

36 WAYS TO LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

LIFE CYCLE

CELEBRATING A NEW ADDITION TO THE FAMILY

- 01 Invite both parents to recite an appropriate *beracha* of thanksgiving at the naming or *Brit Milah* ceremony.
- 02 Invite the mother to recite *birkat hagomel* in *shul* or at the naming or *Brit Milah* ceremony.
- 03 Write an original prayer, or *techina*, to welcome your child. Incorporate traditional *techinas* written by women of the past into your ceremony.
- 04 When naming a child, include both the father's and the mother's name in the *misheberach*.
- 05 Invite family members or significant people to participate by *blessing* the child with a personal *bracha*, symbolising the child's entrance into a welcoming community.

Jewish Woman & Ritual: Birth Ritual - includes *simchat bat* and *birkat hagomel*

http://www.jofa.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/birth_ritual_guide.pdf

CELEBRATING A BAT/BAR MITZVAH

- 06 Invite the mother to compose an original prayer, or *techina*, to mark the occasion. Invite her to voice her dreams and aspirations for her daughter or son in a spiritual way.
- 07 Invite both parents to bless their son or daughter in front of the *aron hakodesh*.
- 08 Invite *Bat Mitzvah* girls to the front of the *shul* to address the congregation with words of *Torah*.
- 09 Call *Bar Mitzvah* boys to the *Torah* with both their mothers' and their fathers' names.

Jewish Woman & Ritual: Bat Mitzvah

http://www.jofa.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/bat_mitzvah_guide.pdf

CELEBRATING A WEDDING

- 10 Have a *kallah's tish* (table) and invite family members and guest to share *divrei Torah*.
- 11 Discuss with the officiating rabbi the option of inviting a woman to read the *ketubah* after *kiddushin*.
- 12 Invite the mother of the bride and/or groom to give the couple a personal *bracha* (blessing) under the *chuppah* in addition to the seven traditional *blessings*.

JOFA Journal, Summer 2003: Weddings II

http://www.jofa.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/jofa_journal_summer_2003.pdf

Rabbi Yuval Sherlow, "Bringing the Potted Plant to Life [in Hebrew] להחיות את העציץ

<http://musaf-shabbat.com/2013/11/08/להחיות-את-העציץ-יובל-שרל/08>

JEWISH HOME EVERYDAY

- 13 Take the opportunity to recite *blessings* on food or *Birkat Hamazon* out loud.
- 14 If you bake *challah* or bread, invite your family members to hear you recite the *blessing* on the mitzvah of *hafrashat challah*.

SHABBAT

- 15 Invite your family to gather together to welcome in the Shabbat as a family when you light Shabbat candles.
- 16 Develop family rituals so that both parents bless the children on Friday nights.
- 17 Take the opportunity to share *divrei Torah* with your family and guests at the table. When inviting guests to share *divrei Torah* make sure you offer the opportunity to both men and women.

KIDDUSH & HAMOTZI

- 18 Remember that women are equally obligated in *kiddush* and *hamotzi*. Find opportunities to recite *kiddush* or *hamotzi* yourself.

Ta shma halachic study guide: Women's obligation in *kiddush* of shabbat

http://www.jofa.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/ta_shma_kiddish_guide.pdf

ZIMMUN

- 19 Take the opportunity to recite *birkhat hamazon* with a *zimmun* of women.

Women and *Zimmun*, by Jennifer Breger

https://www.jofa.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/women-and-zimun.pdf

SYNAGOGUES AND COMMUNITY

INVITING AND ACKNOWLEDGING WOMEN'S PRESENCE

- 20 Ensure that the daily or ad hoc *minyanim* (eg for a *shiva* or *Brit Milah*) are welcoming to women with access to *siddurim*, the *Torah* (on Mondays and Thursdays) and the *tzedaka* box.
- 21 Discuss with your rabbi the option of having the *shaliach tzibbur* recite the *bracha* "*Shelo Asani Isha*" silently.
- 22 Ask your rabbi to insert the names of the *imahot* (matriarchs) into the *mesheberach* prayers recited by the congregation.
- 23 Consider extending individual *misheberach* for *aliyot* to include female family members; *blessing* the congregant's wife, daughter, sister or mother as appropriate.

PRAYERS

- 24 Invite women to recite *birkat hagomel* publicly. Ensure that the congregation is aware in advance so that they can respond.
- 25 Invite, encourage and support female mourners to recite *kaddish*. Ensure that the congregation is aware of female mourners so that they can answer *amen* to them.
- 26 Participate in the public prayer rhythm by responding out loud to *kaddish*, *kedusha* and *barchu* as well as reciting *baruch hu u-varuch shemo* and *amen* during the repetition of the *Amidah*.
- 27 Offer women the opportunity to *leyn* the *Megillot Shir haShirim*, *Ruth* and *Kohelet* on the appropriate festivals in addition to *Megillat Esther* on Purim.

JOFA's Megillat Esther App http://www.jofa.org/Education/Ritual_Opportunities/Megillat_Esther_App

TEACHING TORAH

- 28 Invite women to be scholars-in-residence.
- 29 Invite and support women from the community to deliver *divrei Torah* to the entire congregation.
- 30 Provide study sessions and special *minyanim* for parents and children, not just for fathers and sons.
- 31 Provide age appropriate and meaningful children's services that encourage girls to participate.

AGUNAH

- 32 Raise awareness, form a group in your synagogue and educate yourself. Speak whenever you can about *iggun* and its detriment to both Jewish law and the community.
- 33 Ask your rabbi for a class which explores the *halachic* solutions to freeing *agunot* or preventing *iggun*.
- 34 Prevent the emergence of new *agunot*. Ask your rabbi to raise public awareness about get refusal as a form of abuse and a perversion of *halacha*.
- 35 Ask your rabbi to speak publicly about signing pre-nuptial agreements.
- 36 Speak out if a man in your community delays or refuses to give his wife a get.

JOFA's online library: Agunah <http://www.jofa.org/Library?id=103079215901>

GENERAL

Speak out whenever you hear sexist jokes, comments or inappropriate gender stereotyping whether at a Shabbat table, in sermons or *shiurim*, or in everyday conversation.

ORTHODOXY AND FEMINISM

The Lonely Woman of Faith by Shira Wolosky. This article asserts that Rav Soleveitchik's essay, *The Lonely Man of Faith*, suggests ways in which feminism, rather than threatening traditional Jewish values and commitments, can be seen to accord with and enhance them.

<http://www2.jofa.org/pdf/uploaded/1097-SBEP5637.pdf>

WOMEN'S VOICES

A New Analysis of "Kol B'Isha Erva" (the voice of a woman is nakedness) by HaRav David Bigman

http://www.jofa.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/bigman_kol_isha_tshuva_hebrew_and_english.pdf