



At a Glance

Bet
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In Elul Bet, we respond to a variety of questions and statements that inspire **introspection** and promote **self-awareness**. Participants are challenged to identify their passions and priorities and to establish specific and realistic **short- and long-term goals**.

GOALS

- To enhance participants' self-awareness by engaging in active introspection
- To encourage clarity regarding personal priorities and perspectives
- To develop and practice goal-setting skills

ACTIVITIES

- **Opening Ritual and Warm-Up**
- **Who Am I? An Introspective**
Answering questions that promote self-awareness
- **Make It Your Mission**
Developing and sharing personal mission statements
- **If You Will It, It is No Dream**
Setting goals
- **Making Your Mark**
Creating a bookmark as a reminder of personal goals and priorities
- **Closing Ritual**
Singing *Im Tirtzu* and/or reciting the traditional "Prayer for the New Month"







Before the Gathering

PREPARE


- Read all materials.
- Secure a gathering location.
- Send *Remember* cards.
- (for optional “Closing Ritual”) Learn Debbie Friedman’s song, “*Im Tirtzu*,” on her tape “*Ani Ma-amin*” or as sheet music, available at www.soundswrite.com. The music is also published in the songbook, *The Best of Debbie Friedman*, available at www.arepublish.com/Friedman.htm. A Real Audio Player clip may be available at www.soundswrite.com/swsounddf.html.
- Make several sample bookmarks, according to the instructions in “Create.”

COPY HANDOUTS

One copy per participant:

-  *Essence of Elul*
-  *Im Tirtzu: If You Will It*

One copy on paper, and cut into strips:

-  *To Get You Thinking*

ASSEMBLE MATERIALS

Stock Supplies

- Ritual Cloth (and fabric markers if part of your ritual)
- Rosh Hodesh candle, candleholder, matches
- Kipah* (optional)
- CD or tape and player to use during craft or writing activities
- Group Guidelines* poster
- Snacks

Additional Supplies

- Bowl or bag for distributing *To Get You Thinking* strips
- One for each participant:
- Pad of paper
 - Pencil
 - Strip for bookmark (very thin leather or canvas, if available; bright cardstock if not)
 - Markers
 - Optional: hole punch and yarn for making tassels



Gathering Plan

GATHER

ברוכות הבאות Beruhot Haba'ot: Coming Together, Creating Sacred Space

Welcome girls to the meeting for Rosh Hodesh Elul as they sit around the Ritual Cloth.

If applicable, **process** “Bring It Home” suggestions from the previous month.

☞ Distribute an *Essence of Elul* handout to each participant.

Ask a volunteer to **lead** the group in singing or reciting the “Creative Prayer for the New Month” as the host girl **lights** the Rosh Hodesh candle.

Invite the girls to **identify** the connection between the snacks and the themes of the months. **Compare** their responses to the “Food” section on the *Essence Sheet*.

Ask for a volunteer to **recite** the appropriate food blessing. (See *Blessings* sheet in binder pocket.)

Ask for a volunteer to **lead** the opening sharing:

Imagine yourself ten years from now. (Pause.) What are you doing?

Acknowledge the girls’ contributions.

EXPLORE

קולותינו, נחלתנו Nahalateynu, Koloteynu: Our Inheritance, Our Voices

Who Am I? An Introspective

Review the *Essence Sheet*. **Point out** that, in anticipation of the High Holy Days, this month is a time of introspection.

Explain that in this meeting we will engage in a process of **self-reflection and goal setting**.

☞ **Pass around** a container in which you have placed slips of paper cut from the *Get You Thinking* handout.

Instruct each girl to **pull out** one of the questions. **Proceed** around the circle, allowing each girl to read and **respond** to the question she selected. **Encourage** everyone to think about how they would respond to each question. ☞

☞ **Facilitator's Tip**
Allow girls a chance to respond to someone else's question if they feel compelled.

REFLECT

נִדְרוֹשׁ Nidrosh: Seeking Meaning

Make It Your Mission

Explain to the girls that these questions were intended to help get them thinking about who they are or dream of becoming, and what they dream about and enjoy. This exercise is a “warm-up” to help prepare them to **develop their own mission statement**.

Explain that many organizations and companies develop such a **statement of purpose** that defines and guides them. A personal mission statement can do the same.

Point out that a personal mission statement is like having your **own motto** that states what you are all about. There is no formula—it can be a quote, a poem, an emblem or a line from a song. It should just reflect **what matters** to you.

Distribute pads and pencils. Allow about ten minutes for the girls to **write** their mission statements.


Invite the girls to **share** their statements.


