



Yamim Noraim Resource Pack

Youth Director Edition | 5787 / 2026

ROSH HASHANAH • YOM KIPPUR • SUKKOT • SIMCHAT TORAH

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Welcome to a new (Jewish) year at your communities!

First and foremost, we would like to thank you, the Youth Directors, for your unwavering investment into your communities. Putting yourself aside and putting time, energy and creative efforts into making the Yamim Noraim meaningful for your community is something we value so highly and cannot thank you enough for.

In this booklet, you can find example sessions for each of the Yamim Noraim, which can serve as a springboard for sessions at your community. You can use parts of it, you can adjust it, or you can use all of it, depending on your community and participants' needs and wishes.

My thanks to Rebbetzen Shifra Chesler, who put together every activity in this booklet.

Wishing you a Ktiva Vechatima Tova.



Rabbi Matt Marks

Executive Head of Tribe

The Order of Tishrei

An introduction for youth directors.

R' MATT MARKS · EXECUTIVE HEAD OF TRIBE

For most of the year you are competing for attention. Over the Yamim Noraim you are not. Your shul will hold more of your community in one room than at any other point in the calendar: families you will not see again until Pesach, children whose names you are learning on the spot, teenagers who have been sent by a parent and are deciding within about four minutes whether there is anything here for them.

It is also the hardest few weeks you will work all year. But it is also what will set the tone for the year that follows.

The Rambam opens Hilchot Melachim with three mitzvot given to Israel on entering the land: appoint a king, cut off the seed of Amalek, and build the Beit HaBechira.

שְׁלֹשׁ מִצְוֹת נִצְטְווּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשַׁעַת כְּנִיסַתָּן לָאָרֶץ

Three mitzvot were commanded to Israel at the time of their entry into the land.

RAMBAM, HILCHOT MELACHIM U'MILCHAMOTEIHEM 1:1

That is a claim about how you settle a land. It is also a claim about how you begin anything at all: a year, a youth department, a Sunday morning with eleven children in it.

And it is the shape of the chagim we are about to walk into.

1

ROSH HASHANAH

Appoint a king

Rosh Hashanah is a coronation. The whole of Musaf bends towards Malchuyot, and the shofar is the sound a king is crowned to. Before a single practical question gets answered, one question is settled: who this is for.

That is the most important part of community work, remembering why we do what we do and Who it is all for.

2

YOM KIPPUR

Cut off Amalek

Amalek in our sources is more than a nation. Asher karcha baderech: the one who cooled you down, who meets a burning thing and makes it feel embarrassing. The mussar and chassidic reading takes Amalek as gaava, as the ego, and Yom Kippur is the day you stand in front of a court and let it be taken off you.

Ego is the hardest part of serving a community. You will be judged. You will be criticised, sometimes by people who have never run anything.

Working l'shem shamayim gets talked about as piety. Treat it as an operating model. Recognition does not arrive in proportion to effort in this job, and if recognition is what you are running on, you will be finished by Chanukah.

3

SUKKOT

Build the house

Shlomo dedicated the Beit HaMikdash at Sukkot, in the seventh month, at the chag (Melachim I 8). The house we build ourselves in that same week is a hut. Days after the most exposing day of the year we go outside and put up something deliberately fragile, with a door nobody guards, and then spend a week inviting people into it. Seventy korbanot go up over the chag, one for each of the nations of the world (Sukkah 55b). It is the least exclusive festival we have.

That is the model for what you are building: a room a child who has never been to shul can walk into on the second day of Sukkot without feeling out of place or unwelcome.



In the spirit of Rosh Hashanah and orienting ourselves around our purpose, this is what Tribe is striving to achieve, this year and in the future:

VISION

Every young person in our communities rooted in their Jewish story, understanding where they come from and what it means to belong. Out of that rootedness comes responsibility, for themselves and for the people around them.

MISSION

To be the fabric and framework of Jewish life for young people, linking home, school, shul, camp, gap year and campus so that each stage strengthens the next.

ROSH HASHANAH



Many years ago, Martin Luther King Jr., one of history's greatest leaders, gave a famous speech called "I Have a Dream." He didn't spend his time talking about what had gone wrong in the past. Instead, he inspired people to imagine a better future and to believe they could help build it. That's exactly what Rosh Hashanah is about. Every year we say that we pass before Hashem like sheep. Imagine a shepherd watching each sheep walk by. Is he thinking about what that sheep was like last year? No. He's looking at it today. Is it healthy? Is it growing? Is it becoming what it has the potential to be? Hashem looks at us in the same way. Rosh Hashanah isn't about being trapped and judged by the past it's about asking, "Who do I want to become this year?"

SESSION 1

The Jewish People's Dream Relay

BIG QUESTION

What keeps a people going when everything seems lost?

FACILITATOR SET-UP

ASK THE GROUP

If I told you that your school was closing, your home was being taken away, your community was being forced to move, and nobody knew what the future held... would you still believe things could get better?

The Jewish people have faced moments like this many times. Yet every generation kept moving forward. Why?

Because they always had a dream. Not just a dream for themselves, but a dream for the future of the Jewish people and the world.

Rosh Hashanah is not about our past, we join a chain of dreamers stretching back thousands of years.

FACILITATOR

Divide everyone into groups and give them each a scene to discuss. At the end each group will present their scene and as well as their thoughts on the discussion questions.

1

SCENE 1

Avraham Avinu's dream

Imagine being Avraham. Everyone around you believes something completely different from what you believe. Your family, your neighbours and the society around you all worship idols. It would have been much easier to stay quiet, fit in and accept the world as it was.

But Avraham couldn't do that. He looked at the world and started asking questions. He saw the sun, the stars and the incredible world around him and realised that there must be something greater. He came to believe in one God, the Creator of the world.

But Avraham's dream wasn't simply to believe something different from everyone else. He believed that this idea could change the world. He imagined a world where people recognised God, where people lived with kindness and responsibility, and where humanity understood that we are all part of something much bigger than ourselves.

Then God gives Avraham an enormous challenge: "Lech Lecha" - leave your land, your birthplace and your father's house and go to the place I will show you.

Avraham doesn't know exactly where he is going or what will happen when he gets there. He doesn't have a map or a guarantee that everything will work out. He simply trusts that there is a bigger future waiting for him.

Avraham's dream begins with one person being brave enough to believe that the world doesn't have to stay the way it is.

His dream eventually becomes the beginning of the Jewish people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Are there elements of modern culture and society that clash with our values?
- 2 Would you leave everything familiar behind?
- 3 Why was Avraham willing to do something so difficult?
- 4 What dream was Avraham chasing?

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

What is your dream for this year?

