

# Cheshbon HaNefesh: Embodied Accounting (Elul)

Source Sheet by Bonnie Levine

Week three of Soul Relationships: An Elul Accounting (Ahavath Achim Synagogue Seudah Shlishit Study - Elul 5784)

**GUIDE:** In Elul we are instructed to perform a “Cheshbon HaNefesh”: A soul accounting. Our soul can be conceptualized in terms of relationships with everything ... aspects of ourselves, the people around us, our environment. In this exercise, we will use this framing of “what is my soul’s relationship to this?” to measure our progress over the last year.

As we close out Shabbat afternoon over five weeks beginning with the first Saturday evening in Elul and ending with Motzei Shabbat Shuva, we will do a brief text study and then complete an “accounting” of a category of soul relationships to identify areas of tshuva (“return”) as we enter the High Holiday season.

This source sheet is for WEEK 3: Body

## 1.

Siddur Ashkenaz, Weekday, Shacharit,  
Preparatory Prayers, Elohai Neshama 1

(1) My God! the soul which You bestowed in me is pure; You created it, You formed it, You breathed it into me and You preserve it within me. You will eventually take it from me, and restore it in me in the time to come. So long as the soul is within me I give thanks to You, Adonoy my God, and God of my fathers, Lord of all creatures, Master of all souls. Blessed are You, Adonoy, Who restores souls to dead bodies.

סידור אשכנז, ימי חול, תפילת שחרית,  
הכנה לתפילה, אלהי נשמה א'

(א) אֱלֹהֵי נִשְׁמָה שֶׁנָּתַתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא אַתָּה  
בְּרַאתָה אַתָּה יִצְרַתָּה אַתָּה נִפְחַתָּה בִּי וְאַתָּה  
מְשַׁמְרָה בְּקִרְבִּי וְאַתָּה עֲתִיד לְטַלְּהָ מִמֶּנִּי  
וְלְהַחְזִירָה בִּי לְעֲתִיד לְבֹא, כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהַנְּשָׁמָה  
בְּקִרְבִּי מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאַלֵּהֵי  
אֲבוֹתַי רַבּוֹן כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים אֲדוֹן כָּל הַנְּשָׁמוֹת:  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמַּחְזִיר נְשָׁמוֹת לְפִגְרִים  
מֵתִים:

## 2.

Siddur Ashkenaz, Weekday, Shacharit,  
Preparatory Prayers, Asher Yatzar 1

Praised are You, Lord our God King of the universe, who with wisdom fashioned the human body, creating openings, arteries, glands and organs, marvelous in structure, intricate in design. Should but one

סידור אשכנז, ימי חול, תפילת שחרית,  
הכנה לתפילה, אשר יצר א'

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר יִצַר  
אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה וּבְרָא בּוֹ נְקֻבִים וְנְקֻבִים  
חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים. גְּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לְפָנֶיךָ כֶּסֶף  
כְּבוֹדְךָ שָׂאם יִפְתַּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד

of them, by being blocked or opened, fail to function, it would be impossible to exist. Praised are you, Lord, healer of all flesh who sustains our bodies in wondrous ways.

מָהֶם אִי אֶפְשֶׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּם וְלַעֲמוּד לְפָנֶיךָ  
אֶפְּיִלוּ שְׁעָה אַחַת: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' רוֹפֵא כָּל  
בָּשָׂר וּמְפַלֵּיא לַעֲשׂוֹת:

### 3.

#### Mishneh Torah, Human Dispositions 4:1

Since maintaining a healthy and sound body is among the ways of God - for one cannot understand or have any knowledge of the Creator, if he is ill - therefore, he must avoid that which harms the body and accustom himself to that which is healthful and helps the body become stronger.

They are as follows: a person should never eat unless he is hungry, nor drink unless thirsty. He should never put off relieving himself, even for an instant. Rather, whenever he [feels the] need to urinate or move his bowels, he should do so immediately.

