



solo SHABBAT



The most beautiful, dangerous, adventurous and gratifying journey of all is the one inside yourself.

— Mauro Morandi

On a sailing trip in 1989 Italian teacher Mauro Morandi encountered a small island nestled between Sardinia and Corsica. Uninhabited save for a caretaker, Morandi was captivated by its beauty and isolation. Soon after, he took over as the island's guardian and sole inhabitant — and remains there over 30 years later.

Alone but not lonely, Morandi reminds us to distinguish between the two.



Being alone during this pandemic is life-saving work, and while most of us are not fortunate enough to be alone on a beautiful Mediterranean island, we can all encounter what philosopher Abraham Joshua Heschel calls “an island in time” every week on Friday night.



Light

Happiness can be found,
even in the darkest of times,
if one only remembers to turn on the light.

— Albus Dumbledore

Friday night is about transforming time and space, which is particularly challenging if you've been working from home, and are therefore still in the same space.

Let the light do the work:

Candles are a simple way to bring light into your life, and serve as a symbolic transition from week to weekend. The light you create is a flickering reminder to revel in this moment: put down your work, put down your week, you have nothing left to do, you only have to be.

Try turning off lights that you usually leave on, using twinkly lights or nightlights to create a Shabbat glow.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu
b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.*

Blessed is the Oneness that makes us holy through commandments and commands us to kindle the light of Shabbat.

Bless

Blessings should add abundance to what is already there.

— Nefesh Ha'Chaim

Blessings aren't wishes — when you offer a blessing, it's not about what you wish to be or wish to have, it's about seeing the blessing that is *already in you* and elevating it.

Sit for a moment in stillness before honoring yourself with the blessing below, or a personal blessing of your own choosing.

Adapted from the Buddhist Prayer for Peace

May the loving kindness within me find expression
May the inner dangers within me know resolution
May my mind and body be healthy
May I find peace and be truly happy.



Kiddush

So much depends upon us and our intention. All of those intentions fill the Kiddush cup to overflowing — they are the moments of brokenness that we bring from the week that has passed. They are gathered into the cup of blessing, and they are lifted up in the moment of Kiddush.

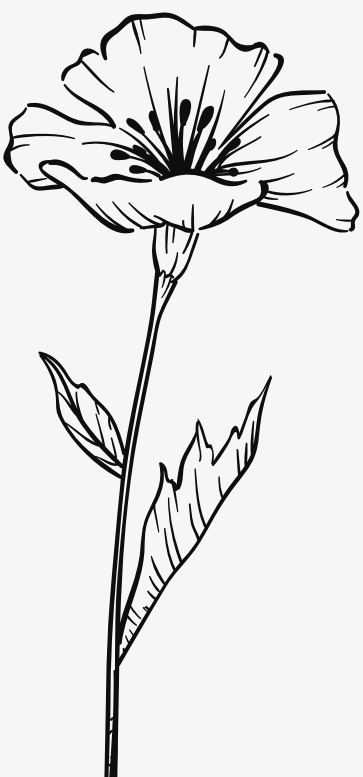
— Dr. Eitan Fishbane

Kiddush sanctifies time. In order to raise your glass to the weekend, you have to put down something from the week that was. What do you want to leave behind? What baggage do you want to check? Let it go, raise your glass, and bless:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam borei p'ri ha'gafen. Baruch Atah Adonai m'kadesh ha'Shabbat.

Blessed is the Oneness that creates the fruit of the vine.
Blessed is the Oneness that sanctifies Shabbat.



Cleanse

Wash your hands in a ritual sense,
knowing that this is a practice shared
the world over.

Wash your hands with soap and water,
knowing this is one of the most powerful actions
we can take to keep our communities healthy.

Whether ritual hand washing is already a part of your Friday night experience, or a practice new to you, we invite you to explore and experiment.

Take a deep breath before turning on the faucet. As you exhale, feel the water run through your fingers. This is the moment to read the blessing below, or to simply be grateful for the work your hands have done this week.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu
b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al netilat yadayim.*

Blessed is the Oneness that makes us holy through our
actions and honors us as we raise up our hands.

*Consider giving yourself a moment to sit in silence before
moving on to your meal.*



Nourish

Abundance

By Amy Schmidt

in memory of Mary Oliver

It's impossible to be lonely
when you're zesting an orange.
Scrape the soft rind once
and the whole room
fills with fruit.
Look around: you have
more than enough.
Always have.
You just didn't notice
until now.

I may be alone this Shabbat, but the bread before me is an abundance, the product of many, and an acknowledgement of blessing.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam ha'motzi
lechem min ha'aretz.*

Blessed is the Oneness that brings forth bread from the earth.



Gratitude

AFTER THE MEAL

וְאַכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ.

V'achalta v'savata u'varachta.

When you have eaten and are satisfied, bless.

— Deuteronomy 8:10

It's a remarkable thing that Jewish tradition seeks to inspire you to be present before you eat, and all the more so that you are then directed to acknowledge your gratitude after you eat, not for the food itself, but for the incredible feeling of being full.

What does it mean to truly be fulfilled? In Hebrew, the root of the word for fulfillment — to be whole, to be complete — is shalom, the same as the word for peace. May you find peace this Shabbat, a whole and complete peace.

בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא מַלְכָּא דְעֵלְמָא מְרִיבָה דְהַאי פִּיתָא.

Brich rachamana malka d'alma marei d'hai pita.

We are blessed with compassion by the Oneness that sustains us with bread.



Endings matter just as much as beginnings.

After your meal, take a few moments to reflect:

Who do you want to reconnect with this week,
whether by text, Zoom, or call?

What is at least one thing you will do for yourself
in the coming week?

What do you need right now?

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