

Rosh HaShanah 5777

10 QUICK SELFIE TIPS

Tip #1: Experiment with Angles

Tilt your head to the left and then the right as you view yourself on your phone's screen. For most of us, one side is more attractive than the other. Also, showing off your "best side" is generally more interesting than a straight-on shot, too.

Tip #2: Adjust Your Shoulder Placement

If your shoulders are parallel to the camera, turn them slightly to the left and then slightly to the right, and see what looks best.

Tip #3: Stand in the Light

Pose in an area with beautiful lighting –either inside near a window or outside. Gorgeous lighting = a more flattering selfie. How will you know if the lighting looks good on your face? Hold the phone in front of your face and turn the camera, so you can see yourself. Look at the lighting at that moment. Now, turn 90 degrees. Make note of the lighting. Glance at the background. Turn 90 degrees again. Note the lighting and background. Keep turning until you're back where you started. Chances are, you will have found a spot with excellent lighting and a decent background. If not, either move to another space or try again at a different time of day. What's the best time of day to shoot? Ideally, during the magic hour! (The magic hour is actually two hours—one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset).

Tip #4: Pose with Something New

Perhaps, you just got a new pair of glasses. Frame the photo to accentuate your new

spectacles. If you recently had your hair cut and colored, show it off in your selfie. Or if you just brought home an adorable puppy, pose with your new furry friend.

Tip #5: Do Something Interesting

Take a picture of you engaging in a fun activity—snorkeling in the ocean, sitting on a jet ski, or hiking in Machu Picchu.

Tip #6: Accessorize

Throw on a hat, don a wig, or wear sunglasses.

Tip #7: Express Yourself

Smile! Frown. Pout. Or make a silly face (But no, not the duck face!)

Tip #8: Take a Full-Body Shot

A full-length mirror works well for this type of selfie shot. Again, angle your body to the left or right, which is generally more flattering than shooting straight on.

Tip #9: Release Your Camera's Shutter the Easy Way

Holding your camera with one hand is more common, but a little trickier to keep it steady and take a photo. With the iPhone, you can quickly and easily take a picture by hitting either the shutter release button or one of the volume buttons.

Tip #10: Extend your Neck Forward

To completely remove any double chin in your photo, and to accentuate your jaw line, extend your neck forward. This may feel funny, but it will dramatically improve how you look in the photo. Also, shoot from above. Raise the camera slightly above you and then look up to even further accentuate the jaw.

Tip #11: Use a QUALITY Selfie Stick!!!!!!

One way to really make your selfies stick out is to get rid of the cheesy ‘extended arm in the photo’ look. I know it seems weird to use a selfie stick at first, but there’s a reason you see them all over the place—they make the photos look really good!

There are two basic types of selfie sticks—wired and Bluetooth. I much prefer the Bluetooth variety. It’s really simple to connect and then you don’t have to constantly stick the cord in and out of the phone every time you want to take a picture. Bluetooth is much faster.

If you want to get an actually GOOD selfie stick, the good news is that the price has come way down. You can [get this one from Improve Photography on Amazon for just \\$9.99](#).

For more selfie ideas, logon to Instagram, click “Explore” and then search #selfie or #stopdropandselfie.

1. Taking selfies are a new phenomenon in the last few years.

It’s an interesting feeling of not needing anyone else even when we need to fit a large group of people.

We have gone out of our comfort zone and we reverse the camera, buy extension to our arms find the right position to each participant and of course no one likes to be the one who takes that selfie because is always the one who looks weird in the

final picture, final result. Do you remember when we ask a stranger, can you take a pic of my family?

And then we go through the whole process of editing..more light, enhancing colors, we rotate, alter the shades: “none-mono-tonal-noir-chrome-fade-process-transfer-instant” Many choices of the

original photo and of course we can still Photoshop!

We could translate the image of the selfie to the way we act in life. It’s all about ME. An enchantment of narcissistic behavior. How do I edit my picture to look better?

With selfies we do not have to deal with anybody’s capacity or skills. We only see-act-hear (on a video) what I say and that’s dayeinu. Enough. The other is irrelevant.

We have lost the capacity of discourse, both right AND left. It’s MY way or no other WAY. It’s MY Truth with capital T.

That has created a society of partial listeners. That

have brought us to a self-imposed blindness and deafness of the one who thinks different. Instead of widening our horizons to learn from the other's perspective we have created an insular sense of comfort around those who agree with us.

That escalates in the political level and endangers the sense of eclectic discussion. College campuses have forgotten the meaning of "University" based on academic freedom. As David Palumbo from Stanford University posted: Academic freedom is often understood as the protection academics have in higher education enjoy against censorship. But there is another, perhaps even more pernicious type of censorship, and that is *self-censorship*, as it occurs in individuals, and in organizations. Self-censorship finds form in our reluctance not just to speak out, but sometimes even to think carefully and deliberately about certain subjects. It is as if we somehow understand that actually knowing about a controversial issue will then oblige us to act, and we anticipate that action will create discomfort. So we simply stop short of finding out all the facts; that is to say, we stop being academics. This then provides us with an alibi: How can I take a position when I don't have all the facts?

BROADCASTING IS BEING REPLACED BY NARROWCASTING. The difference is that broadcasting speaks to a mixed public, exposing them to a range of views. Narrowcasting speaks to a targeted public and exposes them only to facts and

opinions that support their prejudices. It fragments a public into a set of sects of the like-minded.

