

# HHD.I.Y TOGETHER

## Making Days of Awe

Religious rituals, rites and practices, traditions and customs, music, food, services and even learning can all be a help or a hindrance. They can be a framework for what matters or, if we're not careful, a distracting end in themselves. In our preparation for the High Holydays, we can take the opportunity to remind ourselves of what provides most meaning and purpose in our lives, including our relationships with others.



## CULTIVATING HOLY RELATIONSHIPS



### Talmud Shabbat 31a: The Golden Rule

Someone interested in converting went to Shammai. They said to Shammai: "How many Torahs do you have?" He said: "Two: the Written Torah and the Oral Torah." The prospective convert said: "Well, I believe you about the *Written* Torah, but not the *Oral* Torah. I'll convert on condition that you teach me only the Written Torah." Shammai just scolded and threw them out. The same person then went to Hillel, who immediately converted them and began teaching them Torah...

There was another incident involving a person who wanted to convert and went to Shammai. They said to Shammai: "Convert me - on condition that you can teach me the entire Torah while I am standing on one foot." Shammai just pushed them away with a wooden stick.

The same person then went to Hillel, who immediately converted them and said: "That which is hateful to you do not do to another; that is the entire Torah, and the rest is its interpretation. Now go and study."

### Love is a Verb - by Justin Wise

Love isn't a feeling, though there are many feelings that come with love - joy, longing, delight, anguish, frustration, heartbreak. And when we take love to be a feeling we rob ourselves of any agency when it comes to loving. The feeling has gone we say. I don't love him any more.

But, as the psychologist Erich Fromm teaches us, "Love is a decision, it is a judgment, it is a promise. If love were only a feeling, there would be no basis for the promise to love each other forever. A feeling comes and it may go. How can I judge that it will stay forever, when my act does not involve judgment and decision?"

When we start to see love as a verb, we are given the possibility and responsibility of loving free of our demands that we must feel a particular way. And, in doing so, we allow ourselves the possibility of loving not to get something, but as a gift to match the gift we receive by being loved. This is the path that allows us to love strangers we have never met before, people who are wildly different from us, and to love those close-in without needing proof of our lovability in return.

It may be that this path - loving as a verb - is what will eventually help us humans take care of those who we cast out, and those parts of ourselves that we cast out also.

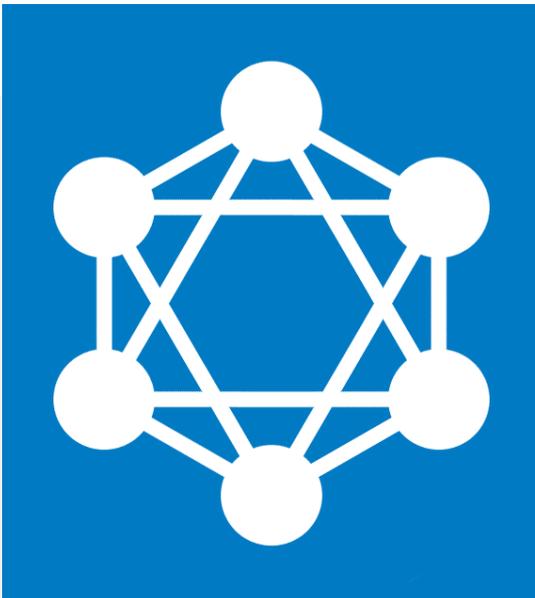
# QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE

The 'Golden Rule' is found in different formulations (and in many traditions). Do you have another short maxim or phrase, or a general principle to live by and to pass on to others? Does it affect the way you live your life? Does it affect others?



## OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER

In the month of Elul, we are doing something a little different this weekend... We invite you to join us for a service in Zoom, **Friday 4 Sept at 6.30pm**. This will be followed by an opportunity to break off into separate Zoom rooms for our local groups to make kiddush together and chat and catch up. Join [here](#). Meeting ID: 820 0755 1530  
Passcode: shabbat



## ACTIVITIES TO DO AT HOME

Reach out to someone who you have been out of touch with for too long. Call, e-mail, text, or arrange to Zoom/Facetime. Is there a reason you lost touch? Which relationships do you want to cultivate?



## **LISTEN** TO A SETTING WHICH INCLUDES LEVITICUS 19:18

***Hareinu m'kabbeil alai et mitzvat ha-borei:***

***V'ahavta l'rei'echa kamocha***

Here I am, taking upon myself  
this commandment of the Creator:  
"Love your fellow as yourself."