

The spiritual aids that I decided to choose and practice for three days were the Jewish Blessings. I really would have loved to visit a synagogue but I wasn't able to make it happen before this assignment. The spiritual aid of blessings stood out to me the most, which is why I decided to practice this instead of any other spiritual aids. I find it so interesting and amazing that Jewish individuals say a blessing for practically everything in their daily lives. When I sit back and think about this, it's actually quite true that everything in our lives is a blessing to say the least, and we should be saying blessings over things to show how thankful we are for everything we have in life. It is a blessing just to wake up each morning, let alone eat a hot meal each day as well. I am very intrigued with the Jewish culture and traditions although I do not understand it very well.

The night before the first day of practicing the blessings I looked up more information on what exactly they may say during each blessing and when exactly it is appropriate to say a blessing. Also, I wanted to know more of the meaning behind the blessings for everything so that I could understand this assignment more and get a better feel on what it is exactly that I am doing by practicing this Jewish tradition. I first found out that the Jewish people say a blessing for pretty much anything, whether it be before sitting down to enjoy a meal, getting a drink of something, washing your hands, driving to work, and the list goes on and on. The Jewish tradition requires that you must personally thank the Lord before each detail in the daily life. I've found that the idea of a blessing is that you bless God, you are not begging or pleading as praying is thought to be. Each time Jews recite a blessing, they are pretty much saying "pay attention, something awesome is happening all around us."
(http://www.explorefaith.org/livingspiritually/following_a_sacred_path/jewish_spirituality.php, par. 12)

On the first day I tried my best to remember to say a blessing before everything I did. I'm not going to lie, I think I may have forgotten more times than I remembered but I still made it happen. One thing I already do that is similar to the blessings is I say a prayer before I go to sleep, mostly thanking God for everything in my life and anything else I need to talk with Him about, and also each morning I wake up I thank Him for another day on earth. It felt kind of weird saying a blessing before each and everything I did, mostly because I'm just not used to doing this. Although it may have felt weird, actually it just felt different doing this, it also felt really good by the end of the day knowing how thankful I was all day long. On the second day I remembered more often to do the blessings, I made sure to remind myself all day that before doing something I needed to give my thanks to the Lord and say a blessing because without Him I wouldn't have any of the blessings I do have. I mentioned to my mom what I was having to do for this course and I even got her to join in with me in saying blessings before everything we did throughout the day. It kind of made it easier to remember with having someone else join along, because if I forgot she remembered and vice versa. By the third day I had it down, from waking up saying my daily blessing (which I mentioned I thank God every morning and night anyways for waking me and my loved ones up again to see another day) to before each meal/drink of something, to washing my hands, washing dishes, before going to work, after leaving the gym, and lying down in bed at night.

After completing this practice of reciting blessings, I actually feel that I should do this more often. There are so many things to be thankful about in the world and I think sometimes we may just dismiss certain things such as washing our hands or washing dishes, when we should be very thankful we have running clean water and soap to do these normal daily tasks, because there are individuals who are less fortunate. I myself feel that I am a very thankful person, but after doing this assignment I really feel that there is so much more to be thankful for than what I have thought. We need to be thankful for literally everything from waking up in the morning, to being able to walking across the street. We need to be thankful for everything, from the biggest things in life to the teeniest tiniest things in life.