#### משנה תורה, הלכות דעות ד:א'

הוֹאִיל וְהָיִית הַגּוֹף בְּרִיא וְשָׁלֵם  
מִדְּרָכֵי הַשֵּׁם הוּא. שְׁהֵרִי אִי אֶפְשֶׁר  
שְׁיָבִין אוֹ יָדַע דְּבַר מִיִּדְעֵת הַבוֹרָא  
וְהוּא חוֹלָה. לְפִיכֶךָ צָרִיךְ לְהִרְחִיק  
אָדָם עֲצָמוֹ מִדְּבָרִים הַמְּאַבְדִּין אֶת  
הַגּוֹף. וְלְהִנְהִיג עֲצָמוֹ בְּדְבָרִים  
הַמְּבָרִין וְהַמְּחַלְמִים. וְאֵלּוּ הֵן: לְעוֹלָם  
לֹא יֵאכַל אָדָם אֲלָא כְּשֶׁהוּא רָעֵב. וְלֹא  
יִשְׁתֶּה אֲלָא כְּשֶׁהוּא צָמָא. וְאֵל יִשְׁתֶּה  
נִקְבִּיו אֶפְלוּ רָגַע אַחַד. אֲלָא כָּל זְמַן  
שְׁצָרִיךְ לְהִשְׁתִּין אוֹ לְהִסֵּךְ אֶת רִגְלָיו  
יַעֲמַד מִיָּד:

#### Mishneh Torah, Human Dispositions 4:2

One should not eat until his stomach is full. Rather, [he should stop when] he has eaten to close to three quarter's of full satisfaction. One should drink only a small amount of water during the meal, and mix that with wine. When the food begins to be digested in his intestines, he may drink what is necessary. However, he should not drink much water, even when the food has been digested. One should not eat until he has checked himself thoroughly that he does not need to relieve himself. He should not eat until he has taken a stroll which is sufficient to raise his

#### משנה תורה, הלכות דעות ד:ב'

לֹא יֵאכַל אָדָם עַד שֶׁתִּתְמַלֵּא  
כְּרִסוֹ אֲלָא יִפְחַת כְּמוֹ רְבִיעַ  
מִשְׁבָּעָתוֹ. וְלֹא יִשְׁתֶּה מִיָּם בְּתוֹךְ  
הַמְּזוֹן אֲלָא מְעַט וּמְזוּג בַּיַּיִן.  
וְכִשְׁיִתְחִיל הַמְּזוֹן לְהִתְעַכֵּל  
בְּמַעְיוֹ שׁוֹתֶה מֵה שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ  
לְשִׁתּוֹת. וְלֹא יִרְבֶּה לְשִׁתּוֹת מִיָּם  
וְאֶפְלוּ כְּשִׁיתְעַכֵּל הַמְּזוֹן. וְלֹא  
יֵאכַל עַד שְׁיִבְדֹק עֲצָמוֹ יָפֶה יָפֶה  
שְׂמָא יְהִיָּה צָרִיךְ לְנִקְבִּיו. לֹא

body temperature.

Alternatively, he should work or exert himself in some other way. The rule is that he should engage his body and exert himself in a sweat-producing task each morning.

Afterwards, he should rest slightly until he regains composure and [then, he should] eat. If he were to bathe in hot water after exerting himself, it would be beneficial. Afterwards, he should wait a short while and eat.

יֹאכַל אָדָם עַד שְׁיִלֵךְ קֶדֶם אֲכִילָה  
עַד שְׁיִתְחִיל גּוּפוֹ לְחֵם. אוֹ יַעֲשֶׂה  
מְלֹאכְתּוֹ אוֹ יִתְיַגַע בְּיָגַע אַחֵר.  
כָּלְלוּ שֶׁל דְּבַר יַעֲנֶה גּוּפוֹ וְיִיגַע  
כָּל יוֹם בְּבִקְרַע עַד שְׁיִתְחִיל גּוּפוֹ  
לְחֵם וְיִשְׁקַט מְעַט עַד שֶׁתִּתְיַשֵּׁב  
נִפְשׁוֹ וְאוֹכֵל. וְאִם רָחַץ בְּחֻמִּין  
אַחֵר שְׁיַגַע הִרִי זֶה טוֹב וְאַחֵר כִּי  
שׁוֹהָה מְעַט וְאוֹכֵל:

4.