2

SCENE 2

Egypt – The Dream of Freedom

Imagine being born into slavery. You have never been free. Your parents were slaves and your grandparents were slaves. Every day you wake up knowing exactly what is expected of you. You work, you come home and you do it again.

After enough time, you might stop imagining anything different. You might start to believe that this is simply who you are.

But the Jewish people didn't completely lose their dream of something better. They remembered that they were the children of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. They remembered that they had a different destiny. They were slaves, but they were not created to be slaves.

Eventually Moshe comes and tells them that they are going to leave Egypt. At first, this seems almost impossible. Pharaoh is the most powerful person in the country. The Jewish people have no army, no political power and no control over their future.

And yet they dare to believe in something they cannot yet see: freedom.

They imagine a future where their children will not be slaves. A future where they can serve God, live as a people and choose their own destiny.

That dream becomes reality. They walk out of Egypt as a free people.

The dream of freedom becomes one of the most important ideas in Jewish history. Every year at Pesach, we tell the story again because we want every generation to remember that your current situation does not have to determine your future.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1** Why do you think the Jewish people were able to keep hope alive for over 200 years?
- 2** What is the difference between your circumstances and your identity?
- 3** What is the path you are expected to tread? If you had total freedom, what might you change?
- 4** Why is hope such an important part of the Jewish story?

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

What have you accepted about yourself that isn't really your destiny? What do you dream of breaking free from this year?

3

SCENE 3

Ezra and Nechemiah – The Dream to Rebuild

The year is around 586 BCE. The unimaginable has happened. The Babylonians have invaded Jerusalem, destroyed the Beit Hamikdash built by King Solomon, and taken many Jews into exile. The city walls have been broken, Jerusalem lies in ruins, and the spiritual centre of the Jewish people has been lost. Today, most Jews live outside Israel, so while the destruction of Jerusalem would be catastrophic, Jewish life would continue in communities around the world. Back then, however, the situation was very different. The vast majority of Jews lived in the Land of Israel, centred around Jerusalem and the Beit Hamikdash. When Jerusalem fell, it felt as though the heart of the Jewish nation had been ripped out. Many people genuinely wondered whether Jewish history itself was coming to an end.

Now Imagine coming back to Jerusalem after seventy years of exile.

The city that your ancestors built is destroyed. The walls are broken, the Beit Hamikdash has been destroyed and Jewish life has been devastated. You could look around and think: "It's over. We lost it. There's no way we can bring it back."

But Ezra and Nechemiah looked at those same ruins and saw something completely different. They saw possibility.

They didn't have the Jerusalem that once existed. They didn't have the glory of the First Temple. They didn't have an easy path ahead of them. What they had were ruins and a small group of people willing to start again. Their dream wasn't to recreate the past exactly as it had been. Their dream was to build a future.

They wanted Jerusalem to become a place where Jewish life could grow again. They wanted people to reconnect with Torah, with their community and with Hashem. They wanted the next generation to have something to inherit. And so they began. Brick by brick, wall by wall, person by person, they rebuilt. Some people looked at what they were creating and compared it with what had existed before. They saw everything that had been lost. Ezra and Nechemiah chose to focus on what could still be built.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which is harder: building something new or rebuilding something that has been destroyed?
- 2 Have you ever had to rebuild after a disappointment, failure or setback?
- 3 What lessons can our generation learn from Ezra and Nechemiah?

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

What do you dream of building this year?

4

SCENE 4

Rabbi Akiva – The Dream Beyond the Ruins

The year is around 100 CE. The Second Beit Hamikdash has been destroyed by the Romans several decades earlier. Jerusalem lies in ruins. The Jewish people have lost their independence, their capital city, and the centre of Jewish life. To many, it feels as though Jewish history has come to a devastating end.

One day, Rabbi Akiva was travelling to Jerusalem with three of the greatest sages of his generation: Rabbi Gamliel, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, and Rabbi Yehoshua. As they approached the city and saw the destruction, they were overcome with grief. When they reached Har HaBayit, the Temple Mount itself, they witnessed a shocking sight. A fox emerged from the area where the Kodesh HaKodashim, the Holy of Holies, had once stood.

To understand why this was so painful, we need to remember what the Holy of Holies represented. This was the holiest place in the world. In Temple times, only the Kohen Gadol was allowed to enter, and even then only once a year on Yom Kippur. It was the place that symbolised the closest connection between God and the Jewish people. Now, instead of holiness and glory, wild animals roamed freely through its ruins.

The other rabbis burst into tears. Rabbi Akiva, however, began to laugh. The rabbis turned to him in astonishment.

"What are you laughing at?" they asked.

Rabbi Akiva replied, "Why are you crying?"

The rabbis answered, "How can we not cry? This is the place about which the Torah taught such holiness and reverence, and now foxes are wandering through it."

Rabbi Akiva then explained why he was laughing. He pointed out that the prophets had given two different prophecies. One prophecy, spoken by the prophet Uriah, warned that Jerusalem would be destroyed and left desolate. Another prophecy, spoken by Zechariah, promised that one day Jerusalem would once again be filled with life. Elderly men and women would sit peacefully in its streets, and children would play there.

Rabbi Akiva said, "As long as I had not seen the prophecy of destruction fulfilled, I worried that perhaps the prophecy of rebuilding might never come true. But now that I see the prophecy of destruction has been fulfilled exactly as foretold, I know with certainty that the prophecy of rebuilding will also come true."

SCENE 4 CONTINUES →

SCENE 4
CONT.

What the others saw as proof that everything was lost, Rabbi Akiva saw as proof that God's promises were still unfolding. The fox did not remind him only of what had been destroyed. It reminded him of what would one day be rebuilt.

The other rabbis were deeply moved by his words. They turned to him and said:

"Akiva, nichamtanu. Akiva, nichamtanu."

"Akiva, you have comforted us. Akiva, you have comforted us."

(MAKKOT 24B)

Rabbi Akiva saw the ruins and imagined the next chapter.

He understood that the Jewish people could experience enormous loss without losing their ability to hope. He wasn't pretending everything was fine. He could see the pain clearly. But he refused to believe that the pain was the final word.

Rabbi Akiva had a dream of a future where Jerusalem would once again be filled with Jewish life, children would play in its streets and the Jewish people would continue their story.

And that is exactly what happened. The Jewish story continued.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What could Rabbi Akiva see that others couldn't?
- 2 Does current circumstance dictate your future?
- 3 Why is hope such an important part of the Jewish story?

