

# Yom Kippur for One who Cannot Fast

*Ribbono shel Olam*/Master of the Universe;  
Creator of All, Source of All Life,  
Who Knows What is Deep in Human Hearts,  
Who Nurtures Every Living Being:

As You know, dear G-d,  
Yom Kippur is fast approaching, and because of my condition,  
I am not able to keep the traditional fast —  
I cannot abstain totally from eating.

On this Day of Atonement, this Sabbath of Sabbaths,  
this year and every year, it is so central to join the people of Israel in denying ourselves food  
and drink for one day so that we focus on correcting our misdeeds, on knowing our mortality;  
on reaching for a life of Torah, *mitzvot* (good deeds), and loving kindness; on You.

You know, dear G-d, that it is not my intent  
to be apart from our people and our tradition.  
My current state of health makes it unsuitable for me to fast.

So, dear G-d, I turn to You now in sincerity and openness:  
Help me in the coming year to do my best in guarding my health.  
Help us, Your children, learn how to protect our bodies from harm.  
Help us support others in caring for their *tzelem Elokim*, their Image of G-d.  
Teach us to help one another grow and thrive in Body, Mind, and Spirit.  
Guide caring family and health care professionals in their partnering with you to bring healing  
if not cure, support and strength if not an end to symptoms.  
And if there is an opportunity for me to help others who suffer by doing something they need  
or by being attentive company —  
Grant me the ability to do this *mitzvah* with love and devotion.

*Rofeh khol basar*/Healer of all living creatures:  
I thank You for the breath that is in me  
for the community of Israel that lives  
for the possibilities of today and tomorrow.

May my eating be as a fast;  
May it be dedicated to You, to *T'shuvah* —  
to the Renewal and Restoration of my Relationship  
to You, to Others, and to Myself.

© *Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, LCSW, 2005*

This article is provided to you by the Twin Cities Jewish Healing Program, a program of Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis. Through the wisdom and traditions of Judaism, the Twin Cities Jewish Healing Program offers comfort, hope and strength to people experiencing loss, life challenges, illness and grief. For information about our resources and volunteer visitors, please call 952-542-4840.

