Plenary #1: Self, Struggle and Change:
Healing Insights of the Stories of Our Tradition through the Prism of Midrash
Rabbi Norman Cohen, PhD

Midrash is the process of seeking contemporary meaning in the Biblical text. Through our reading and interpretation of select Biblical material, we will attempt not only to see ourselves in the text, but what we are capable of becoming. We will see Biblical characters at the crossroads of their lives which reflect our life situations, and as we engage with them, we will learn about ourselves and what it will take to bring us to greater wholeness in the process.

Struggling Toward Healing and Wholeness
Text Study: Judah Confronts Joseph and Himself - Genesis 44: 18-34
Rabbi Norman Cohen, PhD

Through the powerful confrontation between Judah and Joseph, whom the brothers sold into slavery and rose to become the viceroy of Egypt, we will grapple with troubled relationships with siblings and loved ones, and with our human nature.

Tears and Joy; Mourning and Dancing: New Renderings of Tanach through Music and Contemporary Poetry
Reception and Teaching
Debbie Friedman and Rabbi William Cutter, PhD

We will explore the midrashic potential in Psalms and biblical stories through the poets of modern Israel and through Debbie’s own songs. This is a unique opportunity to learn how Debbie creates, and to experience the rare treasures of modern Jewish life.

Plenary #2: Making Peace in the High Places when Midrash and Art Collide
Rabbi Lewis Barth, PhD with Andrea Hodos and Elizheva Hurvich

The study of Jewish texts has become so central in contemporary Jewish life that we often forget that creative imagination not limited to the written word. This session will focus on what happens when creative artists use their talents to make Midrashic texts come alive in art, dance and music. There will be a brief description of the history of the Artist-in-Residence program at Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles. The remainder of the time will be devoted to hearing from the panelists about their own understanding of intersection of art and Jewish tradition and texts and to the brief study of one Midrashic text. We will then break up into groups to engage in our own creative response to the text studied.

Workshop Series I
A. Seeking Meaning in the Second-Half of Life
Remembering through Midrash: Jewish Spiritual Framework for Life Review
Rabbi Dayle A. Friedman, MSW, MAJCS, BCC, Chaplain Sheila Segal, MA, BCC

Midrash is the process through which our tradition explores the narratives of our people. Life review is the process through which individuals can explore and make meaning out of their life stories. In this experiential workshop, we can experience the healing potential for using the midrashic approach in framing, mining and transforming life stories. We will apply midrashic tools to the texts of our lives, in order to glean lessons from the past and directions for supporting others in the future.

B. Psalms, Songs, and Stories
Rabbi Sheldon Marder, Judith-Kate Friedman
Two Part Series – Must sign up for both

In this double-workshop participants will have a hands-on experience of a unique program initiated six years ago at San Francisco’s Jewish Home by musician/songwriter Judith-Kate Friedman and Rabbi Sheldon Marder. One participant described her involvement in the writing of a psalm/song with these words: “Now I really understand why I believe what I believe.” Through this creative experience, this elder experienced a sense of her place in the universe, for she was the maker of something that connected her to God. Judith-Kate describes the process as “freeing the voice within” and sees the combination of text study and communal song composition as “a powerful experience that affirms each participant’s unique, inherent creativity; and our connection to each other and to the Source of life.” For Rabbi Marder, the goal of “Psalms, Songs and Stories” is to help elders attain what Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel called “a sense of significant being.” In the workshop, participants will study psalms, write music and lyrics based on their studies, and gain an appreciation for the way in which this kind of activity can enhance a person’s creative outlook on life. No prior musical experience is needed.

C. The Cast-Off Rock Became the Cornerstone: Metaphor and Meaning in Medical Journeys
Rabbi Simkha Weintraub, MSW
Two Part Series – Must sign up for both

This two-part workshop will explore a range of metaphors that have made their way into, and out of, the experience of illness, suffering, and healing – particularly in classical Jewish texts that deal with disease, disruption, and distress. We will then turn to “writing into metaphor,” a structured ‘spiritual autobiography’ exchange of ideas from our own encounters with and lived understandings of health, affliction, loss, and growth.

D. On Dry Ground: Faith, Fear and Transformation at the Edge of the Sea
Andrea Hodos
Stories of crossing through difficulty told through sacred text, personal story, gesture and movement.

**Workshop Series II**

**A. Seeking Meaning in the Second-Half of Life**

**Lech L’cha – Go Forth: Creating the Journey for Living as We Grow Older**
Carol P. Hausman, PhD, Lynne P. Iser, MPH

Abraham was 75 when he received the call to go forth, “lech l’cha.” In this workshop, we will project ourselves into a time when we are older. What Jewish values can guide us along the way? What tools does Judaism provide to lead us through this wilderness as we search for what is sacred in the aging process? At the end of our time together, we will have an action plan for the next steps of our journey.

**B. Psalms, Songs, and Stories**

Rabbi Sheldon Marder, Judith-Kate Friedman
*Two Part Series – Must sign up for both*

**SEE DESCRIPTION ABOVE**

**C. The Cast-Off Rock Became the Cornerstone: Metaphor and Meaning in Medical Journeys**

Rabbi Simkha Weintraub, MSW
*Two Part Series – Must sign up for both*

**SEE DESCRIPTION ABOVE**

**D. Physician Self-Care: Mindfulness in the Clinical Encounter**

Elizabeth Feldman, MD

Physicians often find themselves rushing from one patient room to the next, without an opportunity to take a breath or center themselves prior to the next encounter. In this workshop, we will explore ways of setting kavannah (intention) or creating mindfulness in the clinical encounter. We hope that setting intention of healing serves to counteract burnout or compassion fatigue by serving as a self-care methodology for the practicing physician. After studying some texts relating to physicians, their preparation for healing, and their prayers, we will each work to create a "midrash-in-action" - a mindfulness ritual or narrative.

**E. Healing and Justice**

Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Rabbi Camille Shira Angel will share some of the amazing work and benefits she's seen in working for justice within this model of faith based organizing, Congregation Based Community Organizing (CBCO) including leadership empowerment and development,
impact on city healthcare policy, and oversight to the roll out of universal healthcare in San Francisco.

Included will be our looking at rabbinic and contemporary texts that clergy and grassroots organizers can use in advocating passionately and prophetically around healthcare reform.

**Plenary #3: The Journey of Later Life: Moses as our Model**  
Rabbi Dayle A. Friedman, MSW, MAJCS, BCC

This presentation will help us to map the territory of life’s second half through close examination of Moses, whose late life journey began with the revelation at the burning bush when he was 80 and culminated with his death at 120. We’ll explore Our Teacher’s paradoxical blend of mission, Torah, despair and loss, and see if we can find inspiration and guidance of our own paths.

Text study:

We will explore Moses’s paradoxical blend of mission, Torah, despair and loss, and see if we can find inspiration and guidance for our own work. We will study selected text from *Midrash Petirat Moshe*, the rabbinic exposition of the death of Moses. This powerful compilation traces Moses’ struggle to confront, fight, and ultimately accept, his mortality.