

President's Address: Yom Kippur 5777

L'shanah tovah, a very sweet New Year to you all. No, you're not having a Déjà vu moment – I did stand here before you just a little over a week ago, on Erev Rosh Hashanah, to welcome you to TBT (or for most of you, welcome back). The air that night was filled with expectation, and in my mind, a little uncertainty: How would my speech be received? How would the choir sound? Would the air conditioning hold up? Some of those questions have been answered: Fairly well, terrific, and good enough.

There were other questions, as well, questions I posed to you: In the recognition of our 40th Anniversary of this building, the brave and bold leadership and vision of our founding members who started this synagogue, I asked you to consider where you thought we should now go as a synagogue. Our place here is established; we are, if nothing else, rooted in the larger community, secure in our ways, but hopefully, not TOO secure.

If there is something that is anathema to our continuing vital presence, it is complacency. We are all familiar with the text of the Unataneh Tokef – “who will live, and who will die, who will be humbled and who exalted” – I have always thought of that prayer in terms of individuals, but now as your President, when I consider these prophetic words, I think about our synagogue – will we grow as a community, daring to tackle new challenges, make bold and brave commitments, transcend our “usual ways” and embrace the new or uncomfortable? Even those of you here today who are NOT physicians recognize that we strengthen our muscles and our brains by exertion, working to increase our reps, increase our laps, improve our time, master new skills, fighting atrophy and stagnation with physical and mental challenges.

I would like us to do the same with our synagogue. On Rosh Hashanah, I talked about cameras – how the evolution of the SLR to the app on your iPhone has transformed how we all communicate with each other. How can our structure and function here evolve to transform our experience of relating to TBT, and more importantly, to each other?

What is your personal relationship to this place? For me, these walls are my house, and you all are my family (that's not as tender as it sounds; you don't know my family!). I know that this may not be what you want out of TBT. But you are seeking something; you are all here listening to me now. Whether you recognize it or not, you have a vision for TBT, what you would like it to be for you, and how it can help you in your life. How can we shape TBT to meet your needs, help you grow with us together? I am asking you to reflect on these points, and share your views with us. Your opinions are not only meaningful but critical to our journey.

The Unataneh Tokef states that t'shuvah, tefilah, and tzedakah can help us to transcend our personal lives. I believe that partnership, participation, and passion will help us transcend atrophy and complacency and ensure the continued success, vitality and strength of TBT as we celebrate this year our past 40 years and envision the next. On behalf of our Board of Directors, my wife Jodie and my daughters Becca and Ellie, I would like to wish you and your loved ones L'shanah tovah, and G'mar hatimah tovah, may you be inscribed for a good year.

Stu Weinzimer,

President, TBT Board of Directors