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

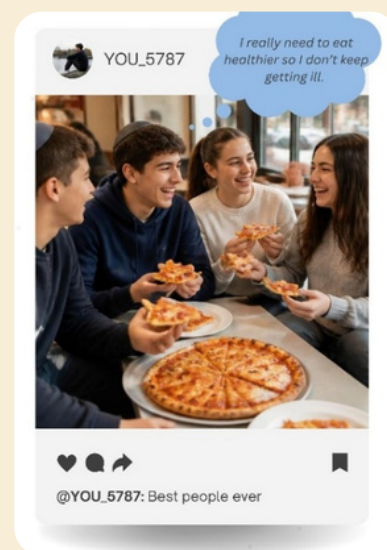
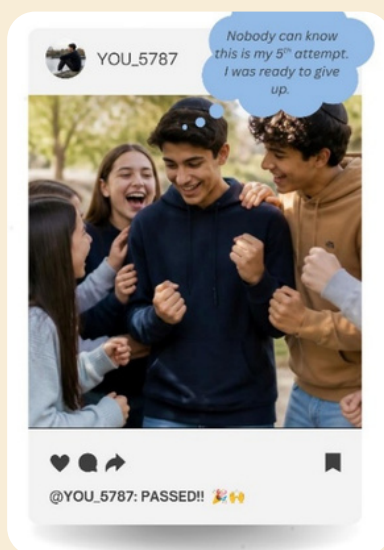
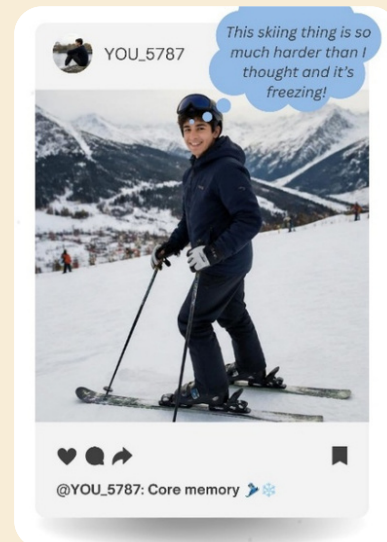
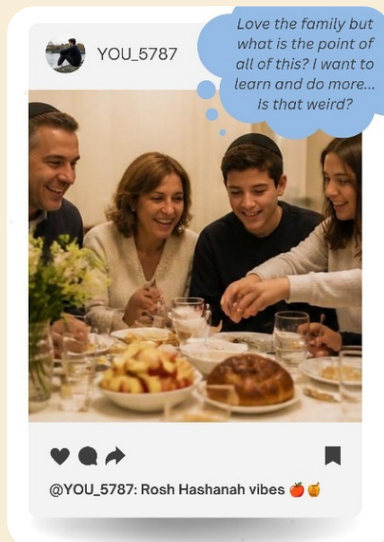
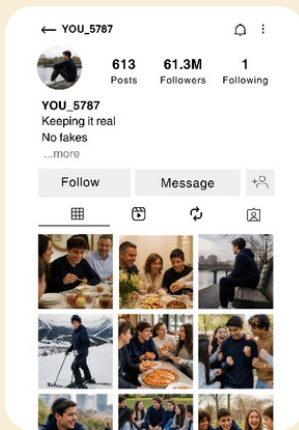
What's your dream for this year?

We are so much more than what we show on the outside. During the year, it is easy to get caught up in how we look to other people - fitting in, succeeding, comparing ourselves, proving ourselves and trying to keep up. Sometimes we become so focused on the outside version of ourselves that we stop listening to what is happening inside. Yet there is a part of us that knows what really matters, wants to grow and knows when we could do better. Rosh Hashanah gives us a chance to WAKE UP - to stop, listen and connect with the person we really are and the person we have the potential to become.

ACTIVITY • @YOU_5787

FACILITATOR SET-UP

Before Rosh Hashanah: Print the @YOU_5787 Instagram profile and the four prepared posts. Show them to the group and explain that each post shows what someone might choose to share with everyone, alongside a thought bubble showing something they might actually be thinking or feeling.



Discussion

ASK THE GROUP

Look at the posts together and ask: "Is this person being fake?" "What do we see on the outside, and what don't we see?"

The point isn't that everything on Instagram is fake. The pizza really happened, they really passed their exams, they really enjoyed skiing and they really are celebrating Rosh Hashanah. But there is always more to a person than what we see.

"Do we only do this on Instagram?" We can get caught up in everyday life too - worrying about what people think, trying to fit in, comparing ourselves, proving ourselves, trying to look successful or confident, keeping up with everyone else, or simply being so busy that we don't stop and think. Sometimes we become so focused on how we appear that we stop listening to what we really think and feel inside.

ASK THE GROUP

"What is the part inside you telling you?"

There is a part of us that knows what matters, wants to grow, knows when we could do better, asks questions and sees our potential. We don't always listen to it because we get caught up in everything happening around us.

Rosh Hashanah Connection

ASK THE GROUP

"So what does Rosh Hashanah have to do with this?"

Rosh Hashanah gives us a chance to stop getting so caught up and actually listen. It is a chance to ask ourselves: Who am I? Who do I want to be? What really matters to me?

תשובה

– Teshuvah. We often translate teshuvah as repentance, but it comes from the root **שוב** – to return. Teshuvah is about returning. Not becoming a completely different person or pretending to be perfect, but returning to the real you - the part of yourself that knows, cares, wants to grow and has potential. It is also about returning to Hashem.

The Shofar

ASK

"Why do we need the shofar?"

It is easy to get caught up in school, friends, what people think, comparing ourselves and trying to prove ourselves. The shofar interrupts all of that. It tells us to WAKE UP. Stop. Listen. Remember who you are. Come back.

FACILITATOR

(If possible) Blow the shofar and leave a few seconds of silence.

"What part of yourself do you want to reconnect with this year?" They don't need to share their answer.

You are so much more than what you show.

**Wake up. Listen.
Come back
to yourself.
Come back to**

תשובה – Return.



YOM KIPPUR

OBJECTIVE

Participants leave understanding that they need to recognise their mistakes but they are not defined by them. Yom Kippur is a chance to look honestly at the moments we got caught up in and acted in ways that weren't really us - and to say: I did that. I take responsibility. I'm sorry. And - I am so much more than my mistake.

Teshuvah means return - not becoming someone new, but returning to the person we already know we can be, and to the values our neshamah already knows are right. Yom Kippur isn't about pretending our mistakes didn't happen. It's about being honest enough to recognise them, brave enough to take responsibility, and hopeful enough to believe we can choose differently.

MATERIALS

backpack; cards or objects labelled ANGER, JEALOUSY, GUILT, WHAT PEOPLE THINK, PRIDE, REGRET, PRESSURE; a large sign reading "CHAPTER 5787"; value cards (KINDNESS, COURAGE, FORGIVENESS, HASHEM, FRIENDSHIP, CONFIDENCE, PATIENCE, HONESTY, TRYING AGAIN, LETTING GO).

