

שבת

Shabbat

lit. rest/7th day

Make Time for Rest and Renewal

The Jewish approach demands we carve out time ...
for rest, reflection, family and pleasure.

Let's go, let's travel to greet Shabbat, for she is a wellspring of blessing.

- Lecha Dodi, Rabbi Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz

To gain control of the world of space is certainly one of our tasks. The danger begins when in gaining power in the realm of space we forfeit all aspirations in the realm of time. There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord. Life goes wrong when the control of space, the acquisition of things of space, becomes our sole concern.

– Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Sabbath

Shabbat is an opportunity to stop *doing* and start *being*, to connect with the people who are right in front of us.

It is said that on Shabbat, we receive a *neshama yetera*, an extra soul. Even if it is not your practice to “keep Shabbat” (or if it is) you can mark Shabbat in your own way – especially by doing something each Shabbat that is good for your soul. It could be a walk in the woods, connecting with a certain friend, enjoying music or dancing – anything that reminds you that you are alive and connected.

Despite all the time saving devices we use, we seem to have less and less time for things we want to do. Arthur Waskow (a 21st century Rabbi associated with the Jewish Renewal movement) asks, ‘how can we be free people if we don’t have free time?’ The practice of Shabbat literally creates free time.

Questions for Conversation and Reflection

1. How do you spend time that feels truly restorative, not depleting.?
2. When was the last time you gave yourself ‘free time’ as Rabbi Waskow describes?