

SEASON 2



# OLAMI MENTORSHIP

## SESSION 10: SUMMARY



## DEAR MENTEE AND MENTOR,

Over the last nine meetings, we have had the opportunity to explore and discover different areas of character development. While improvement in any individual character trait is a substantial accomplishment, this session will hopefully bring together the underlying impetus to all character refinement, a concept called cheshbon hanefesh.

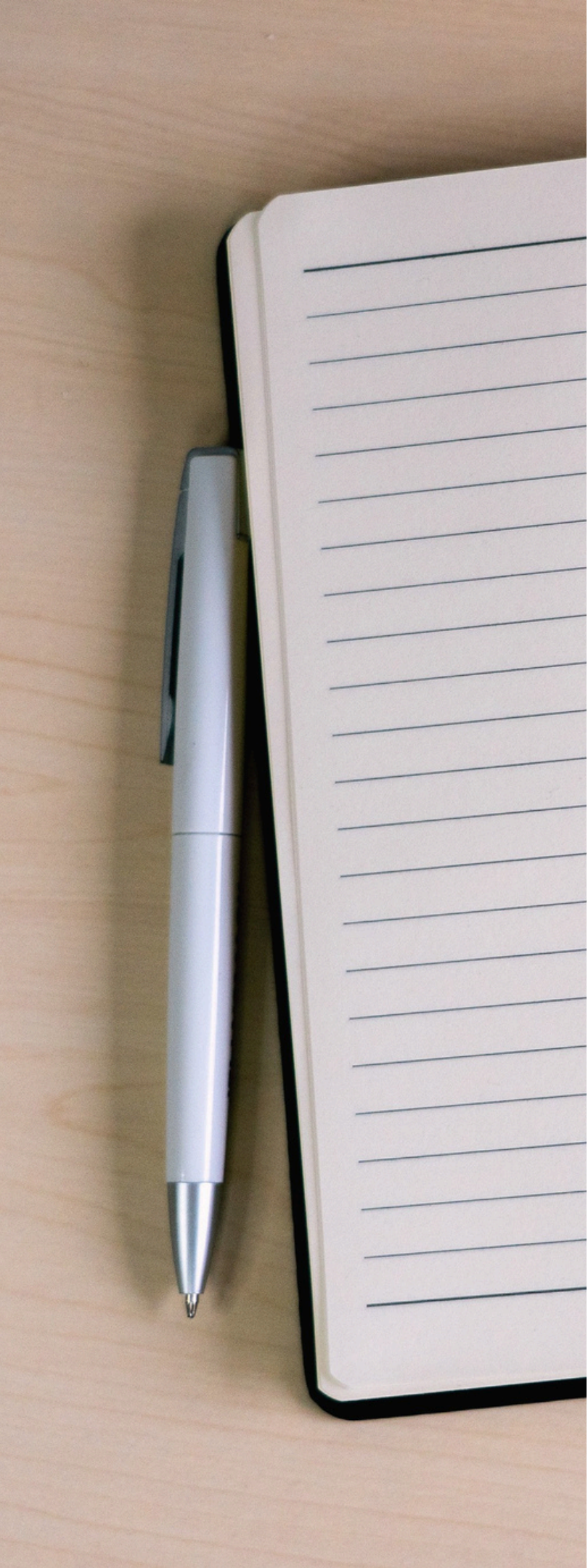
Cheshbon Hanefesh or spiritual accounting is a mindset of taking stock of one's ongoing successes and failures both in the micro and the macro.

It is interesting to note that people of virtue take a few minutes to reflect on their day prior to retiring for the night. Additionally, Shabbos is also intended to be a day of reflection in which one takes stock of the previous six days. Monthly as well, on every Rosh Chodesh; the first of the Jewish month the Torah directs us to think back on the previous month and recognize our successes and failures. Finally, the month of Elul which leads into the High Holidays and the season of atonement, is a full month of reflection and self-improvement on the previous 11 months.

If one follows the above formula of cheshbon hanefesh, one is constantly analyzing, refining and fine tuning their actions and character traits. Living with cheshbon hanefesh is one of the most powerful tools in turning one's life from autopilot to a life of mindfulness.

