

הקשר היהודי שלך

Your Jewish Connection

Brought to you by the Lifelong Learning Committee – *Written by Linda S Trapasso*

Tzniut for Everyone!

Recently I've been going through my clothes to find some things that I think I packed away. In looking at how fashionable they are, I came to realize that most of the clothes are classic styles – so not much changes in my wardrobe! Certainly, I add to it and remove worn items, but I have a look that suits me and I don't deviate from it too much. A few new accessories or more stylish colors, and I'm good to go for another season or more.

But what does Judaism say about clothing? What comes to mind is *tznius* or *tzniut*. For many Jews, the concept of



tznius equates with how one dresses, and particularly how women dress. It often is interpreted as modest or modesty.

Jews are not the only people to consider this question. Muslims and Christian groups also look to women to dress modestly. And if you do a Google search for modest clothing, you will find many places where you can acquire it.

According to Rabbi David Silber, dean of [Drisha Institute](#), in an article published by [Forward magazine](#), *tzniut* is more than just skirt length. Look in the Torah and you'll find that the word does not address women or clothing. Therefore, Rabbi Silber suggests that we not limit our understanding of *tzniut* to only dress. The Hebrew root for this word means “hidden”, but Rabbi Silber encourages us to think of it as “acting humbly in our daily lives.”

This fall, the Drisha Institute offered a three-part lecture series about *tzniut*. Go to the [Drisha website](#), click What We Do in the menu bar, and select Online Learning. You can search on *tzniut* and you'll find two podcasts. These podcasts fully explore *tzniut*. Both podcasts ask us to broaden our definition of *tzniut*. Watch and see what you think.

THE JOY OF TZNIUS

[Wikipedia](#) has a general overview of the topic. If you go to Chabad and [search on tzniut](#), there are pages of topics, including podcasts, from ways to dress to how to act humbly plus stories that help you understand the idea of *tzniut* and how it's perceived.

Tzniut represents a way of life, a manner of behavior, and a manifestation of character. It is a way of embodying an outlook and an approach to life. Additional ideas of *tzniut* and how it affects marriage and relationships can be found in the article [Modesty: Inner and Essential Beauty](#) at Mikvah.org.

To understand the dilemma *tzniut* causes, read this article in Tablet magazine, [Tznius 2.0](#). Though written in 2010,

it is still as true today as it was then. As the author says, “Ultimately, I think, the pinnacle of this new modesty would involve teaching our kids to value themselves for who they are rather than what they wear, whether that's a floor-length denim skirt or a micro-mini. Of course, we want our kids to know they're more than their looks. I'm just not sure how we achieve that.”

As Jews, let us acknowledge that *tzniut* is for everyone who believes in modesty and inner and outer dignity.

CHART
YOUR
COURSE

Save the Date!

Thursday, February 16 – 7:00 PM At the synagogue

For a rocking and rapping concert featuring Matt Barr of Bible Raps Nation.

Matt and his partner Shawn will work with our Vav and Zayin students to create their own Jewish rap. The students will perform during Matt's kicking concert. All are invited to be entertained. Be prepared to rock through the world of Jewish teaching. For more information on Bible Raps, go to [biblerapsnation.com](#)