

# *Nitzotzot Min HaNer*

## **Executive Learning**

***Volume #15, November – December 2003***

*In this month's issue we present the different approaches to and facets of "Executive Learning". Executive Learning is not only 'learning with executives' but also involves missions, conferences, and partnerships. Many kiruv professionals find that to effectively reach 'executives', they must craft a program or approach that caters to the unique needs and attributes of this group.*

*In order to make this presentation as practical as possible, we have included some actual schedules of missions and conventions.*

*We believe this paper is a work in progress. We have approached a select number of outreach organizations, including some who have been extremely successful with this form of kiruv. We are sure there are many other organizations who have valuable insights to share and we appeal to you to write to us at [heritage@netvision.net.il](mailto:heritage@netvision.net.il)*

*The main types of successful programs for executives fall into the following categories:*

- ***From Chavrusas to Partners***

*Here, we will focus on the Aish HaTorah idea of partners. A partner usually begins as a learning chavrusa. How one relates to one's chavrusa will be critical in determining whether someone will not only learn Torah, but deepen their relationship with the Jewish people, understand its challenges and take responsibility.*

- ***Fundraising***

*Today, many organizations learn one-one for the purpose of fundraising. This paper also includes a discussion of the halachic implications of this, starting with a basic overview of the heter to be paid for teaching Torah.*

- ***Businessmen's Shiurim***



*Which topics are best, should groups be open or closed, and do you provide lunch, are some of the nuts and bolts we address here. We have also given an insight into the idea of packaging shiurim into courses.*

- ***Female Executives***

*Female executives and women in general do best with their own programming. On the whole, women tend to prefer group to one-on-one settings.*

- ***Missions to Israel and Elsewhere***

*Missions are life-changing, yet they are challenging to organize. Today, there are missions or trips to all over the world, and these too are proving to be very effective kiruv wise. Yet, nothing compares to an Israel trip.*

- ***Federation Missions***

*Another approach is for you to join a Federation mission. This opens up the possibility of meeting and perhaps later studying with influential communal leaders.*

*Rabbi Binyamin Friedman describes what can be gained by going on a Federation mission, and how to avoid some of the pitfalls which occur on such a trip.*

- ***Conferences and Conventions***

*Conferences and conventions are like mini-missions, yet they can be arranged in your own back yard, and they can draw on a much larger group of people. They can also involve, and even be supported by local federations, Hadassah women and other groups.*



## **EXECUTIVE LEARNING**

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### **1. OVERVIEW: THE AMERICAN JEW AS PROFESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE**

According to the most recent United Jewish Communities study<sup>1</sup>, relative to the total US population, Jews are more highly educated, have more prestigious jobs and earn higher household incomes.

More than 60% of all employed Jews are in one of the three highest status job categories: professional/technical (41%), management and executive (13%), and business and finance (7%).<sup>2</sup>

In addition, 85% of Jewish college age kids are in college. 40% of partners in the top NY and DC law firms, 40% of American Nobel laureates in science and economics and 23% of the top 100 wealthy Canadians are Jewish.<sup>3</sup> There are 27 Jews

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<sup>1</sup> NJPS 2000-2001 Education, Employment and Income

<sup>2</sup> In contrast, 46% of all Americans work in these three high status areas, including 29% in professional/technical jobs, 12% in management and executive positions, and 5% in business and finance.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Hu Statistics



in the House of Representatives, or 6.5% of the membership. We are 3 times overrepresented in that House.

In 1999 23% of the full list of 400 people on the *Forbes* "Rich List" were Jewish, as were 36% of the top 50. In the year 2000, at least 19 of the top 25 NYC billionaires listed on the *Forbes* 400 list were Jewish

In addition to the usual ramifications of assimilation, the cost to Jewish continuity by loss of Jewish affiliation among the Jewish world's most successful businessmen translates into billions of lost charity dollars.

Philanthropy has always been a most powerful force in the shaping the Jewish community. Unfortunately, the scope and direction of Jewish giving – especially in the US – is changing.<sup>1</sup> Echoing a report released earlier this year by the Institute for Jewish and Community Research in San Francisco. It noted that annual giving to Jewish organizations is flat and that Younger Jews are more likely to donate to secular organizations.

The eight biggest gifts by Jewish families or foundations in recent years totaled \$1.47 billion, all to secular groups like New York University and the medical school at UCLA.<sup>2</sup> The Institute for Jewish and Community Research reported that: "American Jews have become an integral part of the philanthropic mainstream, donating large sums to a variety of institutions and organizations in the realms of education, health, human services, culture, politics and others." The report found that of the \$5.3 billion that major Jewish philanthropists dispersed only \$318 million went to Jewish institutions.

Claire Ellman of La Jolla, CA, whose family launched the Jeremiah Foundation which focuses on Jewish day school education as a vehicle for Jewish survival, says much bigger challenges lie ahead. Mega-donors such as the Bronfmans and Michael Stienhardt represent a generation that is expected to transfer an estimated \$1 trillion to the next generation in coming years. "Younger funders are not so committed to Jewish education and other Jewish issues. Who is going to fund the Jews if the Jews don't?"

"Jews are givers." Says Rabbi Mendel Weinbach of Ohr Somayach. "We give when solicited – donating our jewelry to make the golden calf and (le'havdil) to build the mishkan." This sort of indiscriminate giving, however, is root of the problems facing Jewish education (continuity) today. Too many philanthropists fail to distinguish between the "golden calf" and the "sanctuary", pouring millions into secular cultural projects, while Jewish institutions struggle to stay afloat.

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<sup>1</sup> Noted fundraiser, [Naomi Levine] echoing a report released earlier this year by the Institute for Jewish and Community Research in San Francisco. It noted that annual giving to Jewish organizations is flat and that younger Jews are more likely to donate to secular organizations.

<sup>2</sup> David Althshuler, Trust for Jewish Philanthropy



## 2. FROM CHAVRUSAS TO PARTNERS

At an executive level, one-on-one is often the only way to begin a learning relationship and often, to continue it. Two factors are at play here: appeal and time constraints. High level executives find the appeal of personal time with a rabbi – to learn, discuss, grow and explore at their individual pace, conforming to their personal interests and desires – far more attractive than any group session. They like the idea of having their own personal rabbi, and I have sometimes been surprised how proudly many of them quote ‘my rabbi’ on this issue or that. Besides, many executives will simply not find the time to study Torah unless it is brought to their doorstep.

But here is an important caveat. Learning with a male executive during his work time often fails to lead to significant growth. This is because the executive tends to see this as a part of his work-day activity, and leaves the experience behind in the office when he goes home. A way has to be found to either include his spouse and/or children, or get them involved in some other way. However, usually, one-on-one learning is a highly-valued niche of quality time with a rabbi that the executive is loathe to surrender.

Very few kiruv workers do not engage in some one-on-one learning. But this can easily fill one’s day, and then, because it is difficult to disengage, it becomes difficult to free oneself for *shiurim* and other activities which are going to engage a broader *tzibur*. I know one *kollel* where significant tension developed between the *rosh kollel* and the *avreichim*, because the *rosh kollel* wanted the *avreichim* to move into less *chavrusas* and more *shiurim* and the *avreichim* refused to just ‘dump’ their *chavrusas*.

Rabbi Yirmiyahu Abramov of Ner LeElef has developed a solution of sorts. He learns with busy executive for 5 – 10 minutes daily at times that would not be productive *kiruv*-wise in other ways. For example, he studies telephonically with one executive while the latter is on his way to work in the morning.

We usually understand one-on-ones as the beginning of a learning relationship, but it does not have to be that way. One can suggest some individual study with a selected participant already coming to one of your *shiurim* as a way of bonding. This also allows the participant to address certain needs, such as closing a knowledge gap to keep up with the group, or to discuss a private issue. And it has the advantage of not being open-ended, easily limited to four or five sessions.

