1. The Fall Holidays

LOOKING BACK, SETTING GOALS, AND MOVING AHEAD

Now is the time to let the mind
search backwards like the raven loosed
to see what can feed us. Now,
the time to cast the mind forward
to chart an aerial map of the months.

—Marge Piercy, "Coming upon September,"
Eight Chambers of the Heart

Our year begins with the sound of the shofar, jolting us to attention; with a taste of sweetness; with white Torah covers symbolic of a new beginning; with a call to *t'shuvah*, to return. For most of us, fall is the time when we literally return to our classrooms after a summer of rest and preparation. But *t'shuvah*, as we often tell our students, is more than a simple process of going back to some point we've already reached in the past. Ideally, *t'shuvah* allows us to learn from our past and move into the future, providing us with firm grounds for believing that what is yet to come will be better than what lies behind. As teachers, we can see this season of *t'shuvah* as a time for searching and sometimes painful, sometimes joyful reflection. People

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speak of "wiping the slate clean"; every fall, we teachers can picture ourselves wiping our blackboards—or whiteboards—clean of last year's regrets. We can set new goals, resolving to make this fresh, bright year an even better one for our students and for ourselves.

For teachers, the work of *t'shuvah* begins before the High Holy Days arrive. It may begin on Shavuot, when we leave the assembly on the last day of religious school already thinking about what we'll do differently next year. It may continue throughout the summer, as we study our textbooks and chart out a sequence of lessons. And it may reach a climax on the first day of class, when we invite our students to join us in envisioning what the coming year might be. Whenever our process of *t'shuvah* begins, and however long it lasts, the themes and images of the fall holidays provide us with invaluable guidance.

Rosh Hashanah: Looking Both Ways

If you've taught religious school before, chances are you've had your students do some version of the High Holy Days activity I'm about to describe. If you're just starting, chances are you'll have them do it before long. This one is a classic, and for good reason.

For the first part of the activity, we give our students slips of paper and markers or pencils. We ask them to think back on the past year and to write or draw about mistakes they've made, people they've hurt, times they wish they'd behaved differently. Are there people to whom our students should apologize or actions they should take to make up for things they've done wrong? After they've finished, we have our students rip their papers into tiny pieces. As we pass around a wastebasket, we speak reassuring words: There, we say. It's good to remember that we haven't always been as kind or helpful as we'd like. And it's important to resolve to apologize and make amends. But now that you've admitted to your mistakes and decided to do whatever it

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takes to set things right, you can put the mistakes behind you. You can make this fresh, new year better.

Next, we give our students clean slips of paper and invite them to draw or write about goals for the coming year. Some goals may be general—"I'll be nicer," "I'll help more." Others may be specific—"I'll try not to yell at my sister," "I'll take the trash out on Wednesdays." Then we ask students to tape their papers inside their notebook covers, or seal the papers in envelopes we'll give back at the end of the year. One fall, my students and I put our envelopes in a small silver gift bag and left it sitting on my desk all year, a quiet reminder of the goals we'd set.

It's a good activity. It gives students concrete images of the processes of repentance and renewal. It helps them understand some steps involved in *t'shuvah*—confessing, apologizing and making amends, resolving to do better, moving ahead.

It's a good activity for teachers, too. At some point—or several points—before the school year begins, we can benefit from looking back. It helps to do ourselves what we ask of our students—to actually write things down.

I like to set aside an evening several weeks before school begins, load up the Debbie Friedman CDs, and take out three yellow pads. On the first pad, I take notes about last year's low points—classes that fell flat, lessons that didn't connect with the students, discipline problems I wish I'd handled differently, opportunities I missed. On the second pad, I take notes about high points—moments when students' eyes widened with understanding, times we worked together happily and effectively, days their accomplishments exceeded expectations and left us all smiling.

I take a break, read over all the notes again, and look for patterns. Did a class fall short because I didn't prepare enough, or when I overprepared, fell in love with my own lesson plan, and couldn't adjust when students didn't respond as I'd expected? Did students' eyes glaze over because I'd packed too much material into a session or because I

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hadn't made the lesson challenging enough to hold their interest? Did discipline problems arise because I didn't help the class establish guidelines for behavior, or because the guidelines we did set were too strict, too lax, or inappropriate for students their age?

