

# Elul: Time to Reset Your Emotions

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***Feelings determine A LOT. What you genuinely feel is what you in fact believe about yourself, the world, and God!***

Elul can be tricky. As we go through the steps of doing teshuva, hear shiurim and read books about teshuva and coming closer to Hashem, and work on refining our character, at times we're still left with negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, lack of emuna, sadness, envy and hatred that are not exactly conducive to doing teshuva.

Sages tell us that Avoda shebalev – serving God with one's heart, a necessary part of our teshuva process, requires infusing one's heart with intention. How can we increase our

genuine desire to love Hashem and to want to cling to Him? This is foundational to doing teshuva because if we really loved Hashem, if we really believed that He is merciful, that He listens to our prayers, that He is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth, preserving lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity, rebellion and sin, and that He pardons, wouldn't we be feeling pretty good just about now? Wouldn't it be so much easier to not hate, be jealous, feel depressed, etc.? wouldn't we be able to give tzedakah and help others more generously and happily?

Feelings determine A LOT. What you genuinely feel is what you in fact believe about yourself, the world, and God. And what you truly believe is what causes you to actually ACT upon the information in your head. In other words, when we become very focused and completely aware of what we know about Hashem, such as His 13 attributes of mercy for example, to the point where this information becomes deeply embedded within our hearts, this drives us to actually ACT upon this information.

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For the busy ladies who do not have time for one more thing on their teshuva to-do list, I have good news for you. I've been using a very simple technique to purify my heart, or so to speak, reprogram it. We know that conscious repletion of information leads to its embedment within our heart and subconscious, allowing us to feel the information as opposed to just knowing it.

When you feel Hashem's love for you, it is much easier to love Him back. When you feel Hashem's kindness and goodness, it's much easier to be in a good mood and to not worry problems or what others have that you do not. When you feel Hashem's

abundance and protection, it is much easier to wholeheartedly give to others.

What I do is I simply listen over and over to songs with a certain message about God. For Elul, I created a playlist on Spotify with songs that convey information about Hashem that I would like to embed into my heart. My playlist consists of the following six songs: Hatov by Yonatan Razel, Shema Koleinu by Udi Davidi, Machnisei Rachamim by Yitzchak Meir Helfgot, Avinu Malkeinu by Ehud Banai, Adon Olam by Eitan Masuri, Chamol by Yitzchak Meir Helfgot. These songs consist of verses and other sources for Hashem's goodness and mercy, Hashem's listening to our prayers, His everlasting compassion, His Kingship, His rulership over the entire world and more.

I listen to these over and over in Elul. As I listen, I know that come Rosh Hashana, I will be able to crown Hashem as King with a heart full of love, emotion, excitement, compassion, generosity and more. G-d willing, these feelings will drive me in the coming year to do Hashem's will in every area of life with a joyous heart.