ELUL STORIES
Sharing our stories, sharing lives, creating community

Elul is the month leading up to Rosh HaShanah. Each day during the month, a different Temple Beth Torah congregant will share an Ethical Will or portion of one in order to help us prepare for this season of self reflection and personal growth. Even though we are into the month of Tishri, we will be continuing our Ethical Will series throughout the month. Thank you to everyone who has participated. Looking forward to sharing more stories.

Peace and Joy, Love and Light
Jiya Kowarsky

Peace
Make a firm commitment to feeling peace. Along with peace, be content - Nurture a feeling of contentment inside of you. - If you are not clear that this is what you really want and need, it will never happen. So you have to be very clear about your purpose and your intention. When the storms come, you will have a place within you where you can take refuge.

Be sure to meditate each day - find a way to go within and listen to hear what the Divine has to say to you personally, Then from that place, go out and meet the world. We take a shower to cleanse our bodies and we need a way to cleanse our souls so that the barnacles of bitterness and despair don't build up over time. Begin with even five minutes a day and gradually increase to 20 minutes or longer.

Joy
Savor the gift of life. "To life, to life, L'chaim." Like a chicken pecking at grains in the dirt, try to peck up moments of joy each day. Delight in being alive. If you were to accomplish nothing else - the appreciation of life would sustain you. Don't let yourself be relentlessly tossed around. Relax and enjoy this life.
Love
Love all of God's creatures - Be a Vegan - it's the right thing to do - for the animals, for your own health, for the environment and for world hunger. If you're not ready to Go Vegan, at least veer in that direction. We as Jews know the horror of the Camps - Yet the animals are daily herded into concentration camps that we call factory farms. Conditions there are so cruel that even seeing 30 seconds of video footage will be unbearable for anyone who calls herself a human being. The dairy industry is equally cruel.

Light -
My Grandfather used to say, "Help a person when they need help, not when they don't need it. Take a kid to the circus when he's panting to go, not later when he could care less." Try to bring a little light where you can. You don't have to save the world, just do your little "Ping" in the symphony of life and say "Dayenu." It will be enough.

Jiya Kowarsky is full of light. She is an artist and a vegan and keeps wonderful journals. Jiya and her husband Steve, are students of life and it is a delight that they have chosen to study and pray at Temple Beth Torah.

Would you like to share your Elul Story? Write an ethical will, in the form of a letter, a story or a collections of sayings. Include the "gifts" you would like to leave to your family focusing on the values and character traits which you feel are most important. Send it in its entirety or send a section of it to: ravsusie@gmail.com.
If you missed any of the previous Elul Stories you can go to www.tbtiny.org (media galleries/elul stories).