We have stated elsewhere that, while there are many reasons people come to Judaism, the main reason they stay and grow in Judaism is through (if not sometimes because of) relationships. Ultimately people need to know that Judaism is true, but this appears to be secondary to feeling that Judaism is meaningful in all sorts of different ways, including the development of relationships with inspiring role models. Nobody becomes *frum* reading the *Chumash* in their basement. The "proofs" for Judaism usually only work after somebody already has a meaningful relationship with



his *Yiddishkeit*, and suspects that it is true. Then the proofs provide the emotional courage, in an intellectual form, to make an increased commitment.

Aish HaTorah is one organization that has fine-tuned the relationship aspect of *kiruv*. Many Aish branches have dedicated and especially trained staff members whose job it is to develop and manage relationships – including – but not limited to – one-on-one learning. A rabbi engaged in such a relationship will become involved in many aspects of his *chavrusa*'s life, often serving as a 'personal rabbi' and confidant. Aish staff are encouraged to keep in regular touch with a *chavrusa*, whether by e-mail, telephone, casual meetings (for coffee) etc., enveloping him in a whole relationship, over time, to the extent that the partner desires.

But in its concept of partners, Aish HaTorah takes this a step further. The partner becomes somebody who does not just grow in his own *Yiddishkeit*, but somebody who becomes, as his name implies, a partner in helping Aish HaTorah to reach out to others. A "partner" can and should contribute in many ways, including personally helping out with *kiruv* efforts, such as passing on learned knowledge by learning one-on-one or giving a class to other people, helping with technical, office or other work, or offering financial support. This is not only seen as compatible with his personal growth, but actually reinforces it. It is important to note the distinction between this approach and studying Torah with somebody with the specific intention of later soliciting funds from him. The key is to remain genuinely interested in the person's own growth and for his giving, in its various manifestations, to be a part of that growth. For example, when a partner is motivated by becoming aware of the spiritual crisis facing Judaism and begins to feel a sense of responsibility for it, he is enriching his life at the same time. There is an easy test to measure *kiruv* authenticity in this approach. Alarm bells should ring when an organization cannot show any of its partners becoming fully observant. Such an organization may be using its partners to help the organization without taking enough care of the partners' personal growth. Sometimes the solution is to bring in outside organizations like Gateways to deal with the hard sell.

Not every executive will become a partner. There are many executives involved in one-on-one learning who have no interest in becoming partners. They want personal attention, and are willing to pay for the *kavod*/convenience of having a rabbi teaching them privately. On the other hand, there are partners who hardly fit into the category of being executives – college students, plumbers, housewives, etc. They are people who believe in your mission and are willing to get seriously involved in helping.

Nor is everyone who is willing to help the organization in some way automatically considered a partner. A *chessed*-orientated volunteer who gives hours of his time to help does not necessarily qualify him as a partner. A partner takes responsibility beyond accepting a delegated task. Partners buy into the problem (be it intermarriage, lack of funding, or whatever) and see themselves as responsible to find a solution. A partner is not someone to whom you "give responsibility". It's someone who, although perhaps more limited than the *kiruv* professional in time or skills, is fully on board. This means:



- a. They'll take the initiative because they're bothered by the problem and don't need to be told what to do.
- b. They'll use their own resources, contacts, and ideas to make things happen.
- c. They will, by default, encourage, motivate, and provide moral support for the *kiruv* professionals by giving them a feeling that there are those who really care.

Other advantages of partners:<sup>1</sup>

- 1) We cannot do the job alone: One *kiruv* professional, even with extraordinary energy, can manage – at the very most – 100 relationships. At that rate, affecting an entire city would be prohibitively expensive or take generations. Partners, on the other hand, help widen the sphere of influence, help foster relationships with new partners and help to maintain relationships with older students.<sup>2</sup>
- 2) Some of these partners prove to be very surprising; Reform and Conservative "rabbis", for example. Rabbi Polatsek of TORCH, in Houston, Texas, after convincing the Reform rabbi to learn with him personally, also convinced him to open up his congregation (about 1,850) to Rabbi Polatsek's series on Derech HaShem, with about 90-100 people attending.<sup>3</sup> Rabbi Polatsek describes another occasion when he met the Chairman of the Democratic Party in Texas at a meeting. Rabbi Polatsek encouraged him to learn one-on-one. He loved it, and set up a once a month session with his colleagues in his boardroom. In addition to the learning value with each individual in the room, these people hold positions of influence and their changed perspective will influence their decisions and work in their respective fields of expertise, and thus the community at large.
- 3) We can delegate responsibilities to partners: Much of the day-to-day running of outreach *shul* and 'rabbinical' functions can be delegated to capable partners. They can be encouraged to manage existing programs,

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<sup>1</sup> Special thanks to Aish HaTorah for sharing their program in detail.

<sup>2</sup> For example: Mr. Steve E. is a successful businessman in NY. When Aish NY opened, they enlisted him as a partner because of his strong dedication to the Jewish people. Mr. E. started to teach his own Parshat HaShavua class to over 100 students each week. In addition, he sets up dozens of people for Shabbat each week and has been instrumental in getting Aish 'on the map' in Manhattan.

<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere we discuss the success of Rabbi Binyomin Friedman of the Atlanta Scholar's Kollel befriending Reform rabbis on missions.



allowing core staff to focus on other and new projects, relationships and activities.<sup>1</sup>

- 4) Partners develop into a physical community: A group of newly inspired Jews is a powerful charge creating social change in its community. They can encourage neighbors and help build a new “*kehilla*”.
- 5) Partners are positive role models: As partners change and become more *frum* or more receptive to the Torah model and thought, they become role models and advocates to their peers and, even more than a “rabbi”, can positively affect their peers. These partners help us project a positive image within the secular community at large, which, in turn, has ramifications for both membership and fundraising capabilities in the future.
- 6) Partners have skills we may not have. We simply do not have all the know-how and skills it takes to accomplish our massive goals. Partners with business acumen, excellent and influential networks, or wealth can help us tremendously by leveraging these resources. One rabbi was overwhelmed by the amount of work to be done and was not managing as an administrator. He called up a partner who believed in what he was doing and the partner found, hired and funded an administrator who still works for that rabbi.

### ***How to reach potential “Executives” or “Partners”?***

- 1) Networking. See every opportunity to meet more people as an opportunity to interest them in learning and building a relationship, i.e. when someone new moves to town, at community meetings with other community bodies, at professional meetings, speeches, etc.
- 2) Internet link on website.
- 3) Emails. Often partners will allow you to do a bulk mailing to their lists in addition to your own collected lists. You might use this opportunity to advertise a new class, which could be a springboard for one-on-one sessions or a group session.<sup>2</sup>
- 4) Encourage your existing partners to network and refer people they think may be interested, and to help you identify and network with the people

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<sup>1</sup> Ideas of responsibilities you can give ‘partners’ are: organizing an event, including finding a sponsor, help with PR or advertising, organizing a library, help with computer systems, financial planning and budgeting. However, do not push unless you are sure it is something they are ready to do so that they are not set up for failure.

<sup>2</sup> One Rabbi in NY was able to get his message out – nearly for free – via one email to about 300,000 single Jews in Manhattan.





they know. Often they will offer access to groups of people you would never be able to reach otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

- 5) Build relationships with other Jewish organizations in your area. Ask them to refer people they think may benefit from or enjoy your program. For example, Rabbi Polatsek describes how the Federation referred him to a newcomer in town. The Federation understands the value of having leaders in their given fields become more Jewishly affiliated, even if it cannot support that effort or inspire it. More Jewish-minded leaders are better leaders. In this particular example, this individual sent his son to Sunday school, introduced his friends, and is now raising \$1 million for a new Federation fund. The Federation benefited directly from Rabbi Polatsek's involvement with this individual and, in addition to effecting change for this person and his family and generations, Rabbi Polatsek will receive part of the funds he is raising as well.

### ***What kind of people?***

Without negating that every *neshama* is infinitely precious and every Jewish “executive” offers an unlimited opportunity for success, people with the following traits are often the most successful “partners”: Dynamic, proactive, natural leaders, learners (people who enjoy growing personally can eventually be encouraged to teach others), responsible, successful (while wealth and material success are not absolute criteria they are often indicators of responsibility), interested couples (again, while many single people or just one interested partner in a couple can make significant strides and achieve success, a couple has each other's support and are thus a more unified strength), people who ask a lot of (non-antagonistic) questions, sociable, well connected, enthusiastic, talented, and have good leadership traits that can be channeled to achieve great success in learning and *kiruv*.