DO

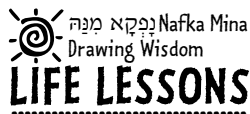
נַעֲשֶׂה Na'aseh: Participate and Process

If You Will It, It Is No Dream

Point out any themes that emerge from the mission statements that connect to goal setting. Knowing what you enjoy doing, for example, can help define your career goals. Identifying what you care about can guide your interpersonal goals and choices.

 **Distribute** the *Im Tirtzu: If You Will It* handout. Review the “S.M.A.R.T.” guidelines for setting goals. Ask the girls to select one goal (personal, academic, short- or long-term) and to apply these principles in completing the handout. ➔

 **Facilitator's Tip**
Assist the girls in completing the handout. Offer examples of steps toward their goal, such as gathering resource information or talking to others who share their goal or have reached it.



Knowing yourself—your preferences, strengths, tendencies, and challenges—will help you make wise choices.

Knowing what is important to you will help you live in keeping with your values.

When you are guided by your personal passions and priorities, you are more likely to feel good about yourself and your life.

You need to know where you want to end up in order to find the path to get there. Setting specific and realistic goals will help you realize your long-term dreams.

CREATE

מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַיִן Ma'aseh Yadeynu: The Works of Our Hands

Make Your Mark

Distribute strips for making bookmarks and art supplies.

Have the girls **design** bookmarks, **incorporating** their personal mission statements.

Encourage them to use it and to read their statements often as a reminder of what matters to them.



BRING IT HOME

לְהֵיטֵיךְ וָדֶרֶךְ לְכַתֵּךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ Lehteyh Vadereh: Take It With You

Point out the quotation appearing on the bottom of the *Im Tirtzu* handout. Encourage the girls in their journey of becoming. Challenge them to apply their short-term time line between now and the next meeting.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Allow girls to add new designs to the Ritual Cloth (optional).

Confirm the next meeting place and time.

CLOSING RITUAL

בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ בְּצֵאתְךָ Beruha At Betzeyteyh: Blessings as You Go on Your Way

(optional) Teach the song *Im Tirtzu*, sharing the translation and source (If you will it, it is no dream.—*Theodor Herzl*) and its significance for today's exercises

and/or

Recite the traditional “Prayer for the New Month” from the *Essence Sheet*.

STILL TO DO!

1 Enter notes on this gathering in the *Monthly Log* (Forms).

2 Determine the next month's topic and activities by reading through the *Sourcebook* options or creating something in response to group needs.

Be sure to check the *Before the Gathering* sheet for any

- **special preparations**, such as arranging for a guest presenter or purchasing materials;
- **special space requirements**, such as for a craft project or movement activity; or
- **reminders** to the girls, such as bringing something to the meeting.

3 At least three weeks before the next meeting:

- **Call** the host family/institutional sponsor to **reconfirm** date, time, and any special requirements, as indicated in next month's *Before the Gathering*.
- **Make** food arrangements in keeping with *kashrut* and allergy concerns. (Check next month's *Essence Sheet* for suggested foods.)
- **Speak** with the host girl to explore appropriate **leadership opportunities**, from sharing responsibility for confirming attendance to selecting a topic or facilitating an activity.
- **Mail Remember** postcards, adding any special instructions, such as something you would like the participants to bring or prepare before the meeting.





To Get You Thinking

Make one copy and cut into strips.

What are the three most important things in your life?

What are you really good at?

What do you wish you could do more of?

What motivates you when you are feeling lazy?

Who are the "support people" in your life?

What is your fondest memory?

What is something that worries you?

What do you like about your life?

What do you dislike about your life?

If you had a day to spend in a huge library studying anything you wanted, what would you study?

How would you like to be able to contribute to your community?

What is your most prized possession? Why is it so important to you?

What is one goal you have for this year?

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live? Why?

If you could be someone other than yourself, who would you be? Why?

What is the one thing you definitely want to do when you are an adult?

What accomplishment are you proud of?

What is something that scares you?

What is something that always makes you happy?





IM TIRTZU: If You Will It אִם תִּרְצוּ

If you will it, it is no dream.
Theodor Herzl

Goal-setting is:

Specific **M**otivating **A**ction-oriented **R**ealistic **T**imely

My goal is _____

Why do I want this? _____

What/who will keep me focused? _____

What steps do I need to take to get there? _____

What are the obstacles on my path? _____

Here is my timeline (When will I complete the short-term steps? When will I reach my goal?): _____

"S.M.A.R.T." is adapted from *Discover Agenda* (Bellingham, WA: Premier), 2001, available at www.premieragendas.com. See also *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey (New York: Simon and Schuster, Fireside, 1998).

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All of us are human becomings, rather than human beings.

Sky Schultz

