

THE HOLIDAY EDITION
For grades 6-7



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What do you know about Yom Kippur? We fast. We spend a lot of time in Synagogue. It's a serious day.

That's all true. But it's important to know that Yom Kippur is actually a happy day, a day when we should feel joy deep inside ourselves.

Yom Kippur is part of the High Holiday season - which begins on Rosh Hashana and continues to Simchat Torah - a season dedicated to cleaning up our mistakes and starting the year fresh.

On Yom Kippur, we get down to serious business. We spend the day in synagogue without any distractions - things which will take our attention away from the 'Better Me' exercise. We don't eat. We don't watch TV.

To prepare for Yom Kippur, we think back to our past year. Did we hurt anyone's feelings? Were we always respectful? Caring? Kind?

We try to make amends. This is an intense process. First, we want to empathize, to think about how the other person must have felt by our actions. We feel regret. We ask the person for forgiveness. We also think about how we can avoid making the same mistake again.

So that's why Yom Kippur is a happy day. Because when we're becoming better people, and when Hashem is forgiving us and our friends are forgiving us, isn't that a reason to be happy? The Shofar blast at the end of the day, is a blast of VICTORY!

THE DIALOGUE

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR THE CHABAD HEBREW SCHOOL COMMUNITY

IT'S YOM KIPPUR!

By: Malkie Herson & Dena Torgeman

SCENARIO 1:

I was so upset! My favorite striped sweater from the Gap was now ruined. Sara, my twin sister, had taken it without asking, and now there was a huge stain of squirted ketchup smack dab in the middle of the torso. She wore it when she went to her friend's for Shabbat dinner. I wasn't home when she was getting ready to leave so she couldn't ask me if it was okay or not. But she still took it. I knew it was an accident, but I was just sooooo mad! She should have asked me, and if she wasn't able to ask, then she shouldn't have taken it! A few days later, after countless unsuccessful attempts to salvage the sweater with oxy-clean and some home remedies we found on google, I came home from dance practice and spotted a wrapped package on my bed. A present! For me! It wasn't my birthday. It wasn't Chanukah. It wasn't any special day at all. I lifted the package, but there was no card attached to it. "Hmmm, who's this from?" I wondered. I tore apart the wrapping paper and opened up a navy blue and white box that said "GAP." Inside was a sweater, the same sweater as the one Sarah had ruined. My favorite striped sweater. Who had replaced it? It was one of two possibilities: Mom or Sara. Sara wouldn't be home from field hockey practice for another hour and a half, so I ran to the kitchen to speak to Mom. "Mom! Look!" I said as I held up the new sweater to show her. "Who's it from?" Mom looked up from what she was doing and said, "Oh. From Sara. She didn't want you to be angry at her so she asked me to replace the sweater." I was grateful that it was important enough to Sara to replace my sweater, but I was still feeling a bit hollow...



SCENARIO 2:

It was peer-editing time in Language Arts. Mr. Kohn paired us up, and with our partners, we took our seats. I was paired with Rachel, who was known to be a tough editor. She was probably one of the best writers in the class, if not the best!



What a pair we'd be; I was probably one of the worst writers in the class. I had a really hard time with punctuation and technical stuff, although I was creative. Rachel and I traded papers and sat in silence as we read through each other's essays. I read slowly, trying hard to pay attention to everything she wrote, but I was distracted by the red scribbles she was marking on my pages. Suddenly, her eyes caught mine as I stared at her, blinded by all the red. "You sure have a lot of problems with your writing. You're not a good writer at all! I don't know if it's even worth it for me to waste my time editing your paper. You're for sure gonna fail no matter what. I mean, I'm a good writer, but I don't know if even I could save this paper," Rachel said, glaring at me. I was speechless. Her words struck me like daggers. "Wait a second," she began again, "is this a joke? Are you in a bet or something? Who can get the worst grade on their essay? What other friends of yours are in on it?" My mouth dropped open. I couldn't believe how bluntly hurtful she was being. Suddenly my eyes welled up with tears. I know guys aren't supposed to cry, but you have no idea how hard I worked on that paper! I stayed up late the past three nights just to get it right. And here was someone critiquing me in the most insensitive way! I know I was bound to have errors, but there's a way to say things! Rachel then realized that it was not a joke. I was really upset. She looked from side to side, anxiously, as if she was figuring out what to say next. "Josh, let me try to edit and give you some tips in a more sensitive way," she said. I was grateful that she offered to treat me more sensitively now, but I was still feeling a bit hollow...

SCENARIO 3:

I was standing on line at the Apple Store, anxious to pay for my new iPod Touch. Man, it was packed in that store. There were so many people in the bright white, technology studded square of a room. Suddenly, this guy who seemed to be juggling about 6 different packages, including two laptops, two different iPods, and a few random accessories pushed his way through the crowd from the front of the store to the back of the store where the cash registers were. The boxes in his hands were piled so high that you could tell he could barely see where he was going. Suddenly I felt a heavy load smash down on my right foot. "Ouch!" I yelled. As I looked up, I realized it was that man with all the things who had stepped on my foot. I kneeled down to rub my toes, hoping the friction would help ease the pain. My luck – I was wearing sandals that day! My teeth clenched, I was trying to resist the throbbing. The man set his things down and saw me writhing in grief. "Oops, oh man. I'm so sorry, kid. I was rushing to go pay, and I didn't realize where I was going." I knew the guy didn't mean any harm, but he didn't even give me eye contact when he apologized. He took his place at the end of the line, and just then I stepped up the register to pay for my new gadget. I couldn't wait to get home and play around with my new iPod Touch, but I was still feeling hollow...



THE DIALOGUE

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Yom Kippur is a time to take a good look at our past year and try to make up for any wrong things we may have done. This is called "DOING TESHUVA". Teshuva is a Hebrew word that means "return". When we make amends, we return to our best selves.

The Teshuvah Exercise is a three-step process:

- 1 - We **FEEL SORRY**, *truly* feel sorry, for a misdeed or mistake we may have made. We think deeply about our action, and the consequences of that action, bringing ourselves to a place where we feel a sincere sense of regret.
- 2 - We promise ourselves that **IN THE FUTURE** we will not do this again.
- 3 - We approach the other person and **VERBALLY APOLOGIZE**.

- ◆ Have you ever received an apology from someone and felt that either 1: the person didn't *really* feel sorry, or 2: the person felt sorry but if the opportunity should arise s/he would probably do the same thing again? Have you ever been in a situation in which you were wronged by someone, and you sensed that the person felt sorry but that person didn't actually apologize to you? How did it feel?
- ◆ Do each of the stories above include **all** three components of Teshuva? If not, what was missing?
- ◆ Practically speaking, what does **all** this teach *us* about how we are to "do Teshuva"?