

YOM KIPPUR CHEAT SHEET

Yom Kippur is when we get to atone for the mistakes we made during the past year and think about who we want to be in the coming year. Whether you're at services, at home or in the office, fasting or not, or just happy you'll get to wear your skinny jeans tomorrow, use these readings to help you focus on the important stuff – so you don't "cheat" yourself out of all the holiday has to offer. We wish you a meaningful Yom Kippur.

HEENAYNEE

RABBI RAMI M. SHAPIRO

Here I am. A little bit nervous, a bit self-conscious.

After all, who am I talking to? And what have I done?

Am I a sinner in search of grace or a saint seeking salvation?

Am I so evil or so good as to warrant this season of introspection?

And yet here it is, and here I am:

this time of change and correction, this heart of confusion and contrition.

Oh, if I could change!

If I could be so sure of myself that I no longer had to imagine the slights of others;

to be so loving of myself that I no longer had to ration my loving of others;

to be so bold with myself that I no longer had to fear the bravery of others.

Oh, if I could change there is so much I would change.

Maybe I will, but it scares me so.

Maybe I won't and that should scare me more.

But it doesn't.

So let me pray just this:

Let no one be put to shame because of me.

Wouldn't that make this a wonderful year?

Heenaynee – Here I am!

THE WORLD DOESN'T NEED MORE PEOPLE BEATING THEMSELVES UP INSIDE

CRISTEN RODGERS

The world doesn't need more people beating themselves up inside,
making a bloody mess of their broken hearts and tattered shreds of their minds.

There's quite enough of that and all it brings is more pain.

The world needs more beautiful souls like yours who choose to see the beauty in their scars,
who dare to forgive, to take their great big hearts and turn them inside out
and give themselves the same kind of compassion that they give to others.

FOR THE SIN WE COMMITTED

ADAPTED FROM RABBI DOV PERETZ ELKINS (CALL AND RESPONSE:)

For the sin we committed by not serving our community.

And for the sin we committed by serving our community and neglecting ourselves and our families.

For the sin we committed by chasing after material possessions.

And for the sin we committed by thinking we are unworthy of owning nice things.

For the sin we committed by saving the world and ignoring our own people.

And for the sin we committed by saving Jews and ignoring the rest of the world.

For the sin we committed by being too busy for our children.

And for the sin we committed by indulging our children.

For the sin we committed by ignoring the past.

And for the sin we committed by living only in the past.

For the sin we committed by being selfish.

And for the sin we committed by not loving ourselves and not caring enough for ourselves.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE ANGRY

LORI DESCHENE

You have a right to be angry. It's not negative or wrong. You don't have to condone someone's actions or pretend you're okay with them in order to be a good or spiritual person. Just know that you have the power to move beyond your pain, when you're ready. You have the power to find lessons in your heartache, gains in your losses, and reasons to forgive. It might take time, and it might not be easy, but it is possible to heal and move on.

BLESSING FOR ANYONE WHO ISN'T JEWISH

(‘CAUSE WE KNOW THIS IS A LOT)

INSPIRED BY RABBI JANET MARDER

May everyone who shares in a Jewish life feel welcome and integrated. We lovingly acknowledge the diversity of our community and are deeply grateful for the love and support you provide by opening your heart to Judaism, no matter how big or small a part it is in your day. Your presence at this Jewish experience is valued. It is not taken for granted because not everyone in this broken world will sit at a Shabbat dinner or attend a Passover Seder. We are a very small people and history has made us smaller. As we once again see a rise in hatred and hear fear in the voices of our community, we are grateful for your presence. We pray with all our hearts that all you give to the Jewish people will come back to you and fill your life with joy. Amen.

ADD WHEN READING TO A FAMILY RAISING KIDS:

We offer special thanks to those who are raising their sons and daughters with Jewish identity. Our children mean hope, life and future. With all our hearts, we want to thank you for your love and willingness in giving the ultimate gift to the Jewish people. Amen.

“APOLOGIZING DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN THAT YOU’RE WRONG AND THE OTHER PERSON IS RIGHT. IT JUST MEANS THAT YOU VALUE YOUR RELATIONSHIP MORE THAN YOUR EGO.”

RABBI DOVID WINIARZ

A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION FOR THE HIGH HOLIDAYS (THAT WE CAN'T JUST GIVE UP ON IN A FEW WEEKS...)

