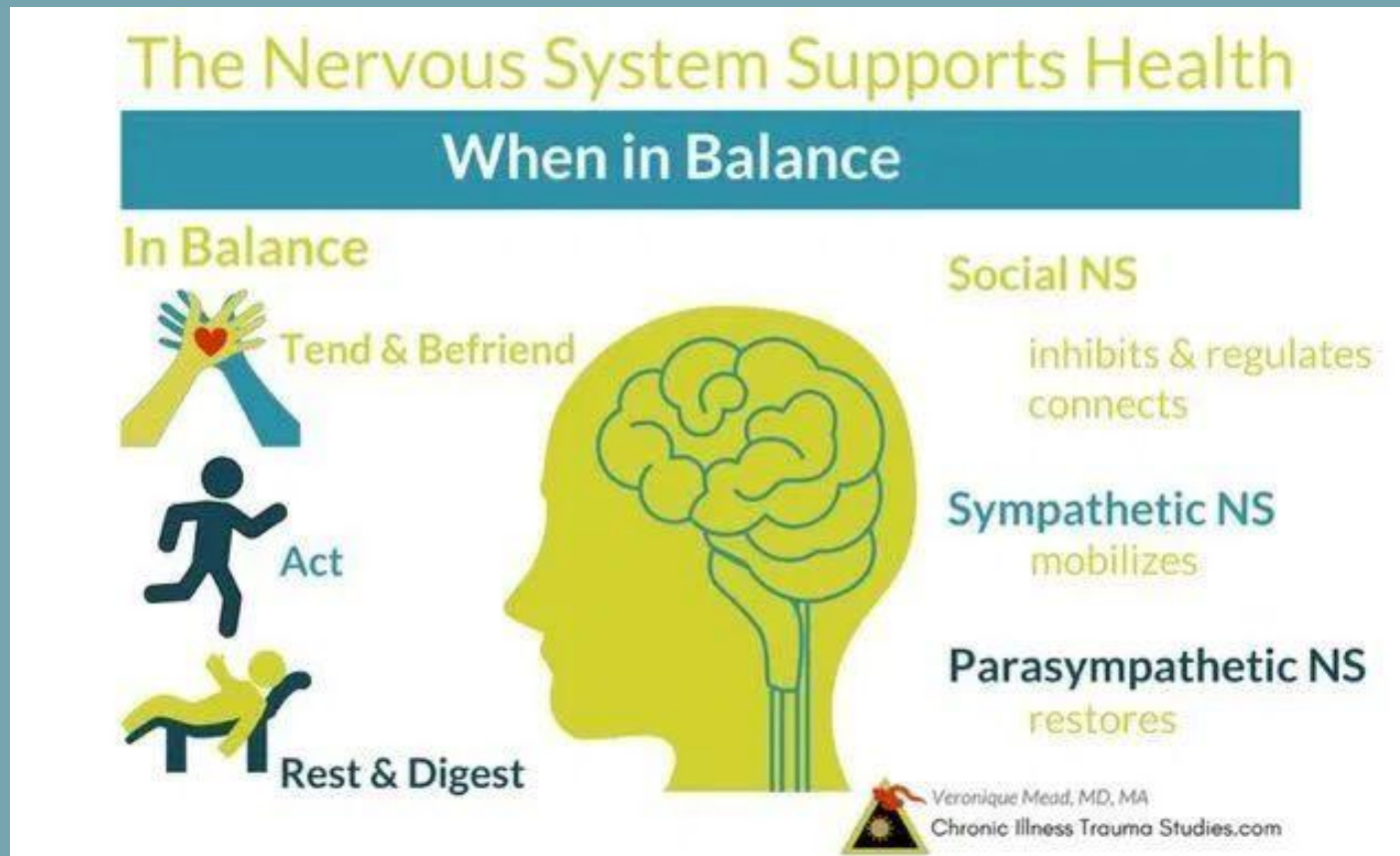


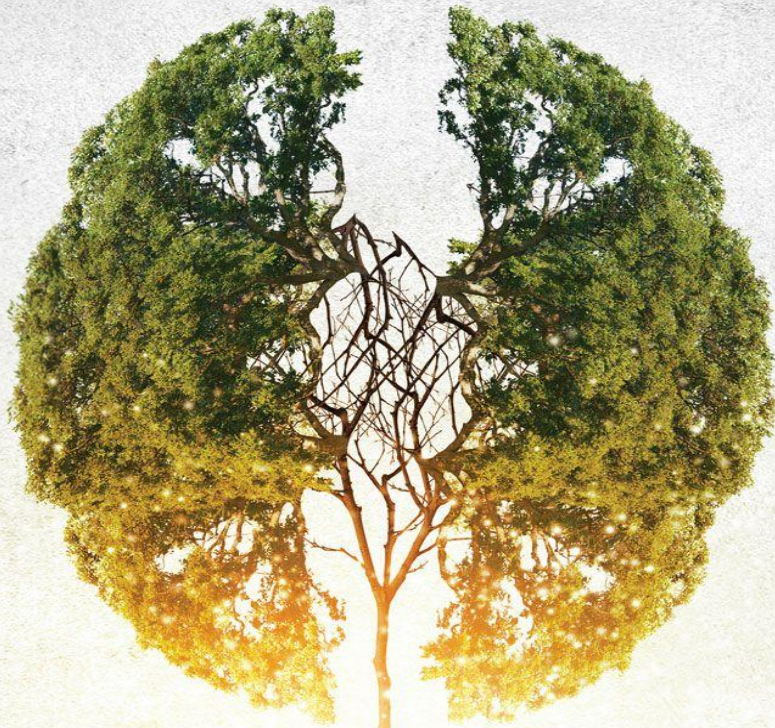


Judaism & Polyvagal Theory

Reminder...What's this Polyvagal Stuff About?



Using the principles of polyvagal theory to understand how Judaism prompts our autonomic responses.



Playfulness

Rhythm of Rest

Savoring Snapshots/
Being in the Present

Compassion

Nurturing Glimmers/Optimism

Music

Stillness

Nature

Response to *tsuris* or feature of the faith?

Playfulness

In *Proverbs* 8:30-31, King Solomon speaks in the voice of the Torah: “I [the Torah] was the artist’s plan. I was His [God’s] delight every day, playing before Him at all times, playing in the inhabited areas of His earth, my delights are with human beings.” This translation from the Hebrew original is based on the wisdom on the first page of the ancient biblical commentary *Midrash Rabba*.



Playfulness

from The Big Book of Jewish Humor

1. Jewish humor is usually substantive.

It is *about* something. It is especially fond of certain specific topics, such as food (noshing is sacred), family, business, anti-Semitism, wealth and its absence, health, and survival. Jewish humor is also fascinated by the intricacies of the mind and by logic, and the short if elliptical path separating the rational from the absurd.

