



Relationships are the fabric of our lives.

They are the very infrastructure and lifeblood of a meaningful existence. Relationships are mutually-dependant and dynamic; each party within the relationship thrives on the energy of the other.

Relationships can be very powerful, but...even the most intimate and deeply-rooted ones can fall into a routine and lose their vibrancy. The High-Holiday season is a time for refocusing on our core relationships, and recommitting ourselves to keeping them alive, specifically our relationship with the Divine.

The High Holiday season opens with Rosh Hashanah. On Rosh Hashanah we acknowledge our power to say, "Whatever was, was. However I approached my relationships in the past need not determine how I face them in the future. If I allowed my relationships to fall into a rut, from this moment on, I can be a new person. I will not allow my past patterns and mistakes to determine the direction of my future. I have the power to declare this a new beginning!"

Of course, we can do that at any moment in our lives, but on Rosh Hashanah as we come together as a community, we draw strength from each other. We each think about our "point of actual" and measure it against our "point of potential". We take the time to think about who we are, and who we want to be. We resolve that, "We are going to get there! We are going to self-actualize!"

So Rosh Hashanah is a time for new beginnings, sweet new beginnings.

The practices and customs of Rosh Hashanah serve as sensory reminders to the holiday's core message:

- ◆ The **Shofar's sound** calls out to us, saying, "Don't lose this opportunity of fresh starts. Use it to set the agenda of the first day of the rest of your life!"
- ◆ The sweet taste of the **apple and honey** reminds us how life has the capacity to be a sweet experience, with positive relationships. Let us remember that we often have the capacity to create our own sweet realities; if we are so inclined, we can make it happen!
- ◆ **Tashlich** is a special waterside prayer ceremony. With the tranquil backdrop of flowing water, we are reminded, that - just as water is invigorating, refreshing, and cleansing - we too have the power to rid ourselves of past negativities, and reshape the destiny of our lives.

May we all use this holiday to launch a year of "becoming the best me I can be,"

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