



The noun freedom is defined as: the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint, the state of not being imprisoned or enslaved, the exemption from external control, the absence of or release from ties.

The first word that's comes to mind when discussing freedom is choice.

Freedom is about being free to choose.

One of our greatest superpowers is our freedom to choose how to respond to life and react with integrity, passion and kindness. It is also our most underused strength in that we are often so unaware of the incredible impact we have on our happiness and success just by virtue of the millions of tiny choices we get to make daily.

From the moment we rise, we are making choices: from what to eat and what to wear to what we say to our families to how we function in the workplace or within our social circles and communities.

In fact, some experts wholeheartedly claim that our life is in theory a sum of all the choices we ultimately make.

Don't get me wrong, there is plenty in life we have absolutely no say or control over whatsoever, but our freedom of choice as to what we decide to do with our life's experience and how we handle what comes our way is entirely on us. Entirely up to us.

To be free means to walk through life's journey with the ability to choose in favor of one's values and live authentically.
To do what is right.

To be free means to follow a new dream or a clearer vision without the shackles and chains of past failures and mistakes.
Learn from them, pick the lessons and move on.
No one said ts easy, but it is worth it.

To be free means to take risks and give yourself permission to fly, and fall, and then get back up and fly again.
Because we can. And we do fall. Hard and often.

To be free means to open your eyes to all that's truly possible and shut your ears to the doubt, fear and judgments of those who don't yet believe. We are surrounded inside and outside with skepticism and uncertainty.

Freedom reminds us we can step forward anyway.

To be free means to see magic and miracles where others see nothing.
Even in the simplest and mundane. We can train ourselves to look for it.



To be free means to listen to the inner voices of encouragement, hope and optimism, despite significant challenge and effort that's lies ahead.

To be free means to live, work, play and love with people who bring out the best in you and make you smile.

To be free means to speak with wisdom, thought and sincerity and select words that uplift both yourself and those around you.

To be free means to live now, in the present with a mindful approach to everything you do – not tied to the past or an unknown future.

To be free means to be thankful. To express gratitude for everyone and everything that blesses your path.

To be free means for me to win, no one else has to lose.

Freedom is an ideal that we strive for daily.

I don't know many people who don't feel the pressure and stress of commitments, burdens and numerous obligations inside and outside the home and career where our busy lifestyles and the fast-paced rhythm of technology and innovation is setting a life pace sometimes too fast for any of us to fully maximize.

As a personal development coach and strategist, I am reminded of the powerful story of the bird who had magnificent plumage.

He would fly over the forest searching for twigs and leaves that matched his beauty in the hope of constructing a worthy nest. After countless attempts the bird decided to pluck his own feathers and use them to build a nest that would satisfy him. He did. And he proudly sat in this glorious nest. But he could no longer fly.

We are free to choose.

We are never free from the consequences of our choices.

Freedom requires energy, effort and sacrifice. Freedom requires saying no to something to allow a yes to other things.

Freedom is not easy or simple. Freedom has a price. Freedom requires accountability and responsibility.

We are free to choose.

We are never free from the consequences of our choices.

Pesach reminds me that freedom is not only about my choices to live fully, but also about how important it is for me to make "seder" in my life. It is a time of renewal and a time to create order within ourselves and without. It is also a pivotal time in our calendar when we reflect on the miraculous events in our history that led to our freedom. Not only our freedom from slavery and oppression, but our freedom to choose, to serve and to live our faith fully, guided by Torah

values. It is our reminder of miracles. Past and present. From the plagues to the splitting of the sea to the magnitude and advancement of natural, technological, scientific, medical and social entrepreneurship. Pesach is about perspective, reminding us of all there is to be grateful for.

Everyday.

One cannot be truly free if one is living in the past. Be grateful for this moment.

One cannot be truly free if one is more concerned with what others think than of being true to oneself. Be grateful for your own opinions and beliefs.

One cannot be truly free if one chooses to see obligations and responsibilities as painful and torturous. Be grateful that you have people and work to commit to and contribute towards. This isn't easy but changing the way we look at things causes the things we look at to change.

One cannot be truly free if one's fear is dictating their next move. Be grateful for the unknown. Be grateful for new opportunities. Hope is real.

The best growth and rewards happen out there.

One cannot be truly free if one's peace of mind is not the highest priority. Be grateful for your ability to pause, pray and reconnect with what truly matters most.

One cannot be truly free if one's goals and values are not aligned with ones vision and action plan for implementation. Be grateful for your purpose in this world and live it with integrity. Everyday ask yourself if what you are doing is truly what you want.

One cannot be truly free if one's loved ones are trapped. Be grateful for the chance to help another person. Commit to be the kindest person you know.

One of Alfred Adler's key concepts in Adlerian Psychology is that of social interest. "Social interest" in German is "Gemeinschaftsgefühl," which translates as "community feeling," as opposed to one's private interests or concerns.

One's "style of life" is the set of personal narratives one has devised in order to cope with being-in-the-world. If one has social interest then one evidences or enacts a "useful" style of life. If one does not have social interest then one is self-absorbed and is concerned only with one's self. For a person to experience happiness and freedom, the feeling of belonging, being significant to the world and those around him, he has to develop an attitude or outlook towards furthering the welfare of others.