ACTIVITY 1 • THE BAG WE CARRY**FACILITATOR**

Ask for a volunteer to hold a backpack. One at a time, load in the labelled cards - ANGER, JEALOUSY, GUILT, WHAT PEOPLE THINK, PRIDE, REGRET, PRESSURE, ask how the bag feels now, and whether they'd want to carry it around all day.

Turn to the group: What happens if we carry every mistake we've ever made with us? What would it be like if every shout, every moment of giving in to pressure, every hurt you caused a friend stayed strapped to your back? Sometimes we do exactly that mentally - something happened months ago, and we're still replaying it, letting it become part of how we see ourselves.

STORY

Rabbi Akiva and the Stone

Rabbi Akiva once saw a stone worn through by dripping water. He was struck that something as soft as water could carve through something as hard as rock and realised that if water could reshape stone through small, repeated drops, Torah could reshape a person the same way. People aren't fixed. We change through the choices we make.

This matters because we all have a line we say about ourselves: "That's just who I am." "I'm an angry person." "I always mess things up." But if the stone can change, so can we.

FACILITATOR

Take the objects out of the bag one by one as you close the activity.

Yom Kippur doesn't mean pretending those things didn't happen - we own our mistakes, we apologise, we learn but we don't have to carry them forever.

"Atonement means that we can begin again. We are not held captive by the past, by our failures."

- RABBI SACKS

Yom Kippur is an incredible opportunity to apologise, let go and move on.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

- 1 What's the difference between taking responsibility for something and letting it define you?

THE MESSAGE

I made a mistake, but I am not my mistake.

ACTIVITY 2 • THE MOMENT AFTER

Often the most important moments isn't the mistake itself, it's the moment right after, when the truth of what we did lands.

FACILITATOR

Read out a scenario and ask the group to call out, on the spot, what someone might be thinking 30 seconds later.

You said something nasty about a friend because everyone else was doing it.

You cheated on a test because you felt under pressure.

You left someone out of a group chat, then realised how much it hurt them.

You lost your temper and said something you regretted the second it left your mouth.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

- 1 Where does that feeling come from? How did you know, straight away, that you shouldn't have done it?

STORY**The Two Wolves**

A grandfather tells his grandson that inside every person two forces compete. One pulls toward anger, jealousy, selfishness, pride, and doing whatever feels good in the moment. The other pulls toward kindness, honesty, patience, courage and doing what we know is right. The grandson asks which one wins. "The one you feed."

There aren't literally two wolves inside us, it's a way of naming the choices we make. Sometimes we get swept up: we react before thinking, follow the crowd, let a feeling take over. But afterwards, something in us often says, that wasn't who I wanted to be.

That feeling is the beginning of teshuvah, noticing the gap between what we did and who we want to be. The Teshuvah process starts with: "I don't want that to be me anymore."

ACTIVITY 3 • THE TURNING POINT

Recognising a mistake matters, but teshuvah isn't just feeling bad. There's a real difference between guilt and change.

GUILT

"I'm a terrible person."

TESHUVAH

"I did something wrong, and I get to choose what happens next."

STORY

The CEO who made a terrible mistake

Rabbi Sacks tells a story about the legendary head of IBM, Thomas Watson. A senior manager made an enormous business mistake that cost the company around \$10 million. The manager was called into Watson's office and assumed he was about to be fired. He even said, "I guess you want my resignation."

Watson's response was essentially: "Are you crazy? We've just spent ten million dollars educating you."

The point wasn't that the mistake didn't matter. It mattered enormously. But Watson understood that if someone learns from a serious mistake, the mistake can become part of their growth rather than the end of their career. Mistakes can become learning experiences when we acknowledge them, apologise, make amends and change.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What's the difference between saying 'I made a £10 million mistake' and saying 'I'm a £10 million failure'?"
- 2 Why is taking responsibility actually a sign of strength, not weakness

STORY • YONAH

FACILITATOR

Start by going through the story of Yonah, you can either say it in your own words or have youth take turns reading it in English.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do you think Yonah ran away?
- 2 Have you ever known what the right thing was but still really not wanted to do it?
- 3 Who does teshuvah in the story? Why was Nineveh able to change so quickly?

Open discussion.

- 4 What makes Nineveh's teshuvah real?

Rabbi Sacks stresses this distinction: Yom Kippur isn't simply about feeling bad - teshuvah involves changing what we actually do. What's the difference between feeling guilty about something and actually doing teshuvah?

- 5 Why does the story end with Yonah rather than Nineveh?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO DISCUSS

Nineveh has already changed, but Yonah is still struggling. Hashem continues teaching Yonah through the plant, the worm and the wind.

The final question is directed at Yonah: "And should I not have pity on Nineveh?" (Yonah 4:11)

Maybe Yonah isn't just a story about Nineveh doing teshuvah. Maybe it's also a story about someone who still has work to do.

6 What does Yonah teach us about being "stuck"?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO DISCUSS

Yonah has a very fixed view of what should happen to Nineveh.

Even after Nineveh changes, Yonah struggles to change his own perspective. Nineveh changes its behaviour; Yonah has to work on his attitude. Rabbi Sacks's broader teaching on teshuvah is that people are capable of change and aren't permanently defined by their past. What's something people sometimes say about themselves - "That's just who I am"? Do you think Judaism agrees with that?

7 Who is easier to blame in the story, Yonah or yourself?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO DISCUSS

It's easy to look at Yonah and think, "Why didn't he just listen?"

But Yom Kippur asks us to look at ourselves, not just other people's mistakes. We have to take responsibility for our own part, rather than focusing on whose fault something is. Think of an argument you've had. What would change if instead of asking "Whose fault was it?" you asked "What's my part in this?"

ONE FINAL QUESTION

Why do you think we read this story specifically on Yom Kippur?

CONCLUSION

- Nineveh teaches us that people can change.
- Yonah teaches us that knowing what is right doesn't automatically make it easy to do.
- Yonah also shows us that teshuvah isn't only about changing our actions — sometimes we need to change the way we see other people.
- Yom Kippur should involve honestly taking stock of ourselves.
- We aren't trapped by our past; genuine change is possible.
- We need to take responsibility for our own part.

SUKKOT

SESSION

Big Fish, Big Sea

BIG QUESTION

Would you rather be the biggest fish in a tiny pond, or a small fish in a huge ocean?

ASK THE GROUP

Why might someone choose the tiny pond? You're good at everything, everyone knows you, you feel successful and you don't have to risk failing. But what do you miss? The opportunity to discover how much more there is.

All year we live in our homes - comfortable, secure and familiar. Then for seven days, the Torah tells us to leave the house and move into a temporary sukkah. We're deliberately leaving what we know and entering something less certain. Sukkot reminds us that our world is much bigger than the comfortable little world we can build around ourselves.

