

Gender Transition Milestone

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY

Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

To be read while preparing for immersion:

מִן הַמֵּיצַר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, *Min hameitzar karati Yah,*
עֲנֵנִי בְּמִרְחֵב יְהוָה. *anani vamerchav Yah.*

Out of a narrow place, I called to God. God heard me fully and answered.¹

Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

FIRST IMMERSION—LETTING GO

To be read at the mikveh's edge before you enter the water:

The Hebrews are called “*lvrim*,” the crossing-over people.
As we left *Mitzrayim*, the narrow places of Egypt, we transformed ourselves—
a painful, yet redemptive, spiritual transition.²
So, too, do I cross through a narrow place,
letting go of my own bondage,
and moving toward personal freedom.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
הַמְעַבֵּיר אֶת הָעוֹבְרִים. *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam
hama-avir et ha-ovrim.*

Blessed are You, Eternal One, our God, Ruler of Time and Space, the Transforming One,
for those who transition, transform, and cross over.³

Slowly descend the steps into the mikveh waters and immerse so that every part of your body
is covered by the warm water. When you emerge, you may recite the following blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּטַבִּילָה בְּמַיִם חַיִּים. *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam
asher kidshanu bi-t'vilah b'mayyim hayyim.*

Blessed are You, God, Majestic Spirit of the Universe
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.⁴

SECOND IMMERSION—TWILIGHT

To be read before you immerse:

Twilight is neither day nor night, but in-between.
We are all twilight people. We can never be fully labeled or defined.
We are many identities and loves, many genders and none.
May this in-between light illuminate our way to God
Who transcends all categories and definitions.⁵

Although I may sometimes feel in-between,
I yearn to integrate my body, my mind, and my spirit,
as I remember:

אלהי נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא. Elohai, n'shamah shenatata bi tehorah hi.

God, the soul You have given me is pure.

*Take a moment for personal reflection.
Take a deep breath and exhale, while gently immersing for the second time.*

THIRD IMMERSION—LOOKING AHEAD

To be read before you immerse:

As I stand here today, I acknowledge the powerful emotions that are part of this journey
and that remind me of the promise that lies ahead.⁶

*Relax and let your body soften, as you slowly and completely immerse for the third time.
When you emerge, you may recite the following blessing:*

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam
שהחיינו, וקימנו, והגיענו לזמן הזה. shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higianu la'zman hazeh.

Holy One of Blessing, Your Presence fills creation.
You have kept us alive, You have sustained us, You have brought us to this moment.⁷

ATTRIBUTIONS

This ceremony was created by Rachel Stock Spilker and adapted by Matia Rania Angelou and Judith P. Kummer for Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters

1 Psalm 118:5

2 Excerpted and adapted from Rabbi Elliott Rose Kukla,
<http://www.ritualwell.org/categories/398>

3 Excerpted and adapted from Rabbi Elliott Rose Kukla,
<http://www.ritualwell.org/categories/398>

4 Created by the Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004

5 Excerpt from Reuben Zellman's, "Twilight People" in Siddur
Sha'ar Zahav, ed. Michael Tyler and Leslie Kane, San Francisco,
CA. Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 2009, p.149

6 Excerpted and adapted from Rabbi Elliott Rose Kukla,
<http://www.ritualwell.org/categories/398>

7 Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley. *Vetaher
Libenu*. Sudbury, MA 1980, p. 104



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