How to develop the relationship beyond the hour (or more) of individual learning?

- 1) Broaden the scope of the relationship to include the entire family. Invite them over for Shabbat, offer to make connections between wives and children. This will help them grow in a rounded and sustainable way.
- 2) Allow and encourage them to accept responsibility. Get them involved and seek their input on initiatives, include them in planning meetings. Don't squelch their initiatives. (Even if an idea is not 100% in line with your mission, allow partners to follow through with it as long as it is not a negative idea.) This will encourage the partnership and empower them to initiate solutions. Partners will often step up to plate to offer a solution you may have suggested or a completely new solution based on their entirely

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<sup>1</sup> One woman in New York who was approached by Rabbi XXX was not interested in one-on-one learning, but was interested and impressed, and set up a group learning session in her company that includes a number of colleagues.



new and different perspective, often offering to help out in areas they are good at or to sponsor a solution that resonates with them.

- 3) Train them to share their learning. Though a partner may not be an ordained rabbi or have anything close to an acceptable depth of learning, a nice ‘vort’ or concept you shared, repeated by a friend in casual and non-threatening circumstances, can motivate a new partner to get involved, seek to deepen his/her own level of knowledge, and become active in your Torah-oriented community.

### ***Where to meet?***

The suggestions are as numerous as there are places with room for two people, a source book and a bit of quiet. The most preferred locations are:

- 1) *Office*: This setting lends itself best to quiet, focused time. It also imparts a sense of importance and value – at least on par with the other meetings the executive conducts in his day. In addition, it is usually easiest for the executive to accommodate and stick to. However, unless the executive can achieve some niche and prevent constant disturbances, this is not a good idea. Also, with meetings at the office, one must work harder to make sure the session does not become a trivial or arbitrary part of his/her “work” day, and something that is ‘left behind at the office’.
- 2) *Home*: This seems to be the least favorite location among executives for myriad reasons. As with the office, be wary of regular distractions. It may become appropriate when/if a spouse joins the sessions or if no other common ground can be found.
- 3) *Shul or other communal location*: This works well too, if it is in close proximity to the executive’s office/home and if he is completely comfortable there. It is crucial that there be a quiet and private location for the session as well.
- 4) *Other*: Any place where the executive is comfortable and relaxed, quiet space can be found and disturbances will be minimum can be utilized, i.e. a park (in appropriate weather or climate), the rabbi’s house, etc. One rabbi found success by meeting at Starbucks. The coffee shop lent the relationship and the study session a kind of “in hip-ness”, an image difficult to project in some of the other locations. Despite the lack of privacy and the noise, it was possible to carve out a sphere of concentration and it fit right in with the executive’s idea of in vogue advanced learning and self-improvement, which added to the psychological appeal and reduced any lingering misgivings.



### **3. BUSINESSMEN'S SHIURIM**

Like any area of kiruv, businessmen's shiurim is an art, a sugya which needs to be learned up an applied. Here are some pointers.

#### ***1. Timing***

There is no good time to hold a shiur. Many are loath to leave their homes and loved ones once they finally return to them. Evening hour study groups require a strong commitment on the part of the student (and teacher), are prone to cancellation due to conflicting interests, and can sometimes even get in the way of shalom bayis. Sunday is often a “family day”, especially in less observant families, and carving time out of that on a regular basis is often quite difficult.

In their crowded schedules, lunch-time shiurim have their place, even in cities like New York and Toronto, where businessmen are often tempted to skip a lunch break altogether. In some Southern cities, the opposite is true. Lunch time is so sacrosanct, and life so relatively laid back, that business-men's shiurim are best held an hour before lunch!

#### ***2. Frequency of Sessions***

Groups can run weekly/biweekly or monthly – regularity is the key. The groups with the strongest regular attendance are the groups that meet most frequently. Generally, the less frequent the group meets, the more maintenance it requires in terms of reminding and contacting group members between sessions to make sure they attend

#### ***3. Open or Closed?***

Five of the Jewish Experience groups are “open”. Two are private, set for a specific group of people. The Jewish Experience had one group that started as open and when others started to join the original core group started to disintegrate. People no longer felt committed to participate. Eventually that group stopped and then restarted as a successful closed group.

Most of the groups are populated solely by men, less by design than by default. Occasionally a woman has attended one of the all male groups but, possibly because she felt uncomfortable, did not become a permanent participant.



A Talmud study group is best run as a closed group. It is too frustrating having drop-ins who do not know what is flying. Often closed groups comprise of a group of friends or colleagues who are most comfortable keeping it closed to the public.

#### ***4. Do you provide lunch?***

The Jewish Learning Experience learned that providing lunch was at best a hassle, at worst a money loser, each group provides their own lunch. Each week a different, predetermined member buys lunch for everybody (providing lunch for the teacher as well.) (Teachers should eat before or after the session.)

#### ***5. Recruitment***

A successful initial learning session will have a catchy title or address a topic of great interest to the group and possibly offer a free lunch. It is best to have an experienced and very dynamic teacher for the first session. After the group is established, you can rotate teachers (with the group's approval) or introduce a different regular teacher. It is important to be on top of things in the beginning so that the group is firmly established. This often entails reminder emails and phone calls - both of which are more important when the group meets less frequently.

Many top businessmen, lawyers or other professionals are quite flattered by an offer to hold a shiur in their offices. Go to the wealthiest or most successful person you can find, even if he has had not previous contact with the organization and put your offer on the table. You may be pleasantly surprised at his reaction. Such a location, in turn, attracts similar type people. This has a broader legitimizing effect of 'learning Torah' and of Orthodoxy in general, amongst the broader Jewish population in the town. 'If they are doing it', the logic goes, 'it must be something good.'

#### ***6. Topics***

For many, this executive learning session is their spiritual sustenance. Whether it's once a week or once a month, it's often the only time they have set aside for learning about and developing their relationship with Hashem.

The key word to finding a topic is 'relevance'. People want 'take-home value', something that they can think about during the week and apply to their lives, some thing they can take home and put into practice right now, something they can share with their families and use to enrich their lives, i.e. Inyanei d'Yoma, Ethics (Pirkei Avos), Business Ethics, Mitzvos bein adam le'chavero and bein adam l'atzmo etc... One successful group studied Derech HaShem. If you are not using a sefer, it is usually wise to offer a predetermined curriculum.



Although progress through text may be very slow, this is no way indicative of the strides the group is making.

Ideally one should find a topic that opens a whole new sphere of learning or thinking such as learning to read Hebrew, Parshas HaShavua, Rambam, an area which will encourage discussion and thought.

Many Rabbis found that teaching Gemara did not go over well in this context. They found it either a struggle or an intellectual exercise with no direct meaning in their lives. Most prefer ‘softer’ topics such as: Jewish Thought, Miracles, Love, Teshuva, Torah perspective on current events, Yonah, Daniel, etc.

It is of paramount importance that the topic be one that excites the teacher. Part of the learning experience is seeing the joy and pleasure that Judaism gives to the teacher.

#### **4. FEMALE EXECUTIVES**

Many interested women fall into the ‘executive’ category. While some rabbis will learn one-on-one with a woman upon request, we know of some serious problems that have arisen as a result, and we highly recommend against this. Most outreach professionals will suggest one-on-one learning with another woman (their wife or other) or propose that she joins a group session. One important difference between males and females is the fact that, in general, women prefer and enjoy the group setting once they have given it a try.

Without going into the halachic and hashkafic desirability of having separate women's groups, purely practical considerations have made all-women's groups the way to go. This is especially true of business-men's (shall we say 'business-persons') shiurim. Occasionally a female business woman has attended what is usually an all male group but, possibly because she felt uncomfortable, did not become a permanent participant.

Men and women often have interests and ways of thinking that are sufficiently different to necessitate having separate gender groups. Separate groups create learning environments that are the most conducive for active questioning by the men, and that foster more bonding between the women.