STORY

The Four-Minute Mile

For years, people believed that running a mile in under four minutes was physically impossible. The world's best runners kept trying and getting close, but nobody could break the barrier.

Then, in 1954, a British runner named Roger Bannister ran a mile in 3 minutes 59.4 seconds.

And something incredible happened.

Within just 46 days, another runner, John Landy, also broke the four-minute barrier. After that, more and more runners did it.

The physical world hadn't suddenly changed. The barrier had been in people's minds.

One person had shown that the "impossible" was actually possible and suddenly people were willing to enter a much bigger world.

DISCUSSION

- 1 What are the "four-minute miles" in your life?

Things you tell yourself

"I'm not that kind of person."

"I'd never be able to do that."

"People like me don't do things like that."

"I'm not good enough."

"Everyone will think I'm weird."

"I'll just stick with what I know."

FACILITATOR

Give a choice for each scenario



SMALL POND

Stay where I'm comfortable because I know I'll be good.



BIG SEA

Try something bigger, even if I might fail.

CONCLUSION

The sukkah is physically smaller than our homes, but it can teach us to make our lives bigger.

We don't have to spend our lives trying to be the biggest fish in a tiny pond trying to be the coolest, the most popular or the best.

Sukkot invites us to step outside the little world we've built for ourselves and discover the much bigger world that's waiting for us.

FINAL QUESTION

Where in your life are you choosing the small pond when you could be swimming in a much bigger sea?

SIMCHAT TORAH

Shemini Atzeret / Simchat Torah

SESSION

THERE'S ALWAYS MORE TO KNOW

INTRODUCTION

Start by introducing the fact that we finish the Torah and restart it immediately. Why is that? Surely once we were done we should move on?

הַפֶּה בָּהּ וְהַפֶּה בָּהּ דִּכְלָא בָּהּ

"Turn it over and over, because everything is in it."

PIRKEI AVOT 5:22

GUESS THE CHARACTER

"A man has twelve sons. One is his favourite. The brothers become jealous. They throw him into a pit and sell him." (Yosef)

Continue by explaining that they know the story, now let's discuss it deeper

ASK QUESTIONS ONE AFTER ANOTHER

- 1 "Why did Yosef tell his brothers his dreams?"
- 2 "Was Yosef actually arrogant?"
- 3 "Why did Yaakov love him more?"
- 4 "Why didn't Yosef reveal himself immediately?"
- 5 "Why did Yosef cry so much?"
- 6 "Did Yosef really forgive his brothers?"

Suddenly, the story they thought they knew has become full of questions.

This is what Torah does. You can know the story for ten years and still discover that you've barely scratched the surface.

אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְבֵית הַמִּדְרָשׁ בְּלֹא חֲדוּשׁ

There is no study hall without something new."

CHAGIGAH 3A

A 'Chiddush' doesn't necessarily mean inventing something nobody in history has ever thought of. It means seeing something new in Torah - a new connection, question, explanation or perspective. With curiosity we learn.

We thought we knew Torah. Then we started asking questions.

TASK

Look through the Chumash, either in Hebrew or English. Find a story you are familiar with and see if you can see a different perspective on it or learn something new.

THERE'S MORE TO YOU TOO!

We can take the idea one step further. - If Torah has more inside it than we first realise, maybe people do too.

DISCUSSION

- 1 Have you ever thought someone was one type of person and then discovered there was much more to them?

The torah teaches us to look again. Don't assume you've understood a person because you've seen one side of them. Don't assume you've understood a Torah story because you've heard it before. The Torah trains us to look beneath the surface.

Why Are We Dancing With the Torah?

ASK THE GROUP

Are we dancing because we finished a book? Or are we dancing because of what this book gives us? What does Torah actually give a person?

The Torah doesn't just tell us what happened thousands of years ago. It tells us how to live. It gives us a way to understand what matters, how to treat other people, how to make choices, and how to live a life with purpose.

STORY

The Man Who Had Everything

There was a rabbi who went to the home of one of the wealthiest people in the community. As he walks through the front door, he is amazed. The house is enormous, with beautiful rooms, incredible artwork and every luxury you could imagine. Then he notices something completely crazy - there is a huge shark tank built into the house! The man has an amazing wife, wonderful children, a successful business and more money than he could ever spend. Looking around, the rabbi thinks to himself, "This man has everything."

ASK

"Do you think this man is happy?"

The rabbi sits down with the man, expecting to hear about how wonderful his life is. Instead, the man becomes quiet. He looks around his incredible home and says, "Rabbi, can I tell you something? I have everything. I have the family I always wanted, the money, the success, the house, the holidays... everything. But I honestly can't remember the last time I was truly happy."

ASK

"How is that possible? How can someone have everything and still feel like something is missing?"

The rabbi thought for a moment and said, "Maybe you've spent your life learning how to make your life more comfortable, but not enough time asking what makes your life meaningful. Money can buy you an incredible house - even a shark tank! - but it can't tell you what your life is for. Success can give you achievements, but it can't give you a purpose."

DISCUSSION

So what actually gives someone's life meaning?

That's what we celebrate on Simchat Torah. We aren't just celebrating that we finished reading a book. We are celebrating that Hashem gave us Torah a way to live. Torah gives us values, teaches us how to treat people, how to make choices, how to build relationships, how to connect to Hashem and how to live a life with purpose.

So why do we dance? Because we have been given something incredible. We have been given a guide for how to live a meaningful life.

And then comes the most amazing part: we finish the Torah... and immediately start again. Why? Because Torah isn't something we simply finish. Every time we come back, there is something new to discover, something new to understand and something new that can change us.

CONCLUSION

That's what we're dancing about: we have a purpose. We have meaning. We have a way to live. And that is something worth celebrating.

RESOURCES

Ready-to-use quizzes and activity resources

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year.

TRUE

Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of a new Jewish year.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Rosh Hashanah is celebrated on the 1st and 2nd of Tishrei.

TRUE

Rosh Hashanah lasts for two days and begins on the first day of Tishrei.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The shofar is made from a ram's horn.

TRUE

A kosher shofar comes from ideally a ram, but a horn from a goats, kudas, and even the ibex can be used.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Any wind instrument can be used as a shofar.

FALSE

A shofar must come from the horn of a kosher animal and cannot simply be replaced with another instrument.

TRUE OR FALSE?

One hundred shofar blasts are heard each day on Rosh Hashanah.

TRUE

We hear a total of one hundred shofar blasts throughout the service.

TRUE OR FALSE?

We eat apples and honey because the Torah commands us to do so.

FALSE

It is a custom, not a Torah commandment, symbolising our hope for a sweet year..

TRUE OR FALSE?

On Rosh Hashanah we celebrate by fasting all day.

FALSE

Unlike Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah includes festive meals.

TRUE OR FALSE?