Makkot 23b:18

§ **Rabbi Simlai taught:** There were **613 mitzvot** stated to Moses in the Torah, consisting of **365 prohibitions** corresponding to the number of days in the solar year, and **248 positive mitzvot** corresponding to the number of a person's limbs. **Rav Hamnuna said:** What is the verse that alludes to this? It is written: “**Moses commanded to us the Torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob**” (Deuteronomy 33:4). The word **Torah**, in terms of its numerical value [*gimatriyya*],

מכות כ"ג ב:י"ח

דַּרְשׁ רַבִּי שְׁמַלְאִי: שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת  
וּשְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה מִצְוֹת נֶאֱמָרוּ לוֹ  
לְמֹשֶׁה, שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וְשִׁשִּׁים  
וְחֻמֵּשׁ לְאוּיִן כְּמִנְיַן יְמוֹת הַחֹמֶה,  
וּמֵאֲתִים וְאַרְבַּעִים וּשְׁמוֹנֶה עֶשְׂרֵה  
כְּנֶגֶד אֵיבָרָיו שֶׁל אָדָם. אָמַר רַב  
הַמְנוּנָא: מַאי קָרָא – “תּוֹרַה צְוִיהָ  
לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מִוְרֶשֶׁה”, “תּוֹרַה”  
בְּגִמְטְרִיא

5.

Berakhot 61a:28

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: A person has two kidneys; one advises him to do good and one advises him to do evil. And it stands to reason that the one advising him to do good is to his right and the one that advises him to do evil is to his left, as it is written: “A wise man’s understanding is at his right hand, but a fool’s understanding is at his left” (Ecclesiastes 10:2).

ברכות ס"א א:כ"ח

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: שְׁתֵּי כְּלִיֹּת יֵשׁ בּוֹ  
בְּאָדָם, אַחַת יוֹעֲצָתוֹ לְטוֹבָה  
וְאַחַת יוֹעֲצָתוֹ לְרָעָה. וּמִסְתַּבְּרָא  
דְּטוֹבָה לִימִינוֹ וְרָעָה לְשְׂמָאלוֹ,  
דְּכִתִּיב: “לֵב חָכָם לִימִינוֹ וְלֵב  
כֶּסֶל לְשְׂמָאלוֹ.”

## 6.

**Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (Ukraine, 19th century), Likutey Moharan I, 22:5**, translated by Moshe Mykoff, Breslov Research Institute: Jerusalem, 1990

And every person must show great compassion for the flesh of the body, illuminating it with every insight and perception that the soul perceives. The body should also be informed of this perception, as in (Isaiah 58:7), “Hide not from your own flesh.” Specifically from “your own flesh.” Do not hide your eyes from showing compassion for your flesh—the flesh of your body.

For it is necessary to show great compassion for the body, to see to purify it, so as to be able to inform it of all the insights and perceptions which the soul perceives. This is because the soul of every human being is continuously seeing and comprehending very exalted things. But the body knows nothing of them. Therefore, every person must show great compassion for the flesh of the body. He should see to purify the body so that the soul will be able to inform it of all that she is always seeing and comprehending.

Now, when the body is in this category, it benefits the soul. For there are times when she [the soul] falls from her level. However, if the body is clear and illuminated, the soul is capable of picking herself up and returning to her level because of the body. That is, through the pleasures of the body, she will be able to recall and ascend to her own pleasures. For now that the body is also good and right, it doesn't get trapped in the pleasures.