I also ask myself what the good days had in common. Did classes go well when I moved quickly from one activity to another, or when I put aside planned activities to let students linger on a topic they found especially interesting? Did students participate more when we explored a text in depth, or when we used the text as a starting point that let them talk about their experiences? Did discipline problems ease when I took aside disruptive students and talked to them seriously about their behavior, or when a joking reprimand nudged them to stop fooling around and get involved in class?

Inevitably, I also ask myself another question: Why did some approaches work beautifully one day and bomb utterly the next? We can't be too hard on ourselves when we go over our lists; perfection should never be among a teacher's goals. No technique works every time, and there are days when Solomon himself couldn't figure out a way to reach our students, even if he had David backing him up on harp and Miriam punctuating his jokes with tambourine rim shots. Many of us teach on Sunday mornings, when students may come fresh from sleepovers that have left them droopy and sullen, with barely enough energy to grasp their pencils. Or we may see our students on weekday afternoons or evenings when they're already frazzled after a long day, worried about homework they still have to do or tests they'll take in public school tomorrow, or resentful about soccer games or television shows they're missing. When we examine our lists, it's important to be honest about our mistakes but equally important to remember most Jewish educators today teach at less-than-ideal times and under difficult circumstances. When a class fizzles, it may not be our fault (or not entirely our fault); when a class soars, we can justly feel we've beaten the odds and scored a real victory.

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After evaluating the past year, it's time to set to work on the third yellow pad. How can we learn from and avoid last year's mistakes? How can we learn from and build on last year's successes so that the coming year will be more consistently satisfying? What will our goals be?

Of course, our school's curriculum and the organization to which our synagogue belongs have much to say about those goals—about the subjects our students will study, the texts they'll use, the knowledge and skills they should master. Even so, we have great freedom, great responsibility. We'll be the ones to decide how each lesson is structured, to establish the atmosphere in our classrooms, to decide how to respond to the many opportunities and challenges that arise. So we need to think rigorously about our personal goals.

Many goals may emerge from our examination of the past year. If looking back convinced us our classes often lacked structure and purpose, we may set the goal of preparing more thoroughly and looking for a central theme to unify each session. If classes often felt rigid and hurried, we may decide to make lesson plans more flexible, leaving room for spontaneity. If we've discovered our best discussions focused on close analysis of texts, we may choose to begin each class by looking at a brief passage from the weekly Torah portion. If we're encouraged by memories of times when students talked eagerly about connections between a text and their own lives, we may resolve to urge them to draw such connections whenever we study a text together.

Some goals will be academic; others will relate to students' attitudes. We want our students to gain knowledge and skills, but also want them to enjoy their time with us and to develop positive feelings about Judaism. It's easy to overemphasize one sort of goal at the expense of the other. There's the danger of making classes so narrowly focused on covering material that our students hide in the basement when it's time to go to religious school; there's also the danger of being so afraid of boring students that we succeed at entertaining them but fail to teach them

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much. If reviewing the past year makes us suspect we have a tendency in one direction or the other, we can compensate for that tendency when planning the year to come. The chapter on Purim says more about balancing the need to make religious school a pleasant experience for our students with the need to help them build the solid knowledge of Judaism that provides a sure foundation for lifelong commitment.

We also seek a balance between specific goals and larger ones. Some specific goals are set by our curriculum; others we set ourselves. For example, the curriculum may decide we'll teach a children's version of Prophets and Writings. Looking back at confusions that persisted throughout the past year, we may decide to spend more time introducing the idea of prophecy; remembering an especially enjoyable lesson, we may decide that this time, after asking students to write stories to illustrate favorite proverbs, we'll invite them to develop their stories into skits for a school assembly. Setting specific goals helps us focus on central concepts we want to stress, and gives us almost-guaranteed high points to look forward to.

If we measure success only in terms of specific goals, however, we risk overlooking our true achievements. "If there's one thing my students are going to learn this year," we say, voices sharpening with determination, "it's *this*. Whatever else they learn or don't learn, they *will* learn *this*." One year, our confirmation class teacher set the goal of teaching his students the Hebrew names of the books of the Torah. It bothered him that even after bar and bat mitzvah, students still referred to the books by their Greek names; this year, he vowed, his students *would* learn the Hebrew names, and remember them.