Having said that we know of at least one case, reported by Rabbi Zev Kahn of the Chicago Community Kollel, of a woman whose motivation and hard work was responsible for the formation of a highly successful executive learning program and who definitely wants there to be a mix of men and women.



In Denver, the Jewish Experience's women's executive lunch and learn is currently made up of mature baalot tshuva. All of them became frum as married adults and, while they all are fully committed, none of them had a chance to learn seriously for any length of time. They are fluent in most of the halachic how tos, but all need more background in basic Chumash, taamei hamitzvot, machshava and history. For them, the weekly get-togethers provide more than necessary Judaic background; they are a friendship oasis and a refuge from their primarily non-Jewish associates and non-Torah interactions.

That group uses Rambam's Hilchot De'ot as the base of the session and as a springboard for discussion. Each participant takes a turn reading and translating to the best of her ability—one reads only in English—and then the meaning of the text as well as how it applies to their lives is discussed. Often the session digresses and is spent filling in background knowledge necessary to understanding the text or finding its relevancy to their lives.

The learning is especially important to the women as it strengthens both them and the families that they head. Beyond that, it is important for their communities. As women who have been through “the process” and made successful transitions into observant lives, they are looked upon as role models. People watch what they do and how they interact. Unintentionally they become examples for those yet unaffiliated. Many women have expressed frustration at their inadequate education and lack of direction inhibiting their impact in influencing others, actively or passively. Regular study and regular personal contact with a teacher helps strengthen them.

## **5. COURSES**

Getting someone to sign up for a course instead of just a shiur creates not only commitment, but also a feeling of growth and achievement. People are happy to pay for a course and are more likely to stick to it. DATA (the Dallas Kollel) is a pioneer of Mission Control, a seventeen part course, that requires sign up and a fee. They have designed a user-friendly package to allow for duplication by other kiruv organizations and it is available upon request.

Another example of this approach is Chabad's Jewish Learning Institute<sup>1</sup>. JLI enrolls some 4,500 to 6,000 students per ‘semester’ (3 per year) in 80 locations. JLI offers university style adult Jewish learning with basic Jewish literacy and a deeper understanding of Yiddishkeit as its goals. JLI demands a serious commitment on the student's part. Students commit to participate in 32 classes throughout the entire year, each comprised of two forty-five minute sessions. Classes are interactive, incorporating music and tefillah, as well as standard teaching and questions.

JLI has an exceptionally qualified Educational Advisory Board with 12 authors and 26 editors producing comprehensive, college level course work and work-books

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.jlicentral.com>



for the entire national program from one central location. Chabad's program is unique in that the program and marketing and class materials are developed at its headquarters, with identical lessons running simultaneously in each location. This offers an important advantage for traveling businessmen and women who find themselves on the road often, something that would normally disrupt or even prevent significant strides in learning.

Chabad claims that 40% of JLI's students continue for additional years and/or join other Chabad or outreach programs to further their knowledge.

## **6. MISSIONS**

Missions to Israel are often life-transforming for the participants, and more is the pity that local organizations have not made better use of this vehicle. One head of a successful outreach organization told the author: "I have four to five students annually whom I would like to send on a mission or summer program. However, to do this I am going to have to make more than one appointment with each one of them. I just can't find the time to do this." Yet a summer in Israel, especially in a yeshiva, is not just another option on the *kiruv* menu. There are very few experiences that can match its effectiveness in moving people along.

Many of the missions we talk about below are not aimed specifically for executives. But a clearer understanding of the range of options for different target audiences is more helpful than talking of executive missions in isolation.

The usual structure of these missions is "three to four hours of fascinating study with brilliant rabbis in the morning, special sightseeing and historical education with extremely knowledgeable guides in the afternoon, and informative dinners with political and military dignitaries at night<sup>1</sup>."

A mission that involves a serious learning commitment often pre-selects participants already involved in regular learning. Therefore the participant is often coming just at the point where he is grappling with commitment. However missions have been very effective with totally unaffiliated people as well.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Adam Gower, Aish HaTorah Mission from LA.

<sup>2</sup> A perfect example would be Mr. M. from Virginia. Mr. M. joined an Aish HaTorah mission to Israel that was more business than Torah-oriented, but that offered a window into the Torah world and some learning experiences. Mr. M., completely unaffiliated beforehand, began learning one-on-one, once a week when he returned home. His wife participated in a later, women's mission, and now joins him from time to time. Their children also started learning, and they join learning retreats. Mr. and Mrs. M. have also begun actively pursuing solutions to Jewish problems in their area, sponsoring Jewish programs, hosting classes at their home, asking their friends to join. In addition, Mr. & Mrs. M. made strong financial commitments to some of Aish HaTorah's projects.



Pre-Intifada, Aish HaTorah's Fellowships were bringing up to 1,000 students in the summer alone. After the outbreak of violence, some organizations began taking groups to places other than Israel, and have found that these, too, have very positive results. The Zarrets of Ashreinu in LA annually take a group to NY, while Aish HaTorah England (Fellowships) has taken groups to NY, Australia and South Africa. Aish HaTorah Boston took a group to Spain. Sometimes students will go on a trip to Spain just because the price is good, when they might have been more wary of an Israel trip, with all that that implies 'Jewishly'. Testimony to this is a Boston University graduate of the Aish Spanish trip, who is currently learning in the Aish *Beis Hamidrash*. He was previously totally unaffiliated.

Some of these non-Israel trips can be quite spiritual, as Rabbi Brian Rubenstein (now of Aish England) discovered with his safaris to South Africa. They also need not be low on Torah-learning. For example the Aish England trip to NY held morning classes, just like trips to Israel. And not all these groups were Intifada responses. Rabbi Moshe Filler had long brought South and Central Americans for a boy's (and a separate girl's) camp to Ner Yisrael Yeshiva, with an excellent track record of placing his graduates in Yeshiva.

Some, like Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf, feel that although there are real practical considerations for finding non-Israel locations, we are in danger of losing our sensitivity to the holiness of the land and some of the broader reasons for focusing missions to Eretz Yisrael. There is still nothing to compete with the real feelings of *Kedusha* which people experience in Israel, not to mention the vast range of spiritual resources, special people, places, *tisches* and the like.<sup>1</sup> In fact, every tour, every nugget of information, embellishes the Jewish identity of the participants. As one graduate of an Aish mission put it:

*"For me, the trip was very enlightening. I learned that the Western Wall is merely a small part of a retaining wall that supports the ground upon which once stood our Temple, and where now stands the Dome of the Rock; our holiest place usurped by the Arabs in recent years. I learned that water is a critical issue for Israel; that the Golan Heights are strategically vital; and that, sadly, Israel's history is one of almost constant war and antagonism. I have returned ... with greater pride in our shared history, heritage and culture ... inspired to know more and to contribute to the future of the Land of Israel and its people. My people<sup>2</sup>."*

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<sup>1</sup> Israel holds the unique and distinctive advantages of being naturally suited to exploring Jewish heritage and roots. The wealth of tourist attractions that have inherent Jewish value are overwhelming, the atmosphere and experiences open to a visitor are usually far more Jewishly spiritual and inspiring than anything they have experienced closer to home. (Simply being able to witness many real Jews living a real Jewish existence, and yet living mundane lives, can offer a rare glimpse of what is possible.) *Chessed* is also a significant part of the experience of the trip: "I continue to be overwhelmed by the kindness, sincerity, intelligence and "love of life" embodied and displayed by the Aish Jerusalem rabbis, staff and surrounding community." (Adam Gower)

<sup>2</sup> Adam Gower of Aish in Los Angeles





There are so many variations of the mission-to-Israel idea. The Atlanta Scholars Kollel, for one, brings groups on a “learning Safari” to Yeshivas Bircas HaTorah. Usually men only (though they have done married groups), the people pay their way, stay in the Dan Pearl, and study in the Yeshiva every morning<sup>1</sup>. Rabbi Jacobowitz of Machon LaTorah and the Zarrets have been bringing student groups to Israel for years. They usually use Ohr Somayach and Neve Yerushalayim for the Torah-study part of the trip. Rabbi Yirmi Cowan<sup>2</sup> has more specialized medical, business and legal ethics missions – for post-graduate students or qualified professionals specializing in those areas. More recently, Birthright funding has allowed Ohr Somayach and Aish HaTorah to bring Birthright groups, and Hamayan has been bringing hundreds of students a year in this framework<sup>3</sup>. Today, every Yeshiva and Seminary for *baalei teshuva* offers a summer and often a winter break program. (It is actually easier to get students to come in their winter break than in the summer<sup>4</sup>.) Some of these are not real programs – just repackaging of classes into programs – which is fair enough, since the attendee gets his program in the end. Shevut Ami Yeshiva in Jerusalem, which brings groups from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev and Odessa, is such an example. Ohr Somayach combines its regular introductory program with its JLE (Jewish Learning Exchange – England and North America) and Shorashim (South Africa) groups), ensuring that each lecture series has a clear syllabus and flow, and adding tours, *Shabbatonim*, guest lectures and other special events. It is difficult to imagine a start-up organization duplicating the years of polish and the talent-laden team that an organization like this brings to the table.

