**“Repentance” to “Recovery”**

**What’s next for teen families now that Yom Kippur is over?**

We went to teen High Holiday services, we told the [**eScapegoat**](http://www.emanuelnyc.org/escapegoat) about the things we
did wrong... **What now?**

As I am now in my eighth year at Emanu-El, I have for the first time in my professional career seen the students I met as children grow to be teens and young adults. I couldn’t be prouder of the responsible and capable people that they have become and are becoming. Further, I am inspired by the caring and thoughtful parents in this community, as I think about how I am striving to raise my own (still little) children.

And, as someone who grew up in NYC, I am very aware of the kinds of challenges with which teens, young adults, and parents struggle. There is a lot of pressure to succeed and
to fit in, and it frankly doesn’t get any easier as you get older; it just changes shape.

Which is why it was so important to me, when I first learned of the work of [**Beit T’Shuvah**](http://www.beittshuvah.org/) and their musical [**Freedom Song**](http://www.beittshuvah.org/music-and-arts/freedom-song/)**,** that we bring it from Los Angeles to New York City.
Beit T’Shuvah is a residential treatment center that approaches addiction and other self-destructive behaviors through Jewish wisdom. *Freedom Song*, written by residents in recovery, parallels a Passover Seder, with its message of liberation from oppression and internal bondage, with a 12-step meeting. Why? Because, as Beit T’Shuvah’s rabbi, Mark Borovitz, writes:

“Addiction can happen in every family, no matter what religion they practice and despite any facade of normalcy. If you look at all the things we’re addicted to, it’s not just drugs, alcohol and gambling — it’s a way of living that’s become so ingrained in people. We’re living in a society where we’ve forgotten what’s important about being Jewish, about what we’ve brought to the world.”

*Freedom Song*will be performed live on-stage here at Emanu-El on **Sunday, October 19th**. Doors open at **5 pm**, and the performance is at 5:30 pm, followed by a talk-back with the
cast and then breakout discussion groups led by the performers and our educators.
**Tickets are $18** and can be purchased through our website, [**www.emanuelnyc.org/freedomsong**](http://www.emanuelnyc.org/freedomsong). I hope you will be able to join me. This event, run in partnership with the [**Temple Emanu-El** **Skirball Center**](http://emanuelskirballnyc.org/), is open to the general public — so please tell your friends!

With best wishes for a sweet start to the New Year,

**Saul Kaiserman**

*Director, Lifelong Learning*