He's an excellent teacher, and he did his job well. In September, he put up a striking bulletin board about the Hebrew names of the books of the Torah. He taught his students to call out the names without hesitation, drew them into lively discussions about differences between Jewish and Christian rationales for naming the books, and reviewed

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often. Eventually, when it was clear the students had learned the Hebrew names so well that they could never forget them, he put up a new bulletin board. A month or so later, he raised the subject again. The students looked at him blankly. Oh, yeah, one finally said. They'd talked about that. It was cool, the way Genesis and Exodus and those other books had Hebrew names, too. Darn. What *were* those names? Not one student could remember a single name.

Those are the days when we stagger out of religious school clutching our book bags limply, gasping for air, wondering why God bothered to put us on this planet when our existence clearly serves no purpose. If we focus only on specific goals, we experience such days often. We can be confident that our students will gain a great deal from a class that's well planned and well presented, but we can't always predict which particular facts they'll remember and which they'll forget. Indeed, students sometimes seem born with a mysterious ability for figuring out the one thing we most want them to learn, putting up impenetrable barriers, and not learning it.

If we focus on larger goals as well, we can protect ourselves against such disappointments. That same year, the same teacher's class got into an unplanned discussion. They started with a Talmudic passage relating to idolatry; the teacher then asked his students to think of forms of idolatry in today's world, and one suggested that good luck charms are like idols. The teacher agreed, saying it's contrary to Judaism to think a physical object can make good things happen or protect us from harm.

Suddenly, the discussion got livelier. Over half the students, it turned out, carried good luck charms, and they vigorously defended their right to do so. One girl—I'll call her Becky—grew especially adamant. She had a lucky coin that she'd found when she was a little girl and carried in her pocket or purse every day; she'd feel nervous about going anywhere without it. She didn't see anything wrong with that and didn't intend to stop. The teacher said, gently, that he understood how

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she felt and that a habit she'd had for so long would be hard to break. Probably, the first time she left home without her lucky coin, she'd feel uneasy and strange. Even so, he urged her to think about it. Believing a coin could control her life just wasn't a Jewish thing to do.

Becky shrugged his comments off. Even if the coin didn't have magical powers, she said, it made her feel confident—what's un-Jewish about that? When the teacher tried again, she just shook her head. The teacher sighed in resignation. That's one more student I didn't reach, he thought.

Several months later, he opened class in his usual way, by inviting each student to talk about one thing he or she had done during the past week. When Becky's turn came, she hesitated, then said, "I threw my lucky coin away four days ago. I decided carrying a lucky charm isn't a Jewish thing to do."

When the teacher told me this story, we marveled at it together. He'd thought the discussion had made no impression on Becky, but clearly it had touched her so deeply that she'd thought about it for months. And while a good luck charm might not seem significant in itself, a Jewish young person had broken a long-standing habit and given up something that meant a great deal to her because she'd decided keeping it wasn't a Jewish thing to do. That was hugely significant. That might mean that from now on she'd be more likely to look at her other decisions in a Jewish context; that might influence her entire life. Getting Becky to give up her good luck charm might have been the single most important thing that teacher accomplished all year.

And yet he'd never set the goal of persuading his students to give up their good luck charms. He hadn't even known they carried good luck charms. Did that mean his goals were irrelevant to his accomplishment? Not at all. Becky's decision was directly related to several general goals he'd set for the year—to listen to students carefully, to treat their opinions respectfully no matter how much he disagreed, to stay flexible enough to let students help determine the direction discussions took,

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and to help them see how Judaism could guide decisions in their day-to-day lives. This particular success took him by surprise. Given the larger goals he'd established for the year, however, and his care in making them shape every class, it really wasn't surprising at all.

So we turn from our yellow pads, or computers, or whatever aids we've used, and we fix our attention on the future. We may share some of our reflections about the past year and some of our plans for the next one with colleagues, mentors, or supervisors. We look over our list of goals, taking them seriously but knowing the coming year won't turn out exactly as planned. Sometimes, we'll fall short of our goals; sometimes, we'll surpass them; often, we won't be able to figure out why. Even so, analyzing the past year and setting goals for the new one is bound to make us better teachers—more determined to improve, more conscious of what we're doing and why. We can now rip up the regret-heavy pages recording last year's disappointments—we're finished with those mistakes. We can move on. Perhaps we should conclude the exercise with apples and honey—or a fat-free brownie, if we prefer. We've done our best to make the new year sweet. We deserve a reward.

