

SELF-IMPROVEMENT CONTINUED

○ The Entitlement Disease

Between the selfie and Snapchat, this is the age of the narcissist. Nothing corrodes a relationship quite like the stain of self-obsession. How can we turn our gaze toward others, and become less fixated on ourselves?

NARCISSISM

○ Crafting a Personal Mission Statement

Carefully molded and cooked to perfection, a mission statement is what guides us through life. This lesson is a guide to crafting meaning in your personal life.

GOALS

OTHER

○ The Man and His Movement

A Galician story of the man who changed the face of world Jewry. Sample some tantalizing teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, and study the history of the revolution he sparked.

BAAL SHEM TOV

○ Jewish Numerology

The perfect culinary creation hinges on both precise measurement and creative exploration. The numeric values of the Hebrew alef-beit can reveal a fascinating world in Jewish thought, but must be used with wisdom and caution. Enjoy this overview of the purpose and methodology of gematria.

GEMATRIA

○ Once Upon a Rabbi

Suit up for a foray into the history of the rabbinate. How are they grilled and tested, what is the process of becoming a rabbi, and what role do they play in Jewish life?

SEMICHAH

○ Pardon Me

A lesson for the bruised and the bruisers, because we have all been both at some point. This lesson is a delicate treatment of forgiveness: its fragrance, its fragility, and its fruitfulness.

FORGIVENESS

○ Rain, Rain (Don't) Go Away

The secret to success? A perfect balance of saucy invention and home-style faith.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

○ The Land and the Spirit

The Land of Milk and Honey has its way of bringing sane adult minds to a boil. That small stretch of land is at the center of universal debate. But through classical Jewish texts we uncover the spirit pulsating within the Holy Land and our timeless bond with it. You can taste the milk and honey again.

ISRAEL

○ In Search of the Eighth Note

Music sets the tone for every dining experience. In this session, follow the musical thread to the Levite choir to discover the hallowed place music has in Jewish tradition. Study its history and how we can use the magic of melody.

MUSIC



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ב"ה

WHAT'S ON — the — MENU

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START A CLASS IN YOUR HOME OR OFFICE.
YOU CHOOSE THE TOPIC AND INVITE YOUR
FRIENDS—THE RABBI DOES THE REST.

JEWISH PRACTICE

○ The Sun and the Moon

The Jewish calendar is not quite lunar, not quite solar. What is the rationale behind it, why is it such a central part of our faith, and what lessons can we learn from it? This class takes an in-depth look at this fascinating aspect of Judaism.

JEWISH CALENDAR

○ Why Kosher?

Food nourishes and delights, yet the kosher guidelines affect nearly every culinary creation. What do these regulations accomplish? An intriguing Talmudic tale offers three approaches to understanding kosher and its influence on our gastronomic lives.

KOSHER

○ The Top Ten Percent

Our labor produces income that we use to sustain, experience, and enjoy our time on earth. But do we truly own these things? If G-d enables us to create, what do we owe Him? The commandment of maaser—tithing—is a fundamental idea in Jewish

life. This class addresses our relationship with the things we call our own, and asks us to think deeply about G-d's allocation of physical resources.

TITHING

○ The Case for Mezuzah

In jet-black ink on parchment, a scribe copies the fundamental text of Jewish faith: the Shema. The scroll is tightly rolled and fitted into a decorative cylinder case then affixed to every doorway in a Jewish home. Is the mezuzah an archaic totem? A superstitious artifact? Let's unfurl the mezuzah's meaning and purpose.

MEZUZAH

○ A Time to Renew

At the beginning of every month, the moon reemerges from obscurity and Jews celebrate Rosh Chodesh—the new month. Why does our calendar follow the moon's heartbeat? In this celestial lesson, study the intimate bond between the Jewish people and the lunar luminary.

ROSH CHODESH

JEWISH PHILOSOPHY

○ What Am I?

Like fork-tender meat, our self-probing can cut straight through to our essence. On the way, we encounter unsavory as well as divine strands of ourselves. This delicate lesson explores how we define ourselves. Who are we?

NESHAMAH

○ Freedom to Choose

A buffet of every conceivable action is laid before you in this life. What is the meaning of free choice, how do we reconcile it with our natural tendencies, and why is it God's greatest gift to mankind?

FREE CHOICE

JEWISH PHILOSOPHY CONTINUED

○ Why Bad Things Happen to Good People

Bitter and complex, this tart offering is for those who brave life's toughest questions.

GOOD AND BAD

ETHICS

○ Urban Spying

How much privacy does Judaism protect? How does it compare with the Western conception of privacy? A velvety icing for your sumptuous secrets awaits in this lesson.