As social or religious commentary, Jewish humor can be sarcastic, complaining, resigned, or descriptive. Sometimes the “point” of the humor is more powerful than the laugh it delivers, and for some of the jokes, the appropriate response is not laughter, but rather a bitter nod or a commiserating sigh of recognition. This didactic quality precludes laughing “for free,” as in slapstick humor, which derives its laughter from other people’s misfortunes.

2. Jewish humor tends to be anti-authoritarian.

It ridicules grandiosity and self-indulgence, exposes hypocrisy, and kicks pomposity in the pants. It is strongly democratic, stressing the dignity and worth of common folk.

Playfulness

from The Big Book of Jewish Humor

3. Jewish humor frequently has a critical edge.

This edge creates discomfort in making its point. Often its thrust is political—aimed at leaders and other authorities who cannot be criticized more directly. This applies to prominent figures in the general society, as well as to those in the Jewish world, such as rabbis, cantors, sages, intellectuals, teachers, doctors, businessmen, philanthropists, and community functionaries. A special feature of Jewish humor is the interaction of prominent figures with simple folk and the disadvantaged, with the latter often emerging triumphant. In general, Jewish humor characteristically deals with the conflict between the people and the power structure, whether that be the individual Jew within his community, the Jew facing the Gentile world, or the Jewish community in relation to the rest of humanity.