Yom Kippur: Exchanging Forgiveness

Other High Holy Day traditions can also guide us as we begin our new year. As we all know, the Days of Awe are a time for forgiving those who have wronged us and asking for forgiveness from those we ourselves have wronged. For members of a religious school staff, this exchange of forgiveness can be vital. We care deeply about what we do—otherwise, we wouldn't do it at all, because heaven knows the pay isn't good, and often there's no pay at all; often, we dig into our own pockets to pay for snacks and stickers and extra art supplies. The other teachers share our dedication but may not share our opinions. We get

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into heated discussions at teachers' meetings, and sometimes we step on each other's feelings: debates about curriculum or even about games at the Purim carnival can turn, suddenly, into debates about another teacher's understanding of Judaism. As teachers, we have a special need to take to heart our own lessons about exchanging forgiveness before starting a new year.

It can be hard on our egos, but it works. This is yet another time when being guided by our tradition's wisdom makes supremely good sense. Not long ago, I learned that lesson again, after a seemingly tiny incident at a Shabbat family potluck. Several preschoolers started chasing each other around during the after-dinner singing. They weren't making much noise—not yet—but it was distracting, and I feared it would get worse. So I walked over to each child individually and quietly told him or her to sit down. The children obeyed, and the singing continued undisturbed. As far as I was concerned, I'd handled the situation effectively and tactfully.

But then I got a call from one preschooler's mother, a teacher at our religious school. As far as she was concerned, I'd been out of line—I'd undermined her authority by disciplining her child in her presence. The conversation went on for some time, with many assertions of her rights as a parent and my responsibilities as a principal. She said things about being too repressive, and I said things about being too indulgent; we came dangerously close to challenging each other not only as teachers but also as parents. Neither of us would concede anything. Finally, we agreed to disagree, declared we were still friends, and hung up.

After that, when we saw each other at school or services, we were elaborately polite. At teachers' meetings, we carefully prefaced disagreements with comments about how much we respected the other person's opinions. The tension never lifted. We could still work together, but we no longer enjoyed it; obviously, we no longer liked each other much.

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Fall came, and as usual I taught my students about exchanging forgiveness with people with whom we'd had conflicts during the past year. This time, the lesson felt poignant, because I couldn't stop thinking about the woman in the classroom down the hall, the woman I, in fact, respected greatly as a fine teacher and devoted mother. Kol Nidrei fell on a Sunday night that year; we had only hours left. I let my students go early, waited outside her door, went into her classroom as soon as her students left, and apologized. I couldn't say my actions were wrong—to this day, I honestly don't believe they were—but I knew I'd lost my temper and said harsh things. I could sincerely say I was sorry for that, and for hurting her feelings. She looked very surprised and enormously relieved. She'd felt bad about the conversation, too, she said, and she too was sorry. We forgave each other whole-heartedly, hugged briefly, felt awkward together, chatted about nothing for a moment, and went on our ways. Ever since, things have been fine. We can disagree without first having to say how much we respect each other. We like each other again.

Many of us make a point of exchanging forgiveness with family members during the Days of Awe. Maybe we should make a point of exchanging forgiveness with fellow teachers, too. It feels cleansing, it feels liberating—it feels exactly the way Yom Kippur is supposed to feel. And it's not as hard as we think it's going to be. No Jewish teacher worth his or her salt can turn us down if we ask for forgiveness during the Days of Awe. So let's say whatever is needed to erase last year's tensions; let's express the respect and affection we truly feel for one another; and let's move ahead unburdened, united in our efforts to do the work that means so much to all of us.

Sukkot: Shelter, Symbols, Stars

The sukkah is a powerful metaphor for the Jewish classroom. It is, first of all, a shelter, a place that protects our students and us.

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Here, students say things they might not dare to say in public school, ask questions they might not dare to ask gentile teachers in front of gentile friends. We decorate the sukkah with symbols of the harvest; we decorate our classrooms with symbols of our heritage. But neither the sukkah nor the Jewish classroom is closed off from the world. We leave the roof of the sukkah open, so we can gaze at the stars and feel the wonder of Creation. The Jewish classroom, too, is left open: to wonder, to possibility, to visions of all our students and we might accomplish in this world.

It's easy to dismiss preparing the classroom as our least important beginning-of-the-year task. I've heard teachers brag about how inept they are at putting up bulletin boards and how little they care about it. In some ways, the physical appearance of a classroom indeed seems trivial. If our words are brilliant, what does it matter what our classrooms look like?

