

Counselor's Corner, September 2014



Sharing the High Holy Days with your Interfaith

Grandchildren The next few weeks mark the beginning of a new year in the Jewish calendar. These holidays are considered by many Jewish people to be the most important ones of the year, offering a time of family gatherings, reflection, repentance and renewal. **For grandparents whose grandchildren may be growing up in a different religion or with a parent of a different faith, or no faith at all, it is a unique opportunity to share a piece of Judaism.**

How do we do this in a way that is respectful, meaningful and fun?

Share your favorite memories of holidays when you were young or when your son or daughter was young.

Invite your grandchildren (and/or their parents) to help you cook or prepare for family celebrations. Let them know the meaning behind the foods that you eat and the traditions that you follow. If you don't know, do a google search together to find out!

Reflect on the past year by asking about favorite moments, biggest challenges, and any regrets. Connect this to the purpose of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In the tradition of *Tashlich*, we "cast away our sins" by throwing bread into water, like a stream. Many synagogues have a community *Tashlich* gathering that is fun and meaningful for kids.

Explore things to do differently in the coming year to encourage personal growth and change.

Be Aware of the words you choose. Avoid the suggestion that there is a "right or wrong" way when it comes to practicing Judaism or religion.

Assure your adult child and his/her spouse that you want to share a piece of yourself, not impose ideas on them or your grandchildren.

I am very excited to be facilitating a **FREE**, 5- week class this fall called **The Grandparents Circle**. In The Circle, which begins October 21st, we will have an opportunity to share our feelings, learn, and grow with other grandparents whose grandchildren are in interfaith families. While every situation is unique, one thing is universal...you LOVE your grandchildren! To learn more about the Grandparents Circle, email me at gail@cjfsbham.org or call 879.3438.