



Repair the World mobilizes Jews and their communities to take action to pursue a just world, igniting a lifelong commitment to service. We believe service in support of social change is vital to a flourishing Jewish community and an inspired Jewish life.

Land Acknowledgment

We recognize and respect the original stewards of the land and those who have been displaced by generations of colonization and systematic oppression. Repair the World has workshops in communities across the country where tensions from a history of urban renewal, forced evictions, and an upsurge in rent has priced many families out. This disproportionately affects people of color and low-income households.

We also must acknowledge that there is a long history of displacement across our entire country, as we are on native land, whose original inhabitants were forced from their land.

We invite you to use this [Native Land Map](#) to acknowledge their existence. We must continuously remind our community that these peoples did, and do still exist today. Without their committed stewardship, we could not be here.

Today I share our space with...

Framing

The term ***tikkun olam***, repairing the world, can be found in multiple early Jewish texts dating back to the Second Temple period (~70 CE). Rabbi Isaac Luria, a 16th century mystic and Kabbalist, offered an interpretation of this repair based on his understanding of the creation story. He suggested that before creation began, first space needed to be made, a *tzimtzum*, contraction, in preparation of what was to come. Although the initial sparks that set in motion our existence were not triggered by humans, **it is our obligation to bring about this ultimate repair through our actions – we can Repair the World.**

When we enter a space of service or community action, it is important to start with an acknowledgement of what resources, from food and education to abilities, you are bringing into the space and what you are hoping to take away, as personal growth, learning, connection or distribution.

Practice *tzimtzum*

- What brought you into this space today?
- Are you here in anticipation of upcoming service and action, or in reflection of something you have already done?
- Do you prefer to make space for reflection and learning before taking action, or as a way to deepen the service you have already completed?





Repair the World believes, in **a just world**, individuals and communities have access to **resources** they need. This includes access to nourishing **food**, secure **housing**, meaningful **education**, as well as the opportunity to **realize their full potential**.

1 What is one thing you have done, and plan to do, to work towards a just world?

"I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits."
– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Dec 10, 1964)

"If the poor person is hungry, feed them. If they need to be covered, cover them. If they do not have household appliances, buy them."
–Shulchan Aruch, The Laws of Tzedakah, 250:2

2 Are both of these quotes above referring to the same people?

3 Given that the Shulchan Aruch was published in the 16th century, what does it look like in 2023 to continue to follow its teachings?

4 How do we reconcile that for more than 600 years there continues to be widespread hunger, and inequitable resource distribution?

"I've come upon something that disturbs me deeply. We have fought hard and long for integration, as I believe we should have, and I know we will win, but I have come to believe that we are integrating into a burning house. I'm afraid that America has lost the moral vision she may have had, and I'm afraid that even as we integrate, we are walking into a place that does not understand that this nation needs to be deeply concerned with the plight of the poor and disenfranchised. Until we commit ourselves to ensuring that the underclass is given justice and opportunity, we will continue to perpetuate the anger and violence that tears the soul of this nation. I fear I am integrating my people into a burning house.

[We must] become the firemen. Let us not stand by and let the house burn."

– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

5 Do you agree that the state of poverty and so many basic needs being unmet in our society is a sign of a "burning house?"

6 What is your role as a "firefighter" in bringing the Shulchan Aruch text (above) to life? How does your service contribute towards this?

"Tzimtzum, which in Hebrew means a sort of stepping back to allow for there to be an Other, an Else, as in something or someone else...Our world, then is the sacred space that God gave as a gift to us, a space in which to be as human as divinely possible, and as divine as humanly possible. A space to err, to fall, to believe, to doubt, to cry, to laugh. Our space, created by the simple motion of stepping back, the humble act of honoring the separate reality of an Other."

– Rabbi Gershon Winkler, *The Place Where You are Standing Is Holy: A Jewish Theology on Human Relationships*

- 1** How do you practice *tzimtzum*, making space, at your shabbat table, in your home, and with your community
- 2** What happens if you try to act without first designating physical or psychological space for the impact of your actions?
- 3** Beyond service, when do you think you could incorporate the practice of *tzimtzum* into your life?

I am committing to practicing *tzimtzum* before I...