I favor squandering many hours of summer on bulletin boards. I have no artistic ability—I can't draw a cat to save my life—but even I can cut pictures out of old Jewish calendars and magazines to put together a collage. Even I can staple precut letters in place and think of interesting things to do with fabric. And I can certainly throw out last year's art projects, straighten shelves, and try a new arrangement for desks. When students walk in on the first day, I want the classroom to look fresh, uncluttered, inviting. I want students to be intrigued by bulletin boards hinting at subjects we'll study during the coming year. Just as important, I want them to know I care enough about their education to have invested a fraction of my summer in getting the room ready for them.

After all, most public-school teachers devote whole days to making their classrooms look welcoming. If our classrooms look tired and shabby by comparison, our students have yet another reason to conclude religious school doesn't really matter. I take ridiculous pride

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in remembering the time one of my daughters brought a Christian friend to services and took her into my classroom to see the bulletin boards. “Wow,” the friend said, wide eyed, “this looks like *real* school.” That’s the reaction I want from my students on the first day.

But I always leave one bulletin board empty so students can invest something of themselves in the classroom on that same first day. Books and websites on Jewish education offer many ideas for bulletin boards students can create. Maybe you’ll call parents in advance, asking that students come to the first class with photographs of themselves and index cards inscribed with their Hebrew names; maybe you’ll invite students to make collages about favorite holidays or Torah stories.

My favorite approach is to cover my desk with objects representing various holidays—a shofar, a menorah, a gragger. As students identify the objects, we take photographs. Soon, the bulletin board labeled “Our Year” is circled with colorful photographs—Rachel holding a jar of honey and biting into an apple, Ben and Erika dangling carrots and broccoli over Jacob’s head to form a human sukkah, Jessica grinning as she clutches an oversize tree branch and a Jewish National Fund blue box. When students leave at the end of the day, they’ve taken the first step toward making the classroom their own.

And that’s what we want our classrooms to be—safe, sheltering places, rich in symbols of our heritage and of the harvest the coming year will bring, places that bring together fruits that grow rooted in the earth and dreams that reach the heavens. As teachers, we build the frame for this special sukkah, using our knowledge, experience, and hopes to create an atmosphere that entices students to learn. Our students bring to that framework their questions, energy, and insights. Together, we make something beautiful.

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Simḥat Torah: Ending, Beginning, Rejoicing

If any holiday can be singled out as the one that best defines the Jewish teacher's work and purpose, perhaps it is Simḥat Torah. Its themes and symbols embody, precisely and beautifully, what we do, and why we do it.

Simḥat Torah reminds us to rejoice in our work. The study of Judaism, and the teaching of Judaism, are indeed obligations, but they're ones we embrace lovingly and gratefully. As we dance about the sanctuary, we wait eagerly for the moment when the Torah is passed to us; when we feel that familiar weight in our arms, we know we've been entrusted not with a burden but with a treasure, and our hearts thrill to the honor given us. We rejoice in our turn to lead the congregation in following the Torah; we rejoice equally in the privilege of passing the Torah to the next leader.

When we return to our classrooms in September, we feel that same thrill. Once again, the congregation has entrusted its greatest treasures to us. And despite all the difficulties, all the frustrations, we know our students are indeed treasures, not burdens. In our bitterest moments, we may complain that some parents see us as babysitters, but we never see ourselves that way. We know much more goes on in our classrooms. We know we're holding the Torah up before our students, teaching them to recognize how precious it is, preparing them for the day when they'll take it in their own arms, press it to their own hearts, and lead others in the never-ending renewal of the Jewish people. We are teaching the next teachers. Despite all the difficulties, all the frustrations, we rejoice in this sacred task.

And Simḥat Torah teaches us vital lessons about the nature of our joy. These days, we hear much about the yearning for spirituality, about the need for an emotional dimension to religion. Simḥat Torah reminds us of the true foundation of spirituality. On Simḥat Torah, we dance,

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yes, and we sing. But we also read. We read a double portion of the Torah, and *that* is the basis for our joy. Simḥat Torah tells us spirituality is grounded in more than a vague desire to feel good or connected; rather, spirituality is grounded in study, in careful attention to the words of our sacred texts.

On Simḥat Torah and in our classrooms, intellect and emotion come together, each fueling and supporting the other. Our study leads us to rejoice; our joy compels us to study. Which is more important—the joy that leads to further study, or the study that leads to greater joy? Simḥat Torah reminds us both are part of an eternal cycle. As teachers, we help that cycle endure.