The most effective Israel programs are ones that exist in a context. One of the best examples of this is Binyan Olam – a Spanish-Portuguese organization, which runs a program in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro called Highlights. This is a year-long program involving weekly study, weekends (when the two cities get together), and culminating in an end-of-year trip to Israel. A similar approach is taken by Charles Lebow, whose SSNAP program for North American students has winter and summer trips that complete half to a year’s worth of involvement. Aish in LA started a “Monday *minyan*”. It then formed a mission around that group. For many, “The Monday *minyan* has become a fabulous and important part of my life and I feel privileged and delighted to be part of that group.” The Israel mission, in 2002, was the next step.

So much for before. Follow-up after the mission will be just as important. Not to become a forgotten souvenir of a fabulous journey, but rather as the foundation for

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<sup>1</sup> Rabbi Rubinstein of Scarsdale, NY, has also brought many such groups to Bircas HaTorah for learning Safaris.

<sup>2</sup> Of NEIJS – the New England Institute of Jewish Studies.

<sup>3</sup> An interesting variation of this is Aish’s Hasbara Fellowships.

<sup>4</sup> Students are looking to take a vacation in the winter break, whereas many work, gain experience or do extra courses in the summer.



future study and learning. “Every subject we were taught in Israel has tremendous depth.”<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, you really should come with the group, even where you are using the services of another organization to run the mission. One day together on a mission will give a closeness to your participants that is worth months, if not years, of relationship-building back in your home town.

Although we have included a sample mission below, each mission will have its own flavor and thus its own custom built itinerary. The draw of each mission will appeal to a different group, one for women, one focusing mainly on a period of more immersed or advanced learning, one on medical or law ethics, one on politics, one on heritage sites in Israel, etc.

Mr. Adam Gower used an Aish HaTorah mission in part to understand some of the confusing and contradictory politics of Israel. Mr. Gower was refreshed by the reconfirmation of his Jewish experiences, and the deepening of his overall knowledge, affinity and kinship for Israel and religious Jewish people. It broadened the issues he was exposed to<sup>2</sup>, aroused his interest in many aspects of Judaism which he had never touched on, and created a core group of co-travelers with whom he now feels a deepened sense of community<sup>3</sup>.

It is important to note that, for many secular people, Israel and Jewish identity are intimately entwined. They may be inspired by the fortitude of an Israeli general and this will strengthen their resolve to attend *shiurim*. As Adam Gower experienced it: “My .... impression was of the strength, courage and conviction of the Israeli People. They are truly soldiers on the front line of our daily battle with worldwide anti-Semitism. Their humility and modesty amazed me when we complimented and thanked them for doing the ‘heavy lifting.’ They in turn would embarrass us by thanking us for visiting, spending modest sums of money in their shops and showing support for Israel and our fellow Jews.” Israel contains the millennia of Jewish history and it therefore gives a context to their *Chumash*, their Jewish history and many other

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Adam Gower.

<sup>2</sup> “It struck me as remarkable that there was so much more that we did that I had not even touched upon. We met with a tank unit in the Golan; had breakfast with Max Livnat, a career diplomat in the Ministry of Finance; ate with the students of the Aish Yeshiva; met with the senior staff of Aish in Jerusalem; toured the new Aish buildings. None of these events are recorded, other than possibly by photograph in some cases.

<sup>3</sup> My first recollection is the camaraderie, brotherhood and friendship that blossomed between the eight participants on the trip. I took particular pleasure and pride in the manner in which my friend of 27 years, David Gurwitz, was welcomed and embraced by the group, and how he, in turn, reciprocated. It was a real treat to spend a week of “quality time” with a childhood friend without the usual obligations of family and spouses.



things they have heard about. They also feel that they are doing a *mitzvah* (and they are) by showing support and solidarity:

“It felt like the ‘right’ thing to do. Right in the sense of showing our support for our Israeli brothers and sisters; right in showing our American brothers and sisters (both Jew and Gentile) how important it is to believe strongly in something and then act upon it; and right in providing me with additional significance and perspective in my pursuit of my Jewish education.”

While all these advantages are absent from an African safari or a trip to another exotic location, missions to these places still offer a rare opportunity to completely immerse oneself in the learning and/or Jewish experience. People will feel less inhibited by preconceived, personal limits and reservations in such a setting, as well as being free of their usual work and home pressures and commitments, allowing them to explore the topics learned and the experience far more deeply.



## **Sample Mission Schedule #1**

### **Mother/Daughter Aish HaTorah Mission to Israel**

#### **Day 1, Monday, May 6**

Arrival

Tayelet

Check in

Kotel

Welcome Dinner - Tony's Eye of the Universe – Rabbi Shalom Schwartz

#### **Day 2, Tuesday, May 7**

7:30 am Breakfast

8:30 am Walk to the Old City

9:00 am Southern Excavations, Museum - *Esther Schlisser*

10:40 am Journey to the Center of the Universe - Kotel Tunnel Tour –  
*Esther Schlisser (apples)*

12:30 pm The Challenge of Relationships – *Rabbi Leib Kelemen*

1:45 pm Lunch – *Rebbetzin Weinberg*

3:00 pm Bitachon (Trust in G-d) – *Rabbi Moshe Zeldman*

4:15 pm Why Bad Things Happen to Good People – *Rabbi Ari Kahn*

5:30 pm Our Mother Leah and Prayer – *Rebbetzin Dina  
Coopersmith*

#### **Day 3, Wednesday, May 8**

8:30 am Breakfast

9:30 am Tour of the Knesset

11:30 am Tour of the Israel Museum

1:30 pm Lunch in the Old City (or picnic)

2:30 pm 1967 – *Mrs. Golda Varhaftig*

4:15 pm What Difference Does G-d Make? – *Rabbi Motty Berger*

6:00 pm Dinner at Café Rimon

8:30 pm 4 Faces of Benji Levin

#### **Day 4, Thursday, May 9**

Discovery or Alternative classes – mostly women's issues

Rebecca – Feminism and Judaism,

Gila – Tznius in the Workplace – negiah,

Meira – sexuality,

Dina – sources for hair covering

Night for everybody:



Our Mothers (Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, and Leah) – a  
Paradigm for Greatness – *Rebbetzin Heller*

**Day 5, Friday, May 10**

- 8:30 am Depart for the home of Rina Quint
  - 10:00 am Depart for Yad Vashem
  - 1:00 pm Free afternoon to prepare for Shabbos
  - 6:15 pm The Light of Shabbos – The Special Light Of Women –  
*Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik*
  - 6:48 pm Candle lighting at the hotel  
Walk to the Kotel  
Home hospitality
- Oneg Shabbos – (Dessert at the hotel)  
Class: The Strength of the Jewish Woman – Our History and  
Our Destiny – (Who Are We And Where Are We Going?) –  
*Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik*