One reason we hear the shofar is to wake us up spiritually.

TRUE

The Rambam explains that the shofar encourages us to wake up and reflect on our lives.

QUIZ • ROSH HASHANAH

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

The words "Rosh Hashanah" appear in the Torah.

FALSE

The Torah calls the day "Yom Teruah" and "Zichron Teruah."

TRUE OR FALSE?

Your challah must be round on Rosh Hashanah.

FALSE

It's a custom to have a circular shape to represent continuity and the cycle of the year.

TRUE OR FALSE?

We eat pomegranates on Rosh Hashanah.

TRUE

It's a custom to have pomegranate to symbolise our merits increasing like the seeds of a pomegranate.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Tashlich is traditionally performed by throwing bread into a fire.

FALSE

Tashlich is usually said near a body of water, symbolically casting away sins.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Torah contains a recipe for honey cake.

FALSE

As disappointing as it may be, no honey cake recipe appears in the Torah!

TRUE OR FALSE?

Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Tanach.

TRUE

Jerusalem is one of the most significant places in Jewish history and appears many times throughout Tanach.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Kotel is a surviving retaining wall from the Second Temple period.

TRUE

It is one of the most cherished Jewish sites in the world.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters.

TRUE

The aleph-bet contains twenty-two letters.

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

There is a Jewish blessing for seeing a rainbow.

TRUE

A special berachah is recited upon seeing a rainbow, reminding us of Hashem's covenant with Noach.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Shul is only important during the High Holidays.

FALSE

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are special, but your shul is a community that is active all year round. There are youth events, learning opportunities, volunteering projects and plenty of ways for you to get involved throughout the year.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Tribe is only about camps and holidays.

FALSE

Tribe offers much more than camps. There are leadership programmes, volunteering opportunities, educational events, social activities and chances to develop skills, make friends and make a real impact in the Jewish community.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Honey bees must visit around two million flowers to make one pound of honey.

TRUE

Bees travel enormous distances collecting nectar to produce honey.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Hebrew date changes at midnight.

FALSE

In Judaism, a new day begins at sunset, not at midnight..

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Jewish calendar follows only the sun.

FALSE

The Jewish calendar is lunisolar, combining both the moon and the sun.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Every Jewish year has exactly 365 days.

FALSE

Jewish years can vary in length and sometimes include an extra month.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The largest shofar ever used was over 8 feet long.

TRUE

Some enormous ceremonial shofarot have been made, though they are not practical for regular use.

QUIZ • ROSH HASHANAH

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

Rosh Hashanah is all about looking back and not about the future.

FALSE

Rosh Hashanah includes reflection on the past, but its purpose is to help us build a better future.

TRUE OR FALSE?

A person can fulfil the mitzvah of hearing shofar through headphones.

FALSE

The mitzvah requires hearing the actual sound of the shofar, not an electronic reproduction.

TRUE OR FALSE?

A shofar can be made from a giraffe's horn as a Giraffe is kosher.

FALSE

Giraffes are kosher but do not have horns in the same way that animals used for shofarot do..

TRUE OR FALSE?

Honey never spoils if stored properly.

TRUE

Archaeologists have found ancient honey that was still edible thousands of years later.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The custom of eating a fish head on Rosh Hashanah symbolizes a wish to be leaders and not followers.

TRUE

We say a special prayer that we should be "a head and not a tail."

TRUE OR FALSE?

The largest Jewish community today is in Israel.

TRUE

Israel is home to the world's largest Jewish population.

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

NEEDED

cards with True/False on either side, enough for each child (attachment 6).

TRUE OR FALSE?

Yom Kippur is always on the 10th of Tishrei.

TRUE

Yom Kippur is the 10th day of the month of Tishrei.

TRUE OR FALSE?

It is a mitzvah to eat on the day before Yom Kippur.

TRUE

The Gemara teaches that eating and drinking on Erev Yom Kippur is considered as if one fasted that day too.

TRUE OR FALSE?

On Yom Kippur, we are not allowed to wear leather shoes.

TRUE

One of the traditional five forms of affliction on Yom Kippur is avoiding leather footwear.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Torah specifically says that we must wear white clothes on Yom Kippur.

FALSE

Wearing white is a widespread custom symbolising purity, but it is not a Torah commandment.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The word “teshuvah” literally means “return.”

TRUE

Teshuvah means returning, turning back towards Hashem and towards the person we want to become.

TRUE OR FALSE?

If you apologise to Hashem for hurting someone, you don't need to apologise to the person.

FALSE

For sins between people, we need to make things right with the person we hurt as well as asking Hashem for forgiveness.

QUIZ · YOM KIPPUR

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Torah calls Yom Kippur
"Shabbat Shabbaton."

TRUE

Yom Kippur is described in the Torah as a
"Shabbat of complete rest."

TRUE OR FALSE?

The famous story of Yonah is read on
Yom Kippur afternoon.

TRUE

Sefer Yonah is read during Mincha because its
central message is about teshuvah and the
possibility of changing direction.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Yonah wanted to help the people of
Nineveh do teshuvah.

FALSE

Yonah initially tried to escape from Hashem's
command to go to Nineveh and warn them.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Kohen Gadol entered the Kodesh
HaKodashim only once a year.

TRUE

The Kohen Gadol entered the Kodesh HaKodashim
on Yom Kippur.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Yom Kippur is a day when we are
compared to angels.

TRUE

Once a year we disconnect from
everything physical.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The goal of Yom Kippur is to prove that
we have never made mistakes.

FALSE

Yom Kippur gives us the opportunity to honestly
recognise our mistakes, take responsibility,
apologise and choose to change.

TRUE OR FALSE?

If you spend the entire Yom Kippur
thinking about food, you've technically
broken the fast.

FALSE

Thinking about pizza is not the same as
eating pizza

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Dead Sea is actually a lake, not a sea.

TRUE

Despite its name, the Dead Sea is actually a
salt lake.

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

You can send a letter to God through the Israeli postal service.

TRUE

Israel Post has a system for letters addressed to God that cannot be delivered. Such letters can be taken to the Western Wall.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Israel invented the cherry tomato.

TRUE

Israeli researchers helped develop the commercially successful cherry tomato varieties we know today.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Talmud says that someone who saves one life is considered to have saved an entire world.

TRUE

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Torah contains the word "pizza."

FALSE

Sadly, no ancient Jewish pizza recipe has survived in the Torah!

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Hebrew language has no word for "please."

FALSE

Modern Hebrew uses expressions such as bevakasha.

TRUE OR FALSE?

The name "Jew" originally comes from the Hebrew word for Judah.

TRUE

"Jew" developed from Yehudi, which is connected to Yehudah, or Judah.

TRUE OR FALSE?

There is a Jewish blessing for seeing lightning.