A JEWBELONG ORIGINAL

Many of us made resolutions on Rosh Hashanah about the kind of person we want to be in the coming year... start meditating, lose five pounds, call mom. This year there is a resolution that we all must make, and stick to, because it's literally a matter of life and death. Antisemitism is on the rise and we must all do our parts to stop it. Jews and allies need to be courageous, to call it out and to never make excuses for it. Antisemitism isn't new, but there are new and insidious strains of it. There's the familiar white supremacy movement that pretty much hates everyone who doesn't look like them, the run-of-the-mill antisemites, the subtle I-don't-really-mean-it-when-I-talk-crap-about Jews kind, and a relatively new form of hate directed at Israel which crosses the line to antisemitism far too often. Antisemitism is hate. Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, atheists... literally everyone is worse off for it. Are we going to end it completely? Probably not. But that doesn't give us permission to throw our hands up and accept it, make excuses, or discount it. It's exactly the opposite. We must talk about it, write about it, learn about it, and call it out. No matter how difficult or uncomfortable, we can't ignore, chuckle along, or accept it. We've already learned the bitter lesson that true hate is never little, it is never unimportant, and it should never, ever be ignored.

TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT GOD

RABBI DAVID J. WOLPE

A woman once stood before God, her heart breaking from the pain and injustice in the world. "Dear God," she cried out, "look at all the suffering, the anguish and distress in your world. Why don't you send help?"

God responded, "I did, I sent you."

"NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU REVISIT THE PAST, THERE'S NOTHING NEW TO SEE."

ROBERT TEW

HURT PEOPLE HURT PEOPLE

YEHUDA BERG

Hurt people hurt people. That's how pain patterns get passed on, generation after generation after generation. Break the chain today. Meet anger with sympathy, contempt with compassion, cruelty with kindness. Greet grimaces with smiles. Forgive and forget about finding fault. Love is the weapon of the future.

GET UP!

RABBI ALLEN MALLER

O Lord, sometimes I feel sad, useless. So aware of the times I have failed. Last Rosh Hashanah's resolutions soon faded away. My bad habits remain unbroken. My good intentions remain unrealized. I can make no new vows, I can make no new efforts, so I give up.

And then, during the Kol Nidre, I heard your plea, "Get up! I only commanded one day for afflicting your soul. I gave you ten days for repentance, for turning over a new leaf in the Book of Life. Now you will have 50 weeks... to be renewed. Even if you don't have faith in yourself, I have faith in you. Get up off the floor and get up quickly. Falling isn't the worst sin. Staying on the floor is."

FORGIVE YOURSELF

DR. MAYA ANGELOU

I don't know if I continue, even today, always liking myself. But what I learned to do many years ago was to forgive myself. It is very important for every human being to forgive herself or himself because if you live, you will make mistakes. It is inevitable. But once you do and you see the mistake, then you forgive yourself and say, "Well, if I'd known better I'd have done better," that's all. So you say to yourself, "I'm sorry."

If we all hold onto the mistake, we can't see our own glory in the mirror because we have the mistake between our faces and the mirror. We can't see what we're capable of being. You can ask forgiveness of others, but in the end the real forgiveness is in one's own self. The real difficulty is to overcome how you think about yourself. If we don't have that we never grow, we never learn, and sure as hell, we should never teach.

"I NEVER KNEW HOW STRONG I WAS UNTIL I HAD TO FORGIVE SOMEONE WHO WASN'T SORRY AND ACCEPT AN APOLOGY I NEVER RECEIVED."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

A PRAYER FOR THE JEWISH NEW YEAR

ADAPTED FROM RABBI JOHN L. ROSOVE

May we hold lovingly in our thoughts
those who suffer from tyranny, subjection, cruelty, and injustice,
and work every day towards the alleviation of their suffering.

May we recognize our solidarity
with the stranger, outcast, downtrodden, abused, and deprived,
that no human being be treated as "other,"
that our common humanity weaves us together
in one fabric of mutuality,
one garment of destiny.

May we live harmoniously with each other
and side by side,
respecting differences,
cherishing diversity,
with no one exploiting the weak,
each living without fear of the other,
each revering Divinity in every human soul.

May we struggle against institutional injustice,
free those from oppression and contempt,
act with purity of heart and mind,
despising none, defrauding none, hating none,
cherishing all, honoring every child, every creature of the earth.

May the Jewish people, the state of Israel, and all peoples
around the world know peace in this New Year,
and may we nurture kindness and love everywhere.