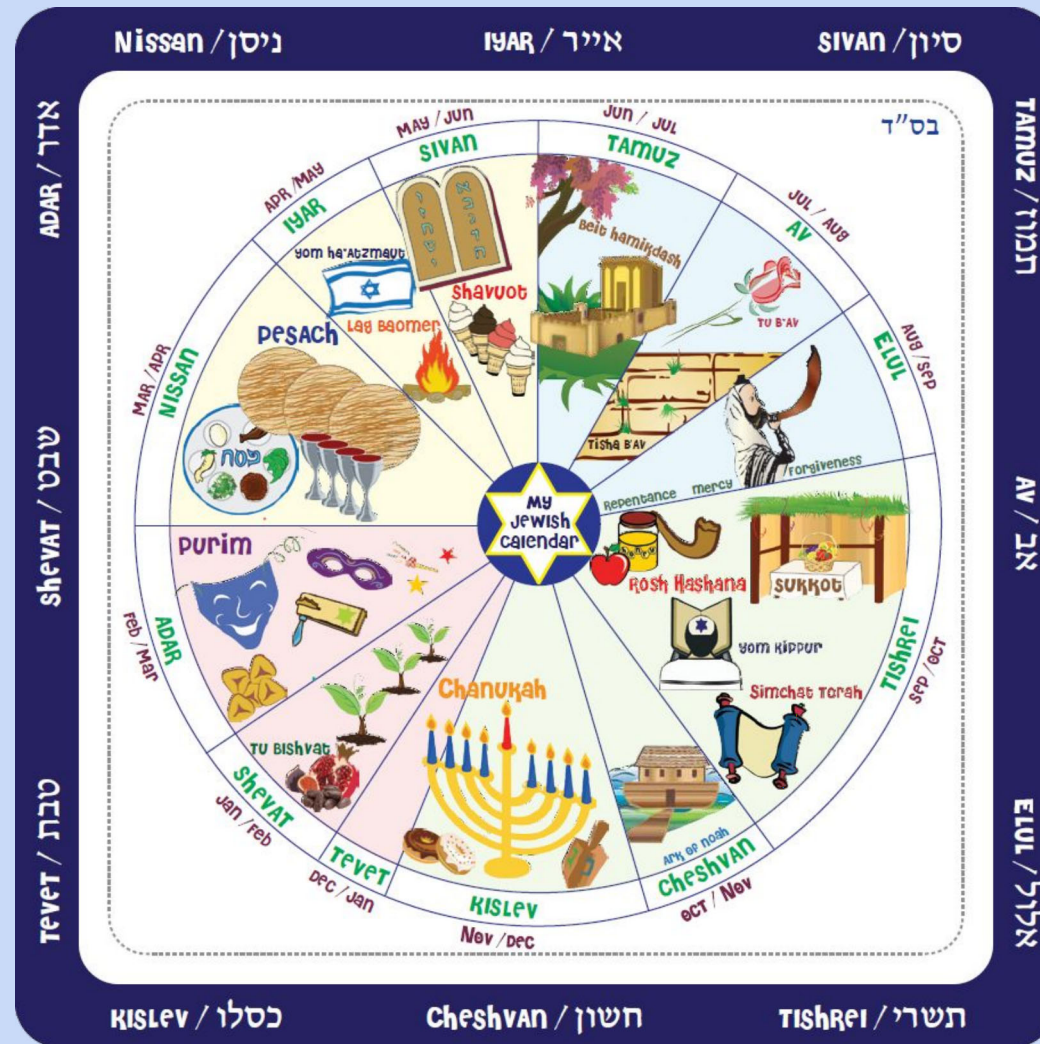
4. Jewish humor mocks everyone — including God.

