



Welcome to the Path of Ruach Shalom

Goals

Our world is in urgent need of healing, Tikkun. As a community and individually, we want to advance a new paradigm for humanity. Infusing our world with Ruach Shalom, the spirit of *shalom*, wholeness, peacefulness, is one path for accelerating the human evolutionary process and realizing this goal. As we refine ourselves by cultivating the spirit of wholeness within our hearts, our thoughts, and our actions, we become instruments to expand Ruach Shalom in the world.

Definitions and Guiding Principles

Ruach is the Living Spirit that animates all creation from the cosmic to the cellular, originating in the moment of Creation. Ruach Shalom is the Spirit of Wholeness – the experience of peacefulness, equilibrium, and integrity from which acts of kindness, compassion, and justice arise.

Awareness of Ruach Shalom flows from understanding the interconnection of all creation; a mindfulness that integrates insights from science, spirituality, and all traditions. It is a manifestation of 4th turning of Chassidism, a universal earth loving egalitarian tradition for all people everywhere.

The potential for Ruach Shalom to flourish within each of us is nourished by love, self-reflection, kindness, and righteous action. Unkind actions can diminish the presence of Ruach Shalom in our lives and the world, while mindfulness in everyday life supports Ruach Shalom consciousness. Ultimately, love is the binding force holding our lives and world together, energizing our movement towards greater harmony and unity.

Realms of Practice and Strategies for expanding our experience and expression of Ruach Shalom

We are developing a system of practice to continually refine ourselves as instruments to promote the flourishing of Ruach Shalom in our lives, our relationships, and our world. By increasing our internal experience of Ruach Shalom we can, in turn, energize our capacity to engage in practical action and to inspire others. The 3 *Realms of Practice* we are presenting are contemporary, universal expressions of the roots of Jewish spiritual life: *T'fila*, *T'shuvah*, *Tzedakah* תפילה תשובה צדקה; additional Strategies for manifesting Ruach Shalom will also be shared.

- **T'fila** תפילה - Connecting to Spirit: each in our own way to harmonize with oneness, wholeness.
- **T'shuvah** תשובה - Refining ourselves as instruments for Ruach Shalom: working on clarifying ourselves through constant self-reflection and learning to enable connection with our pure core.
- **Tzedaka** צדקה - Transformative action: manifesting the spirit of shalom by our actions in the world.
- Blessing - Expanding the circle of goodness by giving blessings wherever we are.
- Reducing negative energy – enhancing the goodness in others by minimizing our behavior that might diminish the expression of goodness in others.
- Dynamic Homeostasis - learning to maintain healthy balance in the face of a changing, challenging world.
- Utilizing the Tool for Daily Self Reflection as a daily personal ritual.

We will also explore the formation of Sacred Circles as a vehicle for developing our practice in community.





A Tool for Daily Self Reflection in the Practice Realm of T'shuva

This poem is a tool for our daily practice of self-reflection, learning, and fine tuning our thoughts and actions. Take time each day to be quiet and reflect on how we may be thinking, feeling and acting in relationship to how we aspire to be. The way we use this tool is individual. Some of us may read it through each day, looking at ourselves in relationship to each of these stanzas and the lines that follow. Some of us may zero in on one stanza or one line that is currently relevant and examine ourselves in relationship to this one aspect of ourselves until we have mastered it. Others may use it differently. The process itself is transformative.

- Be Present
 - Wake up.
 - Our lives are finite.
 - Make time to just be.
 - Grow our wisdom.
 - Cultivate joy, even in the darkest places.

- Perform Acts of Service
 - Opportunities for service are all around us.
 - In our families. In our communities. With others.
 - Learn what needs to be done.
 - Plunge in with both feet.
 - The more we give, the happier we become.

- Engage our Struggle
 - Remember. The struggle is long.
 - Master the terrain.
 - Be strategic and keep a long view.
 - Retreat only to move forward.
 - Come from our love in each encounter.

- Pacify our inner beast
 - Contend consistently with anger.
 - Calm the hurt that lies beneath it.
 - Become self-aware.
 - Anger impedes effectiveness.
 - Beware of the boomerang

- Love one another
 - Be kind.
 - Be kind to each person.
 - Be kind to ourselves.

- Be kind even to those we don't like.
- Our kindness is healing.
- Cultivate our power
 - Gentleness is our strength.
 - Listen with an open heart.
 - Soften resistance.
 - Be generous.
 - Bring one another closer.
- Jettison excess baggage
 - Practice forgiveness.
 - Acknowledge our part.
 - Forgive one another.
 - Forgive ourselves.
 - Letting go is freedom.
- Hold one another together
 - Nurture community.
 - Become a living bridge.
 - Learn, teach and just be.
 - Support one another's initiatives.
 - Practice wherever we are.
- Accelerate our growth
 - Learning makes us stronger and healthier.
 - Form learning partnerships.
 - Be self-reflective without blame.
 - Pay attention where we feel challenged.
 - Making corrections is joy making.
- Ground our actions in vision.
 - Keep our eyes on our purpose.
 - Play the game accordingly.
 - In the moment.
 - For the future.
 - Yes. We Shall Overcome.
- What else
 - Our lives have many challenges.
 - What is calling out for my attention?
 - Who am I in relationship to this challenge?
 - Are any of the previous Ten Stanza and Fifty Lines relevant?
 - I open self in sweet surrender to Ruach Shalom, Spirit of Peace and Wholeness.