TRUE

There are specific berachot associated with natural phenomena such as thunder and lightning.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Jews make up less than 1% of the population of the UK.

TRUE

According to the 2021 Census, Jews made up around 0.5% of the population of England and Wales.

QUIZ • YOM KIPPUR

True/False quiz Cut along the dashed lines

TRUE OR FALSE?

There are more Jews living in the UK than in Israel.

FALSE

Israel has millions of Jewish residents, while the UK has only a few hundred thousand.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Jews make up less than 0.5% of the world's population.

TRUE

Jews are roughly 0.2% of world population.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Shul is just for the High Holidays, to make your parents happy.

FALSE

Shul isn't just somewhere you go on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur! There is so much happening in your shul throughout the year, from events and activities to youth groups and community opportunities. You are an important part of your community, and your shul genuinely wants you to be involved. Come and be part of the community all year round!

TRUE OR FALSE?

Tribe is only for younger kids who want to go to camp.

FALSE

Tribe isn't just about camp, and it's definitely not just for younger kids! There are loads of opportunities for teenagers, especially leadership opportunities where you can get involved, develop skills, meet people and make a real difference. If you're interested in getting involved, speak to your Youth Director or get in touch with Tribe!

The Jewish People's Dream Relay

Cut along the dashed lines

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

SCENE 1

**What is your dream
for this year?**

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

SCENE 2

**What have you
accepted about
yourself that isn't
really your destiny?
What do you dream
of breaking free
from this year?**

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

SCENE 3

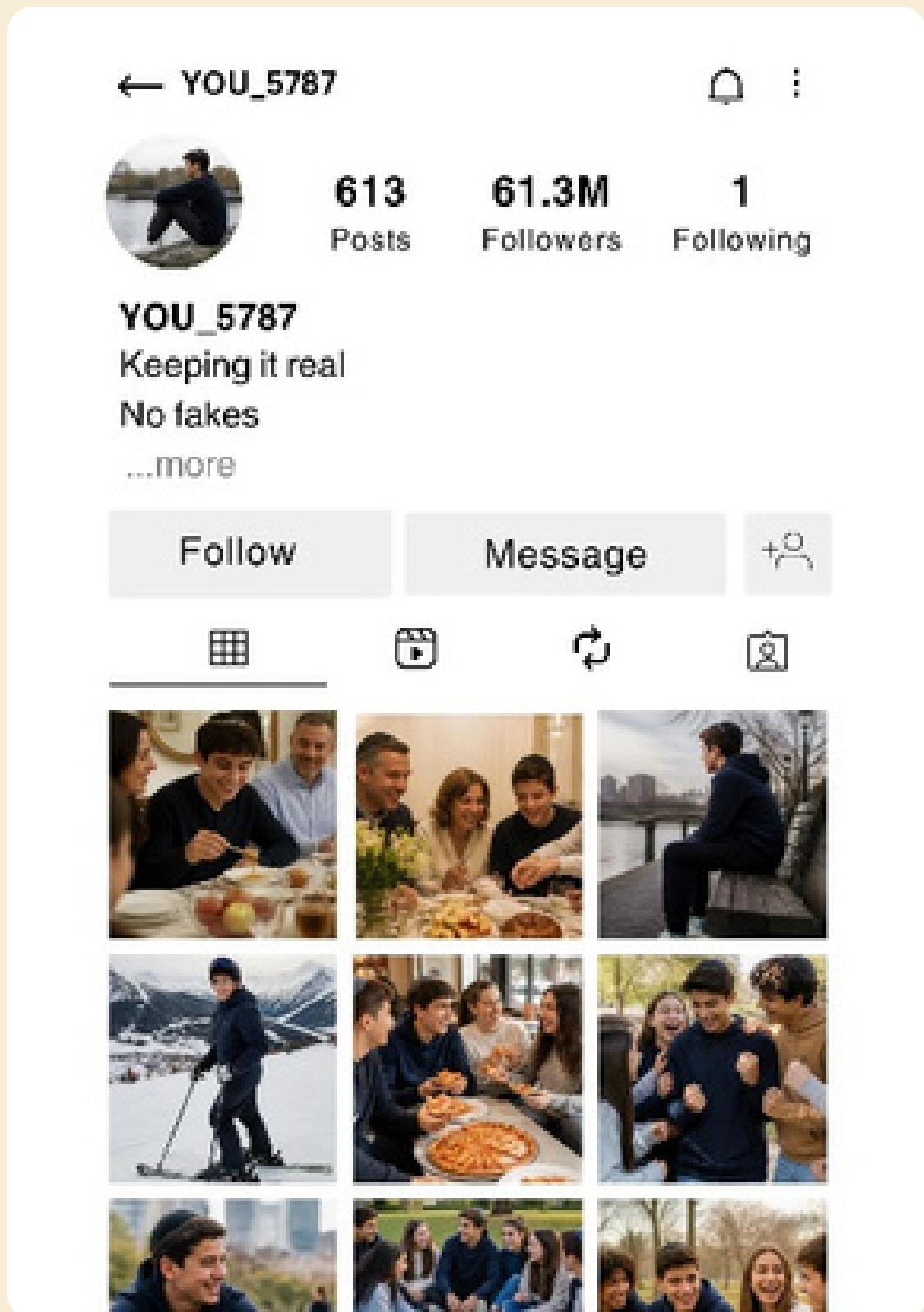
**What do you
dream of building
this year?**

