

# WELL-CONNECTED

It's not what you know.  
It's what *you do*.



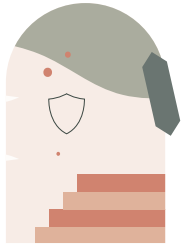
A MONTHLY SERIES  
OF CLASSES  
FOR WOMEN

**Well-Connected**  
is just the thing if you're  
feeling mitzvah-curious,  
or if you simply want  
to find out more about  
practical Judaism.  
Beyond that—if you're  
looking for a deeper  
engagement with Jewish  
ritual and how to live in  
deed—indeed, this is just  
the thing to do!

## WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF RELIGION?

A way of looking at life, perhaps, a story about the world, or a way to pray? For many, a faith is a core set of beliefs surrounded by a little ceremony. For us, that's precisely backwards: Judaism is less a system of belief than a system of action.

But what's so inspiring about all those dreary dos and don'ts? *Well-Connected* will reveal the soul of Jewish ritual life by showing how to make each mitzvah personal, and a way to connect to something beyond ourselves. Each month, we put one area of Jewish law under the microscope and explore its rationale, relevance, and practical application. As we proceed, a complete vision of the mysticism, the beauty, and the richness of divinely inspired life will emerge.



#### LESSON 1

## UNROLL THE SCROLL

A small scroll, wrapped up, placed in a case, and affixed to a door, the mezuzah is so tiny you could miss it if you weren't looking for it. And yet it contains so much. More than Ring or Nest, the ultimate in home gadgetry has always been the *mezuzah*.

Scroll down! Follow the *mezuzah* from its manufacture to the end user experience by learning what it takes to be a scribe, the process of writing a *mezuzah*, how it's actually installed, and the true power of that little piece of parchment.

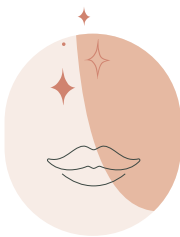


#### LESSON 2

## SOUL FOOD

Is there anything more emblematic of religious dogma than keeping kosher? Kashrut determines not only what we eat, but also where and how we travel, and whom we break bread with. And for what purpose?

To gain insight into the kosher lifestyle, we survey the basics of the dietary code and weigh whether these laws are really about staying healthy—or staying spiritual. Then, moving from the kitchen to the factory, we'll hear firsthand from experts in the field to learn just what it is a certification agency does.

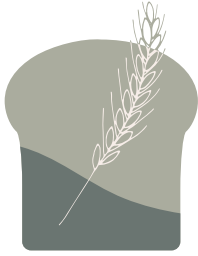


#### LESSON 3

## ENDLESSLY BLESSED

Like some sort of Jewish mantra, *berachot* are better known as those brief blessings recited over food. As it happens, there are blessings for sighting a rainbow, when on a road trip, and even after visiting the bathroom. Isn't it all a bit much?

To learn more, we will go through the various classes of *berachot* and skim the intricate laws governing which benedictions are said, and when. We'll discover how reciting a few words at the right time can transform a given activity or event and make it more mindful, focused, and grounded.



#### LESSON 4

## A SLICE OF LIFE

From baking to breaking to thanking, there is a host of special practices uniquely associated with bread, starting with separating *challah*—the special mitzvah entrusted to Jewish women—to the special role bread plays on Shabbat and the festivals.

So, what's the deal with dough? In this class, we look at the symbolism of bread, take a crash course in the fascinating rituals that surround it, and meditate on the deep significance bread has in our lives.



#### LESSON 5

## PRAY IT FORWARD

Prayer feels like it should be a genuinely spiritual experience, but the foreign language, the rigid text, and the fixed times for the services can threaten to turn the whole thing into a perfunctory drudgery.

By studying the various elements of the liturgy, with a special focus on the meditations of Shema, we'll uncover the possibilities of prayer, and how prayer can be a joyful, soulful, spontaneous experience: open the prayer book, express your spiritual self, and connect!

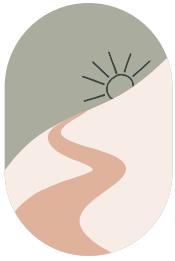


#### LESSON 6

## THE KINDS OF KINDNESS

Sure it's nice to be nice, but sometimes you need specifics. Rather than relying on vague ethical pronouncements, the Torah gets into the nitty-gritty and ensures that we express our love in the concrete, with commandments like giving charity, hosting guests in the home, comforting the bereaved, and returning lost property.

Beyond simply studying how to properly perform these action mitzvot, this class presents them in a new light, making us rethink the general nature of the ethical obligations we bear toward our fellow human.



## LESSON 7

# TO LIVE IN DEED

From birth, to marriage, to death, and beyond, Jewish traditions mark the contours of our lives. If there isn't a Kaddish, there's a Kiddush, bat mitzvah, or *chupah* . . .

Here, we survey the key life cycle rituals so as to more deeply appreciate their significance—that of the rituals, and of the life events they are associated with. Not just an accompaniment, these practices mold our major life steps and give us language to celebrate or to commemorate. Even more, they work to complete the soul's journey on earth.