Simḥat Torah also reminds us that Jewish education never ends—not for our students, not for us. We've heard the speeches at bar and bat mitzvah services and at confirmation ceremonies; we've probably made such speeches ourselves. This is not an end, we say, but a beginning; and when we say this, we speak the truth. The end of each stage in Jewish education is the beginning of the next. What holiday embodies that truth more explicitly than Simḥat Torah? We end the reading of the Torah by retelling the death of our greatest prophet. Then we immediately begin again, with the birth of a fresh, new world. The words of the text and the ritual of the holiday lead us to the same truth—every end is a new beginning.

As Jewish teachers, we are living symbols of that truth. We end one school year only to begin another. Through our example, we prove to our students that Jewish education never ends. Year after year, we return to our classrooms. We return to our people's texts and, with our students, study them once again, knowing that this study can never truly be completed—that each year we will learn something new, teach something new. Each year, we become partners in the process of creating new life. This is our obligation, our sacred privilege, our unending joy.

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SUGGESTED RESOURCES

The following list of resources, like the lists at the ends of the chapters to come, is clearly not exhaustive. In each list, my purpose is to describe just a few resources related to the themes of the chapter, to help busy teachers get started if they'd like to explore a topic further. Some of the lists mention books, websites, and other resources that offer teachers specific suggestions about ways of teaching the holidays. Some choices on this list may seem idiosyncratic. I haven't always tried to identify the latest or most authoritative text on a subject; often, I've listed personal favorites I've found especially helpful through the years. I hope that you too will find these sources exciting and worthwhile.

Robert Goodman, *Teaching Jewish Holidays: History, Values, and Activities* (Denver: A.R.E. Publishing, 1997).

Teachers looking for specific ideas for lessons and activities for teaching the holidays will find this book an invaluable resource. Rabbi Goodman covers both major and minor holidays, suggesting techniques and strategies suitable for various grade levels and for family education. His book also includes background information on each holiday, vocabulary and definitions, related blessings, and a list of books, games, tapes, and other resources.

Lawrence N. Mahrer and Debi Mahrer Rowe, *A Guide to Small Congregation Religious Schools* (New York: UAHC Press, 1996).

Some sections of this book focus on school administration, but others make excellent reading for all teachers as we prepare ourselves for a new year of religious school. For example, the sections on the goals and aims of Jewish education can help us put the coming year in perspective, and the section on curriculum can guide us as we decide what we hope to accomplish in the months ahead. Other sections, such as those on *tzedakah* and family education, can give us ideas for specific projects.

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Michael Strassfeld, *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide and Commentary* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985).

This is the most fascinating book on the Jewish holidays I've ever read. Throughout the year, we can turn to it for facts and ideas about the holidays to share with students and to deepen our own understanding. At the beginning of the year, reading the chapters on the fall holidays can help us focus on the spiritual work that every Jew needs to do during this special season, informing our reflections and preparations as we get ready to return to the classroom.

WEBSITES

As we search for ways to make the coming year even better than the last, we'll find websites a rich and stimulating source of ideas. Especially for those who live in small Jewish communities with few resources, the Internet is a treasure that has truly transformed teaching. Of course, it's important to remember that websites sometimes move or disappear, and that therefore some of the addresses listed here and in other chapters may no longer be accurate.

Teachers' organizations such as the National Association of Temple Educators have valuable websites (**www.rj.org/nate**), and many cities have educational resource centers that also publish websites. (My favorite is the site for the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland, **www.jecc.org**. I especially like the Respons Curricula that help us talk to our students about current events. These curricula are issued in an amazingly timely manner and are consistently excellent.) Some Jewish publishers also have sites that can be rich sources of ideas and advice. Behrman House, for example, sponsors the Educators' Lounge (**www.shalomuvrachah.com/ASPForum**) which invites teachers to share lesson plans and teaching techniques, to ask

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for suggestions or information, and to trade success stories with other teachers using the same books and materials.

More specialized websites are listed in the chapters that follow. You may also want to spend some time exploring some of the general sites that provide links to hundreds of Jewish resources on the Internet. Here are a few to get you started.

Jewish Community Online | www.jewish.com
Judaism and Jewish Resources | www.shamash.org/trb/judaism
Maven: The Jewish Portal | www.maven.co.il
Judaism 101 | www.jewfaq.org

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