**Day 6, Shabbos May 11**

- 7:30 am Breakfast
  - 8:30 am Services at the Great Synagogue
  - 11:30 am Kiddush and Shabbos lunch at the hotel
  - 1:00 pm Actualizing Your Potential – *Rabbi Efim Svirsky*, at the hotel
  - 5:30 pm Tour of the Old City
  - 6:45 pm 3<sup>rd</sup> Meal in the Old City
  - 7:40 pm Havdala with Yom Tov Glazer
- Melave Malka with Yom Tov at the home of:

**Day 7, Sunday, May 12 – Mother's Day!**

- 8:00 am Depart for Carmel Spa  
(Plant a tree on the way)  
Mother's Day at the Spa  
Special Mother's Day/Farewell Dinner
- 9:00 pm Return to Jerusalem

**Day 8, Monday, May 13**

- 7:30 am Breakfast
- 9:00 am Actualizing Your Potential – Part 2 – *Rabbi Efim Svirsky*
- 10:15 am Tour of the new Aish building
- 11:00 am World Perfect – *Rabbi Ken Spiro*
- 12:30 pm Lunch
- 1:00 pm Giving and Growing and Q&A – *Rabbi Leib Kelemen*
- 3:30 pm Check out and free afternoon and evening
- 9:00 pm Meet at hotel to depart for Ben Gurion Airport



## **Sample Mission Schedule #2**

### **Aish HaTorah Partner's Denver - Men's Mission to Israel**

#### ***Monday, February 10***

Arrive Ben Gurion Airport  
Welcoming Dinner (sushi or steak)  
Walk to Kotel

#### ***Tuesday, February 11***

6:30 am Breakfast  
7:00 am Shacharis at the hotel  
9:00 am Depart for the Old City  
9:30 am Know What You Know – *Rosh HaYeshiva*  
10:00 am Kabbalah – *Rabbi Tom Meyer*  
11:00 am Free Will – *Rabbi Motty Berger*  
12:00 pm Back to the Future – *Rabbi Ken Spiro*  
1:00 pm Mincha and lunch  
2:00 pm Depart for Latrun – Armored Corps and Tank Museum, the site of a crucial battle during the war of independence. Film and kids can climb on real tanks.

Depart for Ramat Rachel

The Ramat Rachel archaeological site is one of the more significant landmarks in the Jerusalem area. It includes an Iron Age royal palace and citadel built most probably by King Jehoiachin of Judea; finds from the Persian period; a columbarium and ritual baths from the Second Temple period; a villa and bathhouse of the Roman Tenth Legion; and more from later periods. It is the only site in Jerusalem where one can see finds from periods ranging from the ninth century B.C.E. until almost 3,000 years later. The project presents a novel approach that integrates archaeological excavations, conservation, and development works, creating a delicate balance between the landscape and the site's historical elements. Pedestrian paths were paved, look-out posts from 1948 were renovated, and an observation point and a promenade were constructed.

Free evening in Jerusalem

#### ***Wednesday, February 12***

Travel north along Israel's scenic Mediterranean coastal highway.



Archery, Clay pigeon shooting and horse back riding in Caesarea.

Visit Israel's archaeological jewel – Caesarea – a well-preserved sea-side Roman city with a palace, temples, theaters, marketplace and a harbor displaying amazing engineering feats including an ancient technique to pour concrete undersea!

Go-carting in Netanya.

Return to Jerusalem.

### **Thursday, February 13**

6:30 am Breakfast

7:00 am Shacharis at the hotel

9:00 am Depart for the Old City

9:30 am Being an Intellectual – *Rosh Ha Yeshiva*

10:00 am Creating A World of Joy – *Rabbi Zelig Pliskin*

11:00 am Moral Relativism – *Rabbi Motty Berger*

12:00 pm Judaism and Zionism – *Rabbi Ken Spiro*

1:00 pm Mincha and lunch

2:00 pm Passion and Respect/Defining Love – *Rabbi Leib Kelemen*

4:15 pm Kotel Tunnels, tour Guide: *Esther Shlisser*

Esther will guide us on the most memorable tour of your life.

She will bring you back thousands of years through the recently excavated Kotel Tunnels and share an emotional journey of the Jews that she and her family have personally witnessed.

Free evening in Jerusalem

### **Friday, February 14**

6:30 am Breakfast

7:00 am Shacharis at the hotel

8:30 am Lecture with Mr. Marc Belzberg in hotel conference room  
Marc and his wife Chantelle are founders of ONE FAMILY, an organization established to help victims of terror.

Visit victims

After the presentation we will leave the hotel to visit victims of the terror that has struck our Land and our People. See first-hand the horrors and fears that the Israeli people live with day in and day out as you visit with those who are still recuperating and rehabilitating from what we sometimes hear labeled as "light" injuries.

Free afternoon – lunch, shop, and prepare for Shabbos

4:44 pm Candle lighting – hotel lobby

Walk to the Kotel to welcome Shabbos



Home hospitality  
8:30 pm Meet at the home of Rabbi Raphael and Rebecca Shore to walk to the Tisch in Meah Shearim

***Shabbos, February 15***

11:00 am Walk to the Old City  
11:45 am Shabbos lunch at ELC Dining Hall  
Parshat Shavuah – *Rabbi Abba Wagonsberg*  
2:30 pm Tour of the Old City/new Aish building  
5:30 pm 3rd Meal, Maariv and Havdala  
8:00 pm Melava Malka with music by Rabbi Yom Tov Glaser  
Shabbos is over, but the spirit remains as we escort the Queen back into the days of the week

***Sunday, February 16***

6:30 am Breakfast  
7:00 am Shacharis at the hotel  
9:00 am Depart for the South  
Masada  
Picnic and short hike at Ein Gedi  
Before returning to Jerusalem we stop for a pita snack in the tent of Orchan Horel for an authentic Bedouin experience.  
5:00 pm Return to Jerusalem for a free evening

***Monday, February 17***

6:30 am Breakfast  
7:00 am Shacharis at the hotel or the Kotel  
9:00 am Depart for the Old City  
9:30 am The Essentials of Judaism – Rosh Ha Yeshiva  
10:00 am Kabbalah – *Rabbi Tom Meyer*  
11:00 am What Do We Mean By Torah? – *Rabbi Motty Berger*  
12:00 pm The Middle East Conflict – *Rabbi Ken Spiro*  
1:00 pm Mincha and lunch  
2:00 pm Southern Wall Excavations  
City of David  
Visit the site of earliest inhabitation by Jews in Jerusalem, walk through ancient water systems, here you will learn about the true essence of Jerusalem  
Farewell Dinner





## **7. FEDERATION MISSIONS**

*By Rabbi Binyomin Friedman of the Atlanta Scholars Kollel*

The most successful outreach organizations in North America are the Associated Jewish communities known to most of us on a local level as Federation. Like all outreach organizations Federation identifies prospects, cultivates them (turns them on) and gets them to identify with their cause. One of their most successful programs and, in many cases, the one they use to “close the deal”, is the same one that many of us use, namely a trip to Israel. These “missions” attract a slice of Jewish society that is motivated, identified or looking to identify, and generally affluent.

The wonderful thing about these missions is that, while they are designed to serve the needs of the Federation, they are open to the public and can become a great kiruv experience. In Atlanta we have created relationships on Federation missions that have endured for years and have opened up doors otherwise closed to us. All of this is beside the fact that a number of mission friends have ultimately become shomrei mitzvos.

My most recent mission this past November saw eighty Atlantans travel to Israel to tour and attend the General Assembly of Federations held in Jerusalem this year. There were three to five thousand participants from communities all across North America. In ten days in Israel, meeting representatives from a host of communities, I only found one other representative of a local kiruv organization. In addition, I discovered that thirty Chabad shluchim participated in their local missions.

Why don't more outreach organizations participate? Three answers occur to me. It is not easy to get in. Federations don't encourage our attendance because:

- a. They are afraid we will upset the apple cart by preaching or being too frum.
- b. They don't want us to grab away their prospects.
- c. The trips are difficult for a frum person. Entertainment is often not tznius, hechsherim are suspect or nonexistent, Shabbos is not designed with the Shomer Shabbos in mind and the presentation often clashes with many of our hashkafos.