PRIVACY

○ The Beginning of Responsibility

Prepare some comfort food for the cold and lonely by settling into a class on the biblical origins of social justice and care for one another.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

○ A Heartfelt Plea

A course best served hot, this lesson plunges into the sticky and sensitive issue of live organ donation, touching on modern case studies and relevant halachic material.

LIVE ORGAN DONATION

LIFE CYCLE

○ Bar Mitzvah Lessons

It's time to go beyond the bagels, deeper than deep-fried knishes. A bar mitzvah is more than a platform for our extravagances. By revisiting three biblical bar mitzvah bashes, we discover what it truly means to mature as a Jew.

BAR MITZVAH

○ Heaven and Hell

Every soul eventually enters the heavenly perfumed world of the Garden of Eden. But there is a process of preparation. Wind through the Jewish map of the afterlife in this lesson on life, consequences, and reward.

AFTERLIFE

○ Return Again

A soul diced fine and garnished with a unique mission is one way to describe kabbalistic thought on reincarnation. Discover the mystics' writings on this mysterious topic. How does it work, what is its purpose, and does it inform my life?

GILGULIM AND REINCARNATION

○ G-d's Custodians— The Highest Form of Giving

Judaism places a strong emphasis on charity: everything comes from G-d, so use what you have as He would want. But why doesn't G-d just give each person their appropriate share of wealth, rather than creating a world where some people are wealthy and others are in need?

FREE LOANS

○ Making the Right Turn

Ice-cold is the mind that must design the artificial intelligence behind self-driving cars. How do we program these autonomous machines to react to ethical dilemmas on the road? A delightful Talmudic foray into dangerous terrain.

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

○ The Jewish Way in Mourning

All pleasure turns to dust. After a life comes to its end, what does our tradition have to say about our response? How should we mourn? Why should we mourn? A lesson on life's last dessert.

DEATH AND MOURNING

○ Arise Again

The Prophets promise us a second serving of life in the messianic era. Explore Judaism's appreciation of the body and this material world, to understand the significance of the resurrection of the dead.

TECHIVAS HAMEISIM

LIFE CYCLE CONTINUED

○ Matchmaker, Make Me a Match

Pairing is at the heart of a gastronomical experience. Finding the perfect wine to complement a particular dish is an art. And so is the pairing of souls in marriage. Join us for a foray into the hallmark of tradition: the matchmaker and her process.

DATING AND MARRIAGE

○ Name Changers are Game Changers

Think of the letters of the Hebrew alef-beit as an exotic world of distinct flavors. Order them in any unique formation, and you yield a tantalizing combination of tastes. That is a name. Every name spells out the personality of its owner. It alludes to one's strengths and ultimate purpose. Swirl your name around and find your flavor.

JEWISH NAMES

SELF-IMPROVEMENT

○ The Joy of Purpose

We have all felt our patience wear thin while the line to whatever only seems to lengthen. Do our sages have pertinent advice for our contemporary battle with the banality of life's thousand annoyances and stresses? Of course they do.

DEALING WITH STRESS

○ A Better Concept of Self

Like a full-bodied and warm aroma, a prideful self-conception can intoxicate, but can also easily overwhelm without a taming tone. Humility is the note that balances our pitch. How do we strike the elusive balance between confidence and reserve; how does Judaism define humility and its place in the hierarchy of personal values?

HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM

○ The Pursuit of Happiness

In the mysterious elixir of a charmed and perfect life, happiness is the most sought-after ingredient. What insight does Judaism offer into the search for happiness? Why is happiness so integral to success, why is it elevated as a religious virtue, and how do we secure it?

HAPPINESS

○ The Thank You Nation

Be thankful for every generous act, Torah teaches, even if done by your enemy. Why go to such lengths? The Exodus story reveals how gratitude is an integral part of leaving behind our communal and personal exiles.

GRATITUDE

○ The Fifth Commandment

Obsessively overbearing or frustratingly distant—parents come in all shapes and sizes, yet we are called upon to honor and respect them. How do we navigate our relationships with those who gave us life? What obligations do we have toward them, and why does the Torah give these obligations such prominence?

HONORING PARENTS

○ In G-d We Trust

We all know worrying doesn't help, but does it also hurt? Turns out it does. In exploring the definitions of faith and trust in G-d, we find a profound and empowering message of how to improve our lives with positive thought.

POSITIVE THINKING

○ I Didn't Mean To

If you're craving a full-bodied, traditional entrée with a modern twist, this lesson in Talmudic wrangling is for you. Ancient dialogue about motive and consequence is fused with contemporary readings and case studies, slow-cooked to perfection on an inquisitive mind with a flair for the dramatic.

ACCIDENTAL BENEFITS

○ The Green-Eyed Monster

The destructiveness of the green-eyed monster is well documented. But is there any good to be salvaged from envy? In this salty lesson we traverse the biblical story of Joseph and his brothers to discover the many sides of envy.

JEALOUSY