As the saying goes, "Rome wasn't built in a day", but keeping one's eye on the ball and taking small meaningful steps to tweak one's character can certainly change one's state of being.





## REMINDERS:

- Check-in: How was your week?
- Journaling: The journal is a space to track progress and growth throughout this journey.





# PART 1: PRACTICAL CHESHBON HANEFESH

1. Try this simple exercise with your mentor. Think back on the last 24 hours of your life and answer these basic questions that R. Noach Weinberg ob”m used to share all of the time:

- What have I accomplished over the last 24 hours?
- Did I accomplish what I intended?
- How am I going to improve for tomorrow?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What's my profit? What's my loss?
- How far have I come in my long-term goals?
- What's holding me back from growing?



2. Now Imagine asking yourself these question each night before you go to sleep (instead of scrolling endlessly on your phone or binging Netflix)

3. Or if that is too intense, imagine asking yourself these questions each Shabbat and reflecting on the past week?

4. Finally, imagine yourself writing the answers to these questions (after Shabbat) each week and then reviewing 4 weeks of answers each new month on Rosh Chodesh (The first day of the Jewish month.)

5. Oh, and just to keep things together, imagine taking the topics of the last 8 sessions and reflecting on how in control you are of your character?

(For your convenience here are the 8 character traits: humility, happiness, compassion, anger management, silence, respect, worry, generosity.)



# PART 2: DON'T GO AT IT ALL ALONE!

## 1. Koheles 4:9

Two are better than one as there is more benefit in their efforts.

טובים השנים מן האחד  
אשר יש להם שכר טוב  
בעמלם:

## 2. Pele Yoetz 127:1

It is good for a person to have a good loving and close friend, one that he feels comfortable sharing confidential things. He should consult with his friend about all important matters. Even if he himself is very wise, he should still seek counsel from one inferior to him

וטוב לגבר שיהיה  
לו חבר טוב  
אוהב ורע שיגלה  
לו כל סתרי  
ויתיעץ עמו על  
כל דבר שרוצה  
לעשות. ואף אם  
הוא חכם גדול,  
יטל עצה מן  
הקטן





### 3. Benefits of a close friend or mentor.

- a. People are subjective by nature and a friend provides an objective and unbiased viewpoint.
- b. It is easier to grow and improve oneself alongside another person as opposed to working alone.
- c. Every individual experiences unique life situations. It is very possible that your friend has already experienced a situation that you are facing and can provide insight into successfully maneuvering your current situation.

### 4. Seeing these benefits from the lens of cheshbon hanefesh.

- a. When doing a personal reflection, doing so with a mentor or friend provides a more authentic and genuine experience.
- b. It is so much easier to work on character refinement when you are not doing it all alone.
- c. There is a strong possibility that your friend or mentor may have already been in the exact situation that you find yourself. They can provide guidance and insight into strategies for more effective character refinement.



# PART 3: EVERYTHING IS IN THE TORAH!

## 1. Talmud Bava Basra

Therefore let the Moshlim come and make a reckoning. (Numbers 22:27) “moshlim”; these are the people who rule over [hamoshlim] their evil inclination. They will say: “Come to Heshbon,” meaning: Come and let us make a reckoning about the account of [cheshbono] the world

על־כֵּן יאמרו המִשְׁלִים בָּאוּ  
חֶשְׁבֹן (במדבר, כא - לא  
”הַמִּשְׁלִים” - אֵלָיו  
הַמוֹשְׁלִים בִּיצָרָם. ”בֹּאוּ  
חֶשְׁבֹן” - בֹּאוּ וְנַחֲשֹׁב  
חֶשְׁבוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם

2. What do you think it means to rule over your evil inclination?
3. Why would those who rule their inclination make a reckoning?
4. What is your understanding of reckoning about the account of the world?



# OLAMI MENTORSHIP

For educational questions or support, please contact:

Rabbi Shlomo Landau  
Director of Mentorship  
908.770.0056  
[slandau@olami.org](mailto:slandau@olami.org)

Jordana Baruchov  
Associate Director of Mentorship  
973.370.0414  
[jbaruchov@olami.org](mailto:jbaruchov@olami.org)