

TASHLICH תשליך

"וְתַשְׁלִיךְ בִּמְצֻלוֹת יָם כָּל-חַטֹּאותָם"- (מיכה ז', י"ט)

"And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19)

When I was little, I was mesmerized by this custom. After spending a full day on the first day of Rosh Hashana in shul, followed by a long lunch of deliciousness (round sweet challah, apples and honey, pomegranates and desserts), I was told we were going to *tashlich*. I grew up in Jerusalem, so it didn't seem maybe as natural as it would for someone living in a beach city. We'd find the one pond nearby and there were hundreds of people there. In that pond, on the afternoon of Rosh Hashanah we'd come with our readymade bags of breadcrumbs (usually leftover challah) and throw them in the pond, symbolically washing away all our sins from the past year. I was fascinated by this all- what did it mean that my sins had turned into breadcrumbs? What had I done wrong that year? What if a fish ate the breadcrumb- did that mean my sin was gone? Was this our Jewish version of a new year resolution?

But as I got older, it felt so comforting to know that I had a chance for a fresh start. While it seemed silly that breadcrumbs and a little pond represented that, there was something about my whole community, family and friends, saying- what was in the past is in the past, we are all witnesses here to throw that away and start fresh. I ended up loving this tradition so much, that even when we lived in cities where it was harder to find bodies of water, I would push my family to come do it with me.

I think the symbolism of *tashlich* is something that's easily translatable at any age and maybe particularly in a year like this one, where we have so many things we want to throw away, forget about and start fresh. While it may be hard given various limitations to get to a body of water this Rosh Hashanah, the symbolism of this tradition is more needed than ever and something I think we talk a lot about at camp. Giving second chances, starting fresh, forgetting the past and connecting with

nature. We think about all the things we've done wrong in the past year, and then we throw them away, with a promise to try harder in the next year.

I've put together a few ways, in addition to the traditional way, of how to bring *Tashlich* into your home this Rosh Hashana. Enjoy!

Tashlich #1: The Kiddie Pool

You'll need:
A kiddie pool (or even just a large bowl) filled with water
White paper
Washable markers

Have a conversation in your family about mistakes you've made over the past year. Be honest with them about your mistakes too. Have them draw or write their mistakes on the paper with the washable markers before Rosh Hashana. (And you do it too! We often encourage counselors at camp to share with their campers when they make mistakes as well- that is so important!). Then on the day of *Tashlich* or after Rosh Hashana, float the papers in the water and watch your sins disappear. Maybe make it even better while singing the words from Frozen of "LET IT GO!"

Tashlich #2: Beans/Jelly Beans

You'll need:
A bag of navy beans (or chickpeas, lima beans, etc.)
A bag of black beans (or other darker beans)
A bowl

This activity is great for tactile kids who learn best by holding and touching things. Pour one bag of beans into the bowl. Then give your child and you a few beans. Talk about the ways in which you've each made mistakes that year. After each mistake, throw a bean into the bowl. At the end, point out how, though you can see your mistakes, they do get overwhelmed by the other beans, and it looks like a clean slate. You can also stir up the bowl so you can't see the "mistake beans" to illustrate the point even better.

Tashlich #3: Journaling

You'll need:
A journal or anything to write on
A pen

Ask each member in your family before or after Rosh Hashanah, to share a few paragraphs in a journal of things they want to put down in writing and get rid of from the past year. On the other side of the page, they can write some things they would like to work on for this upcoming year- challenges, goals, words of inspiration. On Rosh Hashanah, as a family, put all the pages having to do with the past year in a box (like a camp time capsule!) and don't open that box until Rosh Hashanah next year. In a place that is visible, hang up the goals for this coming year. Next Rosh Hashanah, check and see if you were able both to move on and forgive for the words in the box AND if you were able to achieve the goals you set out for yourself.

Tashlich #4: The classic

If you have a body of water nearby and are able to go to it, or even make a kiddie pool in your home, feel free to prepare breadcrumbs and either notes or silent thoughts of what you want to change for next year and what you want to throw away.

SHANAH TOVA,

Ariella