רבי נחמן מברסלב, ליקוטי מוהר"ן א,  
כב:ה

וְצָר יָד כָּל אָדָם לְרַחֵם מְאֹד עַל בְּשָׂר  
הַגּוּף לְהַרְגִּיז אוֹת לֹא מִכָּל הָאָרֶץ וּמִכָּל  
הַשָּׂגָה שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה מְשַׁגֶּת שֶׁהַגּוּף גַּם כֵּן  
יָדַע מִזֹּאת הַשָּׂגָה בְּבַחֲיָנָתָּ: "וּמִבְּשָׂרְךָ  
לֹא תִתְעַלֵּם" "מִבְּשָׂרְךָ דִּיקָא שְׂלֵא  
תַעֲלִים עֵינֶיךָ מִלְרַחֵם עַל בְּשָׂרְךָ הַיְנוּ  
בְּשָׂר גּוֹפֶךְ כִּי צָר יָכִין לְרַחֵם מְאֹד עַל  
הַגּוּף לְרַחֵם אוֹת לְזַכְּכוֹ כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּוָּכַל לְהוֹדִיעַ  
לֹא מִכָּל הַהָאָרוֹת וְהַשָּׂגוֹת שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה  
מְשַׁגֶּת יֵכַ הַנֶּשְׁמָה שֶׁל כָּל אָדָם הִיא רוֹאָה  
וּמְשַׁגֶּת תָּמִיד דְּבַר יָם עֲלִיוֹנִים מְאֹד אָבֵל  
הַגּוּף אֵינֶנּוּ יוֹדֵעַ מֵהֶם עַל כֵּן צָר יָד כָּל  
אָדָם לְרַחֵם מְאֹד עַל בְּשָׂר הַגּוּף לְרַחֵם אוֹת  
לְזַכְּךָ הַגּוּף עַד שֶׁתִּוָּכַל הַנֶּשְׁמָה לְהוֹדִיעַ  
לֹא מִכָּל מָה שֶׁהִיא רוֹאָה וּמְשַׁגֶּת תָּמִיד  
כִּנ"ל וְכִשְׁהַגּוּף הוּא בְּבַחֲיָנָה זוֹ הִיא  
טוֹבָה לְהַנֶּשְׁמָה שֶׁלְפָעֲמִים נּוֹפֶלֶת מִמִּדְרֵךְ  
גָּתָה וְכִשְׁהַגּוּף צָח וְאוֹר תִּוָּכַל הַנֶּשְׁמָה  
לְהִתְרוֹמֵם וְלִחְזֹר לְמִדְרֵךְ גָּתָה עַל יְדֵי הַגּוּף  
הַיְנוּ, עַל יְדֵי תַעֲנוּגֵי הַגּוּף תִּוָּכַל לְזַכֵּר  
וְלַעֲלוֹת לְתַעֲנוּגִים שְׂלֵה כִּי מֵאַחַר שֶׁהַגּוּף  
גַּם כֵּן טוֹב וְכִשְׂר אֵינֶנּוּ נִלְכָּד בְּהַתַּעֲנוּגִים

**EXERCISE:** For each category, review each prompt (listening to the guided questions), reflect on the question: “What is my soul’s relationship to \_\_\_\_\_ over the past year”?, then add one or more stickers in the second column.

- BLUE - Successful
- GREEN - Made good progress
- YELLOW - Struggling, but made effort
- ORANGE - Did not make enough effort
- RED - Missed the mark
- WHITE - Not a priority area for me
- PURPLE - Priority area / would like to journal about this

There are extra blank rows - if you think of another category, please feel free to add stickers now and write it in after Shabbat.

My relationship with _____ this year	(add colored stickers here)
<b>My physical appearance</b>	
<b>Food / nourishment</b>	
<b>Hydration</b>	
<b>Substances</b> (e.g. alcohol, caffeine, sugar)	
<b>Sleep</b>	
<b>Preventive care</b>	
<b>Healing</b>	
<b>Exercise</b>	
<b>Meditation</b>	
<b>Hygiene</b>	

Habits	