Because of all this, we view ourselves as outsiders at best and the enemy at worst. In this way we play into their fears. Aside from missing opportunities, I believe that by not participating we marginalize ourselves. We must attend these events because their fundraising slogan is true. We are one. As professional kiruv workers we are the best equipped to represent Torah to the broader community which these missions represent.

So how do we get in ?



The answer is simple. Pay. All federation missions have a price. My most recent trip was ten days, roundtrip airfare, five star hotels, full day guided tours, and all meals for \$1699. Since Federation subsidizes the price of the trip they will not generally be willing to offer any discounts or specials. In addition these trips also contain a solicitation for Federation.

However, different trips have different expectations. A trip for young couples, singles or first timers will have a lower minimum. Other trips target long-time givers and will have a higher minimum.

Of course the clientele will be different also. My recent trip asked for a \$600 minimum pledge. There was another mission leaving at the same time called the “presidents” mission, which, I’m sure expected much more.

We all know people who support Federation and identify with it as they identify with us. These people can be asked to subsidize the expense to help us bridge the gap and reach out to the Federation community. It can be sold as an investment, which it is and, in my opinion, a wise one at that. Now that you have raised some money to invest in a federation mission call the Federation.

Ask them about upcoming trips to Israel. Identify the profile of the mission. Decide if that group will be worth your investment and who from your organization should go on the trip: the kiruv worker, the fundraiser, etc. Generally the most easygoing person should represent your organization. I talked the president of my shul into going. We roomed together and I was able to share his Israel experience with him. This has already paid many dividends in our organization.

Before the trip there will be informational meetings. Try to attend. This will give you a gauge of the participants and help you and them develop a sense of group identity. Ask for the names of the hotels and a copy of the itinerary. Research the hechsherim and decide what you can and cannot eat. Don’t try to fix anything when you get there. Federation wants everything to be smooth and everyone to be having a good time. They will not be happy if you don’t join in. It is not always simple and can be frustrating, but as kiruv professionals we are all sophisticated enough to navigate these waters delicately.

Make a Shabbos plan. The federations are getting ever more respectful of halacha and they will try to be helpful as long as you don’t push them. They do not want any mission participants to feel like they are being expected to be observant. At the same time they like the participants to feel the Jewish experience. Most missions will offer Shabbos options. I have taken groups to a tisch on Friday night with great success. (Do not take women unless you have a frum women chaperone. Even then this should be carefully considered.)



Mission participants are treated to choirs, stage shows, singers along the way. When this happens, unobtrusively slip out into the hall for a few minutes. It all works out.

Another aspect of the mission will be the participation of other rabbis. I have used these opportunities to debate and even argue. As long as it remains civil everyone finds it exciting. Mainly however I try to get to know them as people. I had a sharp exchange with a reform rabbi concerning G-d and the holocaust that left us both feeling badly. Some time later he sat down at my table and announced how happy he was because his wife had just gotten a report from the doctor that her chemotherapy seemed to be effective. Obviously my attitude changed. We later continued our discussion and he acknowledged, if not accepted, my perspective. When we got home I called to ask how his wife is doing. I then invited him to visit our bais hamedrash, which he accepted.

On a mission, days before the first scuds hit Israel in 1991, I met a reform rabbi. We struck up a friendship and he learned with me for many years. To this day he supports frum institutions that I introduced him to and regularly refers seeking Jews to me. When someone receives a referral from a reform rabbi there is a great level of trust and people have become frum because of that. Not all rabbis however will be as friendly, but if you walk away with one relationship the dividends could be substantial.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the trip is the attitude you take into it. You are going as a member of a federation mission. They will show the group an Israel that many of us have never seen. Try to see it through the eyes of the participant. As kiruv workers we have developed an ability to understand the world through the eyes of the assimilated. If we can share their experience with them we can create a bond for life. It sounds easy but that is not always the case, as the following story will illustrate.

A woman told me that she went with a group to see the Museum of the Founding of the State of Israel. They sat in the room where Ben Gurion had read the Proclamation of Independence and viewed important artifacts, and viewed a dramatic recreation of the hours leading up to the proclamation. Then the group was taken to another room where they celebrated a Yom Ha'atzmaut (in November) seder. On the table was a cup of Eliyahu and she looked into it. When she saw that it was filled with milk and honey she broke down crying. This was the highlight of her trip to Israel.

Hearing this I struggled not to laugh, then I thought about what she saw in that cup. She saw in that cup the fulfillment of two thousand years of Jewish history as she understood it. Perhaps the organizers of the "seder" had non-Torah intentions but she did not. She shared a personal moment. We now have a personal keshet.

As kiruv workers we all know that people take baby steps. They cannot always accept the unadulterated emes the first time around. The Federation spends a



considerable amount of money and expertise to give a highly assimilated Jew an experience that will open their heart. When that Jewish heart opens don't you want to be there?

If I can be of any assistance, or for the names of shomer shabbos contacts in Federation / UJA offices, please contact me, Rabbi Binyomin Friedman through the Atlanta Scholars Kollel.

## **8. CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS**

Slightly different than missions, conferences and conventions are more local and shorter, but bring together a larger group of people. Conferences and conventions carry many of the same benefits as missions though they may be more or less intense, without the “wow” factor of a full major trip.

Rabbi Polatsek of TORCH in Houston, Texas, describes a conference he ran for women, offering a day of exciting courses and bringing them together to network, revivify and learn topics they were interested in and enthusiastic about. It also became a perfect, non-threatening way to acquaint these women with TORCH, what it does and offers the community, and give them the opportunity to become involved.

Rabbi Polatsek had previously met with the President of his local Haddassah group, as a part of networking and getting in touch with leaders. When Rabbi Polatsek mentioned his idea of running a women's conference, the President of Haddassah was enthusiastic about co-sponsoring the event. In the end, Rabbi Polatsek also approached the Jewish Family Service, the JCC, Israeli Consulate, Eastern Kashrut, Hillel, Amit and other local, established groups. Not only did these organizations co-sponsor the event, and assist with some of the planning details, they offered to contact their member base to invite them – guaranteeing a much wider reach than would have otherwise been possible.

The conference offered 16 tracks of learning, dialogue, lecture. Not all of these were on religious topics - issues such as financial management, health issues (sponsored by Haddassah), child rearing, etc. were also covered, while keeping the keynote address and the final address on the Jewish oriented topic of “Great Jewish Women – who we are, where we are going” (“Empowering and illuminating will take us back to “the source”, to discover what the strength of the Jewish woman actually is. Once discovered, we can fast forward and put it into our daily lives...”).

The conference was a wild success with 400 women attending, many of whom were introduced to TORCH's efforts for the first time with a very positive and empowering experience. Many participants asked to continue various forms of learning or involvement in TORCH throughout the year. In addition, the conference was a financial success, a fantastic operation in networking and a wonderful opportunity to work together and build a relationship with other local organizations



(including gaining access to their membership). (And, of course, inspired women are a most important step towards inspired and motivated men...) TORCH has a conference planned for next year as well, at which they expect at least 600-800 participants. Participants were charged \$50 for the day (lunch included) or a sponsorship opportunity for a minimum of \$250.