It frequently satirizes religious personalities and institutions, as well as rituals and dogma. At the same time, it affirms religious traditions and practices, seeking a new understanding of the differences between the holy and the mundane.

Playfulness

How does it feel in your body when you laugh?

Rhythm of Rest



Rhythm of Rest

The work on weekdays and the rest on the seventh day are correlated. The Sabbath is the inspirer, the other days the inspired.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

This is what the Sabbath should feel like. A pause. Not just a minor pause, but a major pause. Not just lowering the volume, but a muting. As the famous rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel put it, the Sabbath is a sanctuary in time.

— A. J. Jacobs —



Rhythm of Rest

What Jewish opportunities for rest do you take advantage of?

Savoring Snapshots/Being in the Present

The "burning bush" was not a miracle. It was a test. God wanted to find out whether or not Moses could pay attention to something for more than a few minutes. When Moses did, God spoke. The trick is to pay attention to what is going on around you long enough to behold the miracle without falling asleep. There is another world, right here within this one, whenever we pay attention.

— *Lawrence Kushner* —



Savoring Snapshots/Being in the Present

When you pay attention, what does it feel like?



Nurturing Glimmers/Optimism



Nurturing Glimmers/ Optimism

תִּקְוָה
(tikvah)

Excerpted from: Abarim Publications' Biblical Dictionary

קוּה

The verb קוּה (*qawa*) describes the act of combining a multiple of strands and coiling those into a single, much stronger cable. It is used to mean to gather or collect, but also in the sense of to hope or eagerly await.

Deriving from the strong cable-making sense, the nouns קו (*qaw*) and קוּה (*qow*) mean line or measuring line. Noun תִּקְוָה (*tiqwah*) means cord. The exactly identical noun תִּקְוָה (*tiqwah*) means hope. Noun מִקְוֶה (*miqweh*) also means hope. Noun קוּקוּ (*qawqaw*) means might or strength.

Deriving from the collecting sense, the noun מִקְוֶה (*miqweh*) means collection or collected mass. Noun מִקְוָה (*miqwa*) means reservoir.

Compassion

“A person who saves a single life saves the world.”

REPAIRING THE WORLD

viewing every person with dignity

B'TZELEM ELOHIM COMPASSION FOR THOSE IN NEED

the Jewish commitment to good deeds

TIKKUN OLAM

✧ A religious man is a person who holds God and man in one thought at one time, at all times, who suffers harm done to others, whose greatest passion is compassion, whose greatest strength is love and defiance of despair.

