



From Pharaoh to Freedom

Reading Materials



Reading #1: Tikkun Middot & The Path To Freedom

Like hundreds of generations before us, we are here to participate in preparing and celebrating the oldest practiced ritual in the western world. Did you know Passover is the most widely observed Jewish holiday and at its core is a story of freedom? Passover is a holiday during which we remember the story of Exodus, remember being slaves, and remember being taken out of slavery.

We're here to encourage you to have the most meaningful and connected Passover you can. This is a holiday that begs you to have a personal transformation from narrowness to expansiveness alongside your community. We are a people waking up together. The concept of bondage, suffering, and the hard work it takes to find personal liberation is something we care deeply about.

Each time one of us does the hard work of freeing ourselves from our own suffering, we present an example to others and inspire others to do the same. This Passover we encourage you to find what is holding you back from your most expansive self, share these reflections with your community, and at your Seder table, and commit to a week of living more free!

Tikkun Olam, the Jewish value of repairing the world, is for many of a part of identity as humans, and a value that we hold dear. Tonight we will talk about Tikkun Middot, which is the less well known, but equal partner to Tikkun Olam in healing or repairing the world. It all starts with the self.

When the ultimate purpose of each of our lives is to make this world a better place, and that integral to the work of repairing the world (tikkun olam) is the work of elevating the level at which we each individually behave in the world (tikkun middot). Through this practice, we are offered a way of becoming more patient, more trusting, more reliable, more forgiving and so on. This tradition of healing and working internally allows us to better repair the world. Self care, wellness practices and rituals can be a powerful tool when looking and working inside ourselves to elevate this level at which we present our most authentic selves to others around us, inspiring a domino effect of positive change.

Chag Sameach

At The Well envisions a world where women of all experiences gather to support one another on our individual paths to wholeness, by exploring the connection between our physical and spiritual well being.



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Reading #2: Sneaky Pharaohs & Finding Your Happy

Let's look back at the story of Passover. Pharaoh was the "bad guy" holding the Israelites in slavery and unwilling to set them free. He held people in constraints, confined them, and was unwilling to let the Hebrews become their fullest selves according to their own wills.

In our lives, we often have a sneaky Pharaoh that dictates how we think we are supposed to be or the harsh rules we need to live by, "You can't be happy until X," we tell ourselves. X is often: "til I get promoted, 'til I lose 5 pounds, 'til I get a romantic partner, 'til I'm single, 'til I'm getting paid for my art, 'til I've paid off my debt, 'til I own a nice car, that outfit, 'til this other person changes in the way that I want... until then I cannot be happy.' The list goes on.

Step back for a moment and consider: there will always be more to accomplish, more ways to improve and more things to get. While pain, work, and hardship are parts of life, we cause ourselves more suffering every time we put off allowing ourselves to be happy with what we have.

While we might strive for a more whole self or to create a more healed world, we don't have to be miserable until we get there. We can give ourselves permission to enjoy and be happy in the present moment, with exactly what we have, exactly as we are.

Question the Pharaoh that's denying you permission to be happy. You have the power to give yourself permission to experience peace and joy. Even once we know what we want to let go of or transform, it takes courage to move into freedom. It's difficult to move from the comfort of what is known to the potential discomfort and fear of the unknown.

Further, once we achieve change, things might still be hard. We might still find ourselves wandering through the desert for a while. Freedom is knowing that you are worthy of setting your boundaries and trying to meet your needs. Freedom is knowing that you are strong and courageous enough to face whatever you encounter with compassion and spaciousness.

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