

A Shabbat Practice

Shabbat is a day that stands apart from the rest of your week, a time to stop moving so fast, stop working so hard, stop thinking and stressing about all of the things that occupy your mind. Shabbat is a day of rest, during which thoughts of the material world are to be replaced with spiritual meditations and reflections on the divine.

On this shabbat we invite you to come together for the ancient Jewish action of resting together. Below you will find a template for a shabbat evening practice. This practice combines traditional shabbat rituals with opportunities for us to bring the questions, ideas and struggles we are wrestling with into the center of our practice.

Lighting Candles



An **appreciation** for something that is - Invite someone to dedicate one candle to something that they appreciate in the world. This could be something they are grateful for having/being a part of or something they are grateful exists in the world. An **aspiration** for something that is becoming - Invite someone to dedicate a second candle to something that they are hoping for. This could be something they are fighting for or something they see others fighting for that they would like to honor and support. An **embrace** of tradition - Invite someone to lead the group in singing the traditional blessing over kindling the lights for shabbat

Baruch atah Adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel shabbat	Blessed are you, Source of Life, who commands us to kindle the Sabbath lights.	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת
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Wine



Raise a glass to a **revolutionary** - Invite someone to offer up a toast to an elder who has inspired them. This could be a well known activist from previous generations or an ancestor who is particularly on their mind in this moment of resistance.

An **embrace** of tradition - Invite someone to lead the group in the traditional blessing over the wine

Challah



An **embrace** of tradition - Invite someone to lead the group in the traditional blessing over the challah

A moment of **sharing** - Invite everyone to share. The challah can either be passed around the circle or tossed to each person in turn. When the challah comes to each person, invite them to share something from their week. It can be something they have been reflecting on, something they are hoping for or the round can be framed in a question specific to events or themes that the particular week has brought up.

** During the height of the Covid lockdown, when it was not possible for us to gather in person, this practice was used virtually every Friday night by a small community across North America. It continued for two years that way.*

The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation, from the world of creation to the creation of the world.

- Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

Shabbat as a Sanctuary in Time