

Shalom I'Kulam (Hey Y'all),

Perhaps you have come across the popular teaching about time management: It has been attributed to Stephen Covey and involves a large, wide-mouthed glass jar. The presenter begins by filling it to the top with rocks and then asks the audience if the jar is full. Everyone agrees that it is. He then brings out a container filled with small pebbles and pours the pebbles into the jar around the rocks until it can hold no more. Now, the audience understands that it is actually full, but he smiles and then brings out a bag of fine-grained sand. Everyone laughs as he then fills in all of the open spaces with the sand and having learned his lesson, the audience is ready, "No, it's not yet full." With a satisfied twinkle in his eye, the presenter raises a pitcher of water to truly fill in the remaining space in the jar.

The large rocks, he teaches, represent the one or two things that are the most important to us in our lives. These things may include family, Judaism, work, school, sports or anything for which you always make time...the non-negotiables, the priorities that get blocked off on your calendar before anything else. The pebbles, sand and water are the increasingly lower prioritized pieces in our lives. But, as we all know, the least meaningful elements of our lives often command our attention over those that we feel are most important. If you're not careful about putting in the "rocks" first, you'll never get them in later.

We're all susceptible to this: I know I should exercise, but do I make time to do it? Not until a friend calls and asks me to be his workout partner. I love to study, but do I carve out regular time in my schedule for learning? Not until a friend asks me to learn with him. My father taught me that giving blood is a priority, but do I go out of my way to make an appointment? Not until Stamford Hospital calls to tell me they are low and asks me to come in. Sometimes, we won't get to the important things until they are made so easy that we cannot ignore them.

So?!? What gets in the way of the priorities that we truly mean to make time for? The static of our lives. Deadlines at work and overdue bills distract us. The kids' homework and the sink full of dirty dishes sidetrack our good intentions. The promises to a partner and our own needs divert our best-laid plans. This is the static of life and we are largely powerless to turn it off. Some of you still remember the days of TV's with "rabbit ear" antennae. If you succeeded in arranging them just so, you might have been rewarded with a static-free picture for a while. That is what an occasional Shabbat morning might offer. It won't solve the problem of a complicated life, but it might provide a static free period of time for your family or other seekers who are looking for the same pleasure. Wouldn't that be wonderful!

Toward that goal, I'm excited to invite you to explore two new Shabbat morning groups that will shortly be launching at Temple Sinai. On the first Saturday of each month, a group called "**Avodat HaLev – Service of the Heart**" will meet from 9:00am to 10:00am. It will be a contemplative Shabbat service with song, meditation and peace – all are welcome and no prior experience with meditation is necessary. Then, on the third Saturday morning of each month, all are invited (especially families) to a one-hour 9:00am service we're calling "**Shabbateinu – Our Shabbat.**" Stories, Torah and music will find its way into every heart and you'll start your weekend easily and peacefully, ready to go on about your day. And then, of course, every Shabbat morning, our **Eugene B. Borowitz Memorial Bible Study** group will continue to meet and loves new members. Check the calendar at our website for up-to-date information.

My goal is that these will become comfortable Shabbat rituals for many of you and something towards which you'll look forward as a meaningful way to wake up Shabbat morning and start your weekend off on the right foot. Then you can get back to figuring out how to get all the remaining rocks in your personal glass jar!

L'shalom, In Peace

Jay TelRav