

Rabbi David Wolpe's

# *Off The Pulpit*

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## **Confronting What You Know**

Donald Rumsfeld famously said: "As we know, there are known knowns; there are things that we know that we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know."

One category is missing. As great Jewish teachers of *teshuva* have taught for generations, there are also knowns that we choose not to know. Maybe I have a temper that wounds those around me. But if you ask me I will tell you I am calm, even though on some level I realize that it is not true. Part of *teshuva* is bringing to awareness flaws we would rather not face. They exist, and when pushed we recognize it, but too often choose to

keep our knowledge beneath the level of awareness.

During Elul we seek to explore our character honestly through prayer, dialogue and introspection. Faults come out of hiding; we look at ourselves without evasion or pretence. The beginning of change is to know what we know.

Rabbi Wolpe's new book *David: The Divided Heart* is available now.