In 1535 Erasmus published the fifth and final edition of the Latin Vulgata.

His translation reads “In the beginning there was **discourse**” instead of stating as other translations did “in the beginning there was The Word”

We have lost the capacity of discourse.

Civility is dying and when it dies, civilization itself is in danger.

What do you see when you look at the Other?

Now let's be honest: What do you see when you at the Other who thinks very similar to your beliefs? Now let's be honest what do you see when you look at the Other who disagree with your beliefs?

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks in his book “Not in God's Name” speaks about the concept of Altruistic Evil. Altruistic Evil is violence committed in the name of high ideals for a sacred cause. In a radicalize mind the conviction of having the only truth generates violence.

The pain of refugees as a consequence of cruel Syrian regimen Myanmar intolerance, European uncertainty, Israel's constant vulnerability, Orlando –Pulse club bigotry, victimization of innocents under Hamas, Hezbollah, ISIS, Alqueida and Ayatollahs. It seems that the list of fanatics repeats or increases every year.

I'm not naïve. I know that there is the "altruistic evil" on the other side that takes Darwin's natural selection under the umbrella of theocracy. In the name of God powers of evil are ready to kill and there is no room for discourse. If we look at a standard picture of the static situation we may see triumphalism of this group of fanatics and the success of their radicalism. But if we look at the historic film democracies have shown that power of discourse prevails at the end.

Democracies have made space for dissent.

Ursula LeGuin writes Every act of communication is an act of tremendous courage in which we give ourselves over to two parallel possibilities: the possibility of planting into another mind a seed sprouted in ours and watching it blossom into a breathtaking flower of mutual understanding; and the possibility of being wholly misunderstood, reduced to a withering weed.

Cary Nelson writes in his newest book *Dreams Deferred* about the concept of NORMALIZATION. What's normalization? It is the process through which ideas, actions and social and political

arrangements come to be accepted and perceived as normal. This includes, for example as he expresses, the process of normalizing building empathy and collaborative relationships between Jews and Palestinians. Anti-normalization does refer to efforts to resist and combat that process. Let's for instance take the BDS movement. Based on ignorance, has taken the place of a DBS (Deep Brain Stimulation) on brainwashing. Some people who "support" BDS don't even know where Israel is located in the world map. Don't know that many of the devices that they use are flooded with Israeli technology and many of the advances that are saving their dear one's lives are produced in Israel. When things become personal that's the perfect time to break the barriers of deafness and allow the discourse to happen in a civilized way. It's time to speak up and to listen.

The Talmud teaches to wrestle with the text as long as we validate the opportunity to an opinion that dissent with us. That receptivity to other opinions, the ability to admit when one is wrong, adherence to the principles of intellectual integrity and a devotion to truth are all key characteristics of one who is entering a dispute “for the sake of Heaven.”

Our tradition teaches that God’s presence is most alive in an open exchange: “both these and those are the words of the living God”. Faith is God's call to see his trace in the face of the Other. But that needs a theology of the Other.

Faith is not about certainty but about the courage to live with uncertainty.

We are entering 5777, another critical year that encompasses American presidential elections, We have lost the capacity of discourse and allowed ignorance, fear, prejudice and violence to take over the main stage. Are the democratic societies based on universal human values going to combat this madness.

Where do we start the process of tikkun?

Let me share a story

A scientist sat and worked, when suddenly approached by his 9-year-old son, determined to help him in his work.

The scientist, who would rather not be interrupted, tried to ask his son to go somewhere else for a while, but when he saw that he would not, he started looking for something that can keep a child busy.

He grabbed and tore a page from a booklet with world map, cut it into small pieces, and gave it to the child with a roll of duct tape.

"Do you like puzzles?" he said, "Take this dismantled world map and see if you can fix it yourself."

He was confident the child would take many days to assemble the map, but a few hours later, he heard the voice

of the son calling him "Dad, I'm done, I put everything back together."

At first, he did not believe it: "It isn't possible at the age of nine to reconstruct a map of the world he had never seen before!" He thought. But he put down his notes, and went to his son, when he was sure he was going to see a mess.

To his surprise, the map was perfect and all the pieces were in place!

"How did you DO that??" The scientist asked his son "how did you put the world back together?".

"Well, dad," the boy answered, "I don't know the world, but when you tore the page from the magazine, I saw on the other side a picture of a man. When you gave me the world to fix, I tried but couldn't. Then I flipped all the pieces and started to fix the person.

And when I fixed the man, I turned it over and saw the world had been fixed as well..."

We are capable of fixing the man.

"We must always take sides," Elie Wiesel z'l urged in

his spectacular Nobel Prize acceptance speech

"Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim.

Silence encourages the tormentor, never the

tormented." And yet part of the human tragedy is

that despite our best intentions and our most ardent

ideals, we often lull ourselves into neutrality in the

face of injustice — be it out of fear for our own

stability, or lack of confidence in our ability to make a

difference, or that most poisonous foible of the soul,

the two-headed snake of cynicism and apathy. How,

then, do we unmoor ourselves from a passivity we

so masterfully rationalize, remember that "injustice

anywhere is a threat of justice everywhere” and rise to that awareness with moral courage and imagination.

In this 5777, let’s start by fixing our self and train our mind and heart into a civilized discourse. Even if the world is going mad, at least we have to do our part to prevent it.