Abraham J. Heschel
Jewish theologian

Compassion

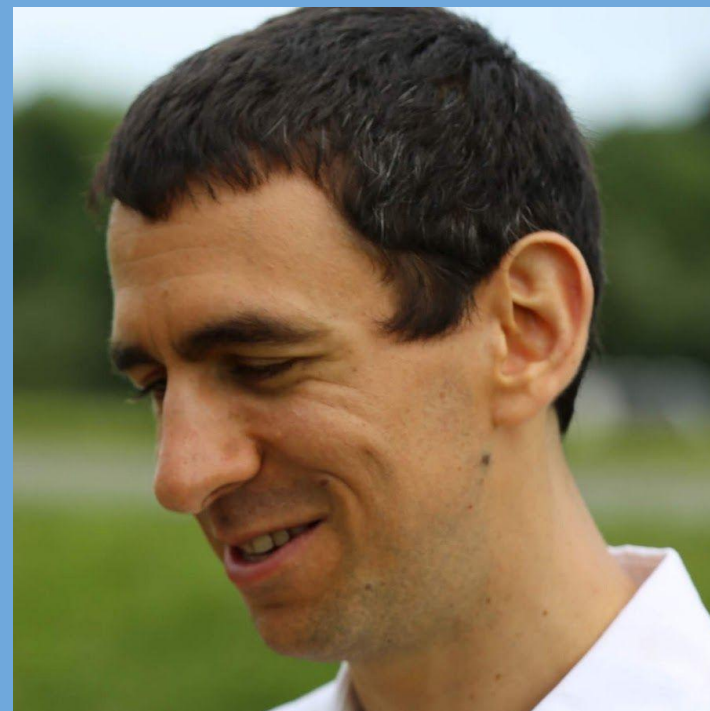
B'TZELEM ELOHIM

TIKKUN OLAM

Gemilut Hasadim

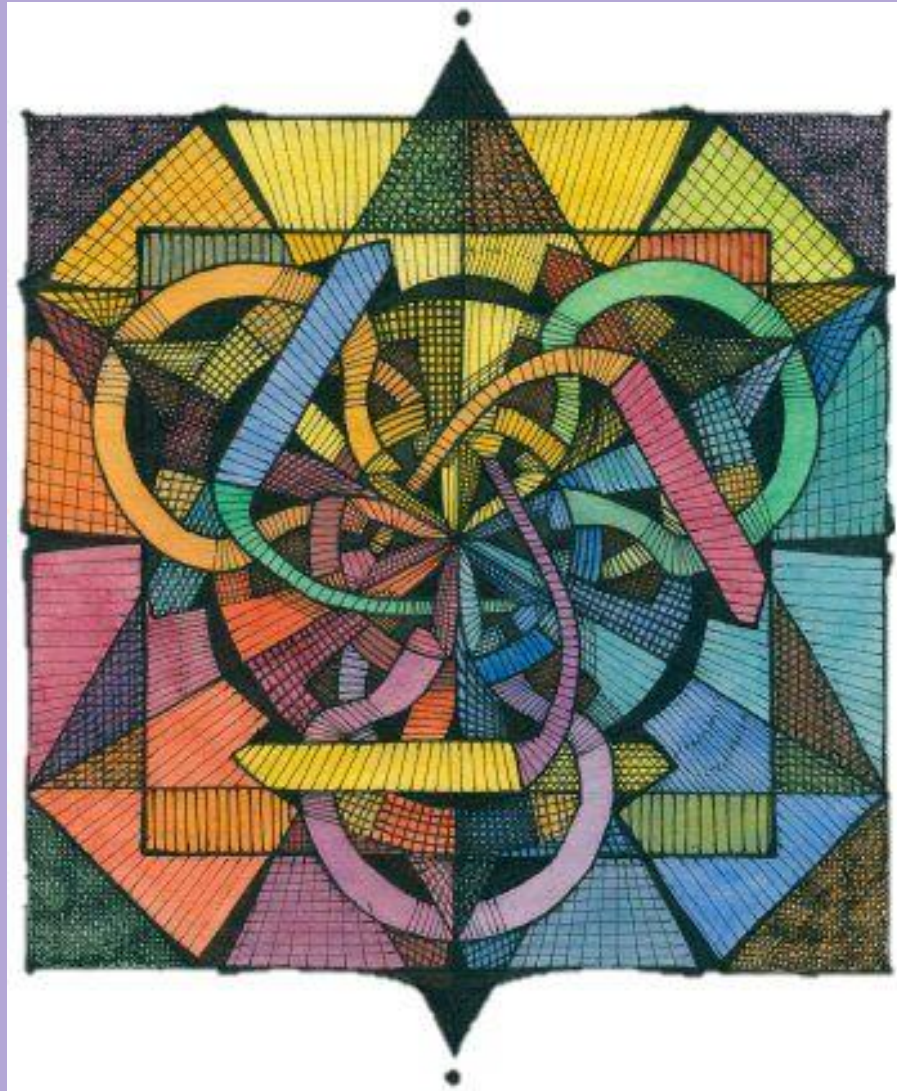
Tzedakah.

Music



Gilad Cohen
Sunday, March 21

Stillness



Dana Weeks
Sunday, April 11

Nature



Nature Walk
Sunday, April 18