May this Pesach, we not only remove more limiting sabotaging thoughts, mindsets and barriers that are keeping us stuck and preventing us from living our greatest lives, but let's make sure that we are sharing our very best selves with the world around us, giving, leading, empowering and encouraging all those around us to do the same.

This Pesach, let's choose freedom and be open and ready for the outcomes of this choice:

1. Let's evaluate how we can be more useful.
2. Let's undertake tasks and goals that benefit others, not only ourselves.

3. Let's clean and de-clutter our lives of anything that doesn't serve our higher good.
4. Let's use our superpower to make better choices that lead us closer to who we want to become.
5. Let's remember that there are far too many who are slaves to so much: governments, brutality, hatred, evil, war, illness, poverty, hunger, loneliness, confusion, and so many other painful and imprisoning experiences and that freedom is never ever something to be taken for granted.
One new custom I am taking on this year is choosing a trait I don't like about myself and writing it down on a page. Along with my Chametz, I want to burn this trait. It doesn't grow me, it makes me sad and I don't like who I am when I embody this characteristic. I am well aware of how I am a slave to it and after a lot of painful reflection; this is something I choose to free myself from.

Take a moment out of your day. Pause.
What are you grateful for?
What do you want to free yourself from?

With Pesach around the corner and the world in a total frenzy, this image of what we can control resonates deeply.

For me, sometimes time and history out of context appear, in isolation, without meaning. What really matters around Pesach season is maybe my Jewish vision of a world redeemed a world in which our highest ethical ideals are met, a messianic world. And so we relive our Jewish experience of redemption year after year at this very time to remind ourselves not so much of our connection to the past, but of our goal for the future.

Our people's Exodus from Egypt is our own paradigm for redemption. Pesach reminds us that true redemption is real, that being liberated is on-going, and that the possibility of salvation is always here. I hope and pray for this.

This is so relevant to our personal lives. Especially today when the entire world seems to be feeling complete chaos and loss of control.

Very often, events, even Coronavirus, out of context, can be misunderstood as random, coincidence, insignificant. I don't think this is the case. I believe every challenge brings plenty opportunities and important messages and lessons - often disguised as unthinkable suffering and distress. Through these terribly hard times, what truly matters is not who we were before the storm, but rather who we decide to become as a result of it - not who we once were, what we once did and where we came from as our starting point, but rather what we choose to do RIGHT NOW, when we can impact and effect and influence and inspire and help and achieve, who we become and the meaningful contribution we ultimately make in this lifetime, especially during uncertain, scary and stressful times.

Pesach reminds us that our personal freedom is something we need to be working on constantly. And we are responsible for our actions alone. There is just too much else way beyond our control. Just look around right now.

And with our personal power, we get to make choices that can positively uplift and transform our family, homes, schools, workplaces, communities, societies and countries and the world. I believe this wholeheartedly. What we do matters.

The Exodus is, religiously-speaking, not an event of history, dead and buried. It is the present. It is the struggle for us to regain our roots. It is our courage to teach, learn and thrive thousands of

years after and during deprivation and persecution. It is the struggle for us to know our values. To know what universal principles are most important to us and to always try choose in favor of them. The Exodus is the on-going struggle of Jews to make a life for themselves and build up Israel. It is the way we make changes, personal and professional. It is the things we are willing to give up on, the things we are willing to commit to and the prices we are willing to pay to make them happen - by choice and dedication.

The Exodus is happening now for all of us - we needn't look very far to find someone who is ill, afraid, isolated, lost, confused, scared, homeless, someone who lacks adequate medical care, someone who seeks employment to support a family, someone who wants a friend, a partner, to belong, someone without direction or clear purpose, someone who wants to go to school and feel safe. Someone who is praying so deeply for a healthy planet. And I embrace all of humanity right here.

I am still in many ways enslaved - we all are perhaps - sometimes by physical bonds, or economic bonds, or by bonds of a distant memory or a powerful negative emotion. Regret, anger, disappointment, fear, anxiety, stress, frustration, there are so many shackles weighing us down - perhaps we're slaves to a past mistake or a crazy global pandemic gone viral.

And if slavery comes in many forms, then to all these forms of enslavement, the message of Pesach speaks so clearly and so loudly.

Redemption is the promise for all people. Redemption is the possibility for all of us to become more of ourselves, give more of ourselves, use-up more of ourselves, offer more of ourselves and do this within the space of all the complexity we face right now in our lives.

Redemption is the chance to unlock passions and dreams.

Redemption is when we debunk myths and shatter limiting beliefs that sabotage us and keep us stuck.

Redemption reminds us to not let fear of failure hold us back because we can win or learn and failures are valuable feedback for us to grow.

Redemption means forgiveness and second chances. It's mending pain, rebuilding trust and nurturing relationships with new eyes.

Redemption happens when we right our wrongs and make better choices.

When we are able to appreciate and enjoy our life with more gratitude, seek and see miracles all around us, love with honesty, live more simply, be present and mindful, create peace wherever we go, live more simply, slow down, re-purpose and re-prioritize, look after ourselves and our world, connect, help and serve those around us more than ever, make a difference, ease another's pain, celebrate everyone's success with joy, laugh more, make the most of every moment, use up all our gifts, make a difference, choose wisely - I guess only then - we are free.



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