ROSH HASHANAH QUESTION

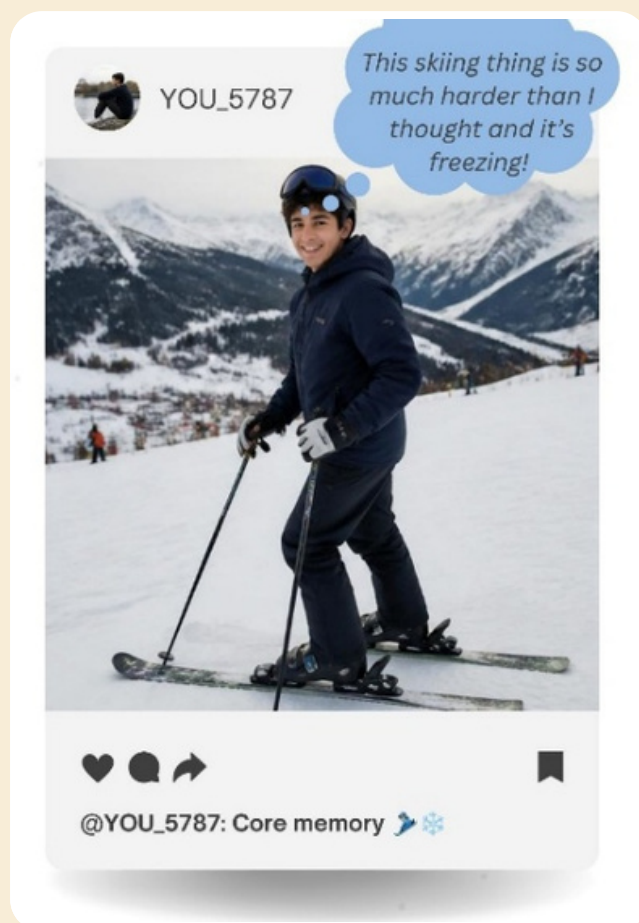
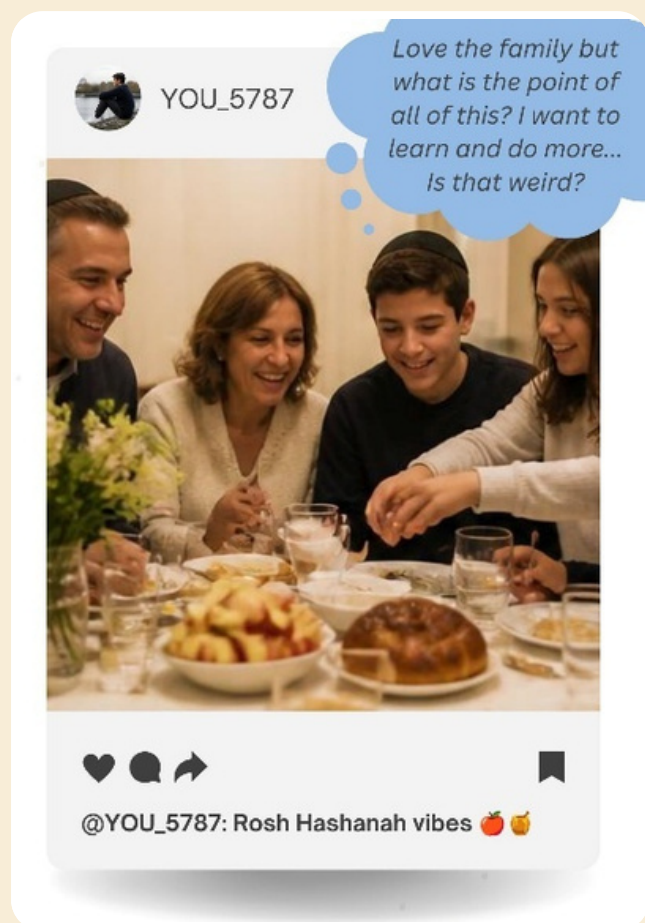
SCENE 4

**What's your dream
for this year?**

Instagram profile

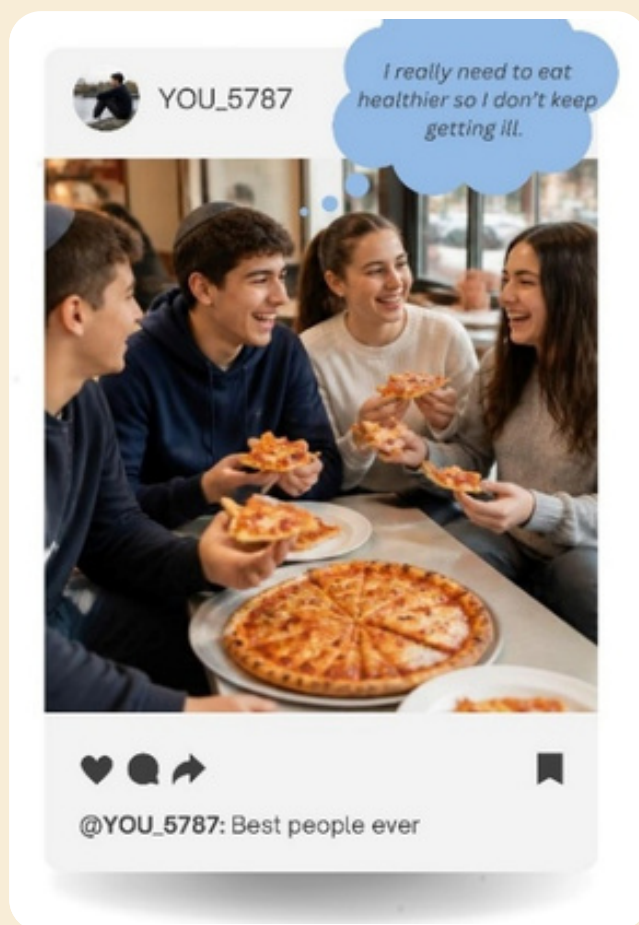
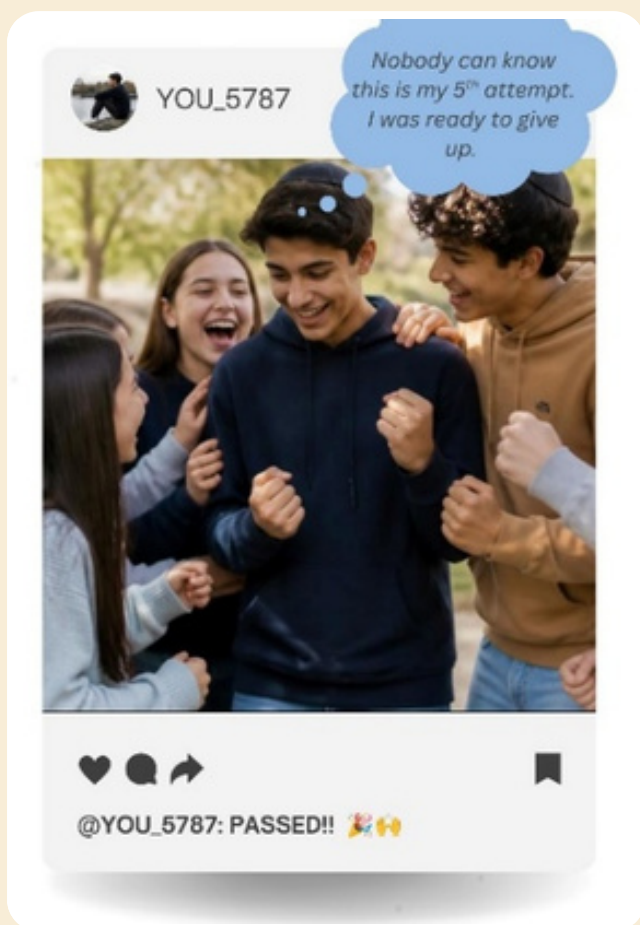


Posts 1 and 2



ACTIVITY · @YOU_5787

Posts 3 and 4





Yamim Noraim Resource Pack

Youth Director Edition | 5787 / 2026

