-improvement will have a far-reaching, meaningful impact on themselves and the world around them.



חשבון הנפש *Cheshbon Ha'Nefesh* Taking Personal Inventory

During the month before the High Holidays, many Jews engage in the practice of *cheshbon ha'nefesh*, taking a personal inventory of their year, both of their successes and the places where they would like to improve for the New Year. Here are four *cheshbon ha'nefesh* questions to help you get started:

- 1 What were the greatest missteps I made in the past year?
- 2 What important decision did I avoid making last year?
- 3 Which relationships in my life need more attention than I gave in the past year?
- 4 When do I most feel that my life is meaningful?