

10 things to do right now, on your own, with your partner, family, or your HMI cohort to make meaning of the high holiday season

### 1. Cheshbon Ha/Nefesh (Accounting of the Soul)

Jewish tradition can be understood as a practical path to self-actualization, the development of our character, and the capacity to act more consistently in accordance with our highest selves. Metaphysically-speaking, the high holiday season is considered an auspicious moment for the practice of *Cheshbon HaNefesh* (literally, an accounting of the soul). Basically, it's a balance sheet of your spiritual highs and lows from 5780 that will position you to embody an even better 5781. Sounds intimidating? It's actually pretty straightforward: Get a blank journal, find some quiet space, and write. For specific instructions and prompts, visit our HMI high holidays website!

### 2. Manifest your 5781

Ok. So, the second half of 5780 was...rough. To say the least. Nothing makes us hope (cautiously) for the future more than a global pandemic. Grab some magazines, a poster board, and some glue, and construct a physical representation of your hopes for 5781.

### 4. Clear space

Think of the High Holidays as a moment for spiritual AND domestic housekeeping. Take some time to "Marie Kondo" your life in order to make space for 5781 goodness.

### 3. Cook something

Our stomachs and tastebuds are the gateway to our souls. Spend a little time this holiday season researching Jewish recipes from around the world, and try cooking a new dish or two. Bonus points for cooking with seasonal and local ingredients!

### 5. Read & Listen

As with most things in Judaism, you only get out what you put in. See our HMI High Holidays website for links to our recs for books, articles, and podcasts that will add color and context to the season.

### 7. Make some calls

While social distancing has put a serious damper on many of our relationships, this holiday season brings us an opportunity to connect intentionally with the people we love. Make a list of folks you lost touch with in 5780, and make a plan to reconnect. Your soul will thank you.

### 6. Get into nature

Judaism is in many ways a celebration of the natural world, and seasonal shifting is a major element of the High Holidays experience. So go take a walk, hike, swim, or just sit under a tree. Mark time by noticing how the world turns under your feet.

### 10. Say you're sorry.

If you take on one ritual this high holiday season, make it *teshuvah*. *Teshuvah* translates as "return" or rather, to 1) acknowledge the ways in which we've messed up 2) apologize for our mistakes and 3) make a thoughtful plan to not repeat the same mistake again. This practice goes really nicely with *Cheshbon HaNefesh* (the first circle on this page), and it can be a profoundly spiritual practice this time of year. The key to *teshuvah* (and what makes it so intimidating), is that the amends you make don't count unless you verbally apologize to the person you've hurt or let down. For more details on how to practice *teshuvah* this year, check out our HMI website for a special guide!

### 8. Get grateful

Ok, this one is a little corny, but just go with us: Gather the people you love (your HMI cohort, family, friends, virtually or socially-distanced) and host a gratitude circle. Give folks (yourself included) the gift of time and space to express gratitude for others. Encourage people to take risks and be specific. This act of radical love will nurture you all throughout 5781.

### 9. Lean on HMI

Consider your local HMI staff as concierges to the wider Jewish world. Have a virtual coffee with your city director and let them curate a list of local and national Jewish resources that reflect your unique journey.