Another recent and highly successful conference was the Aish HaTorah 'Partners' conference. Rather than describe it, we have included a schedule below:



## Sample Conference Schedule: Aish HaTorah Partner's Convention, Nov. 2003

### **Thursday, November 6th**

4:00-6:00 PM	Conference Registration & Hotel Check-In <b>Swim and Gym Time</b> 4:00-4:50 Women 5:00-5:50 Men	Front Desk
4:15 PM	<b>Mincha</b>	The Glen
5:30-7:00 PM	<b>Dinner Buffet</b>	Le Grand Jardin
7:00 PM	<b>Ma'ariv</b>	The Glen
7:30 PM	<b>Partners Conference Opening Session</b> Rabbi Jamie Cowland, Host <b>Aish Audio program</b> <b>"Aish Live"</b> - Rabbi Shalom Schwartz <b>Aish HaTorah - Making the Difference</b> Rabbi Menachem Zupnik, Rav Bais Torah U'Tefilla, Passaic NJ <b>What are we striving for?</b> Rosh HaYeshiva, Rav Noah Weinberg	The Grove
8:30-10:00 PM	<b>Learning Sessions</b> <b>What is Judaism Really?</b> <i>Introductory</i> Rabbi Eliyahu Bergstein <b>Bliss: Three Principles that Make Marriage Work</b> <i>Family Track</i> Rabbi Steven Baars <b>Answering the Toughest Kiruv Questions</b> <i>Intermediate, Advanced, Practical kiruv</i> Moderator: Rabbi Chaim Sampson Rabbi Motty Berger, Rabbi Yerachmiel Milstein, Rabbi Menachem Zupnik <b>"Relentless: Struggle for Peace in Israel"</b> Rabbi Raphael Shore, Rabbi Shalom Schwartz	
10:15-11:00 PM	<b>Learning Sessions</b> <b>Gossip, Lies and Lessons</b> <i>Introductory</i> Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik <b>Everything I needed to know about Judaism - I learned from my personal Computer</b> <i>All</i> Rabbi Yossi Michalowicz <b>Psycho-Spiritual Training I</b> <i>All</i> Rabbi Efim Svirsky <b>Maintaining Faith in the Midst of Suffering</b> <i>Women only</i> Rebbetzin Nechama Karlinsky	



**"Relentless" - Bringing it home: what can you do?"** *Practical Kiruv*

Rabbi Shalom Schwartz, Elliot Mathias, Neil Beube, Jon Neumann

11:00-12:00 PM

**Dessert Reception**

Le Grand Jardin A,B

11:15 PM

**Singles Program**

Le Grand Jardin C

*(for singles program participants only)*

**Friday, November 7th**

7:00 AM

**Daf Yomi**

Oak

Rabbi Hillel Weinberg

8:00 AM

**Shacharis**

The Grove

7:30-9:15 AM

**Breakfast**

Le Grand Jardin

9:30-11:15 AM

**General Sessions**

The Grove

**Partners Making A Difference**

Moderator: Rabbi Shoshan Ghoori, Chile

A panel of partners from around the world

**JEWEL and EYAHT**

Ilana Zernitsky, Bonnie Cohen

**Getting the Job Done**

Rosh HaYeshiva, Rav Noah Weinberg

11:30-12:30 PM

**Learning Sessions**

**"...as long as he's a good person!" What makes something right or wrong?** *All*

Rabbi Motty Berger

**Psycho-Spiritual Training II** *All*

Rabbi Efim Svirsky

**I Don't Eat Flesh: Animal Rights &**

**Vegetarianism in Judaism** *All*

Rabbi Avram Rothman

**Tapping into the Power of Prayer** *Women only*

Rebbetzin Nechama Karlinsky

**Yeshiva Kids Hashkafa Questions - What are**

**they really asking?** *Advanced*

Rabbi Daniel Mechanic

**You can teach Bliss** *Practical kiruv*

Rabbi Steven Baars

12:30 PM

**Lunch**

Le Grand Jardin

Rose of Jacob Campaign, Mrs. Sandy Schiff

1:15-2:15 PM

**Swim and Gym Time/WOMEN**

2:20-3:20 PM

**Swim and Gym Time/MEN**

3:30-4:25 PM

**Bringing in the Shabbos Queen - a musical experience**

Sam Glaser

4:25 PM

**SHABBOS CANDLELIGHTING**

Le Grand Jardin

4:25 PM

**Mincha/Ma'ariv**

The Grove

6:00-8:00 PM

**Dinner**

Le Grand Jardin



- 8:15-9:45 PM Sheva Brachos for Michael and Laurie Bennett  
**Teaching: The Essence of Wisdom** The Grove  
Rav Noah Weinberg, Rosh HaYeshiva,  
Rabbi Yaakov Salomon  
Rabbi Yerachmiel Milstein
- 10:00-10:45 PM **Learning Sessions**  
**Jewish Values for Jewish Children All**  
Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik  
**Why bad things happen to good people? All**  
Rabbi Ari Kahn  
**Shabbos - What's in it for me? Intermediate, Advanced**  
Rabbi Eliyahu Bergstein  
**Finding your Soulmate Singles**  
Rabbi Yom Tov Glaser  
**Inyanim b'halacha - Ner Ish U Baiso Advanced**  
Rabbi Menachem Zupnik  
**"Israel on Campus: Fighting the Battle"**  
*Practical kiruv*  
Elliot Mathias and Hasbara Fellows
- 10:45 PM **Oneg Shabbos** Le Grand Jardin  
The Glaser brothers and Aish Philly Partners
- 11:15 PM **Soul Journeys** Elm  
Rabbi Efim Svirsky
- Saturday, November 8th**
- 7:00 AM **Daf Yomi** Oak  
Rabbi Hillel Weinberg
- 7:30-9:30 AM **Continental Breakfast** Le Grand Jardin
- 8:15-10:30 AM **Shacharis**  
Aufruf of Josh Dill The Grove
- 9:15 AM **Learning Sessions**  
**An Explanatory Shabbos Prayer Experience**  
*Introductory*  
Rabbi Simcha Barnett  
**Giving as Mothers, Daughters and Wives - The Torah View Women only**  
Rebbetzin Chana Kalsmith  
**SMALL Hebrew Words That Contain BIG Life Lessons** *Introductory*  
Rabbi Dovid Zauderer
- 10:15-11:00AM **Kiddush** Le Grand Jardin Foyer
- 11:15-12:00 PM **Learning Sessions**  
**Insights into this Week's Parsha** *Introductory*  
Rabbi Jamie Cowland  
**Free Will: the Mechanics All**  
Rabbi Motty Berger  
**Trials and Blessings Women only**





	Rebbetzin Nechama Karlinsky <b>The Challenges of raising an FFB in a BT home</b> <i>Advanced</i>	
	Rabbi Yerachmiel Milstein <b>"It is not in Heaven": Divine Intervention, Rabbinic Independence</b> <i>Advanced</i>	
	Rabbi Ari Kahn <b>Easy Lessons in Explaining Torah: 10 Commandments of Toras Chaim</b> <i>Practical kiruv</i>	
12:15-1:00 PM	Rabbi Shraga Simmons <b>Learning Sessions</b> <b>The Jewish Calendar: A spiritual wash cycle</b> <i>Introductory</i>	
	Rabbi Yom Tov Glaser <b>Listening to our kids: what they say is not always what they mean</b> <i>All</i>	
	Rabbi Yaakov Salomon <b>Shabbos Meditation</b> <i>All</i>	
	Rabbi Efim Svirsky <b>Growing In Our Own "Yiddishkeit" As We Teach Others</b> <i>Advanced</i>	
	Rabbi Menachem Zupnik <b>Growth through partnership: for yourself, your family, your branch</b> <i>Practical kiruv</i>	
1:00-2:30 PM	Rabbi Shalom Schwartz <b>Lunch</b>	Le Grand Jardin
3:00-3:50 PM	<b>Learning Sessions</b> <b>To Be "Modern" or "Radical": What is the Jewish Imperative?</b> <i>All</i>	
	Rabbi Motty Berger <b>Caring for Parents</b> <i>All</i>	
	Rabbi Ari Kahn <b>Making the Right Choices</b> <i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>	
	Rabbi Eliyahu Bergstein <b>Attaining True Simcha (happiness) as Women</b> <i>Women only</i>	
	Ilana Cowland <b>Lessons from Lech Lecha</b> <i>Advanced</i>	
4:05 PM	Rabbi Menachem Zupnik <b>Mincha</b>	The Grove
4:30 PM	<b>Seuda Shlishis (Third Meal)</b>	Le Grand Jardin
5:40 PM	<b>Ma'ariv</b>	The Grove
6:00 PM	<b>Havdalah</b>	The Grove
	Musical Havdalah with Rabbi Yom Tov Glaser	
6:00-6:45 PM	<b>Swim and Gym Time/WOMEN</b>	
6:50-7:30 PM	<b>Swim and Gym Time/MEN</b>	
7:30-8:30 PM	<b>Melava Malka</b>	Le Grand Jardin



- 8:45-10:30 PM **The Power of One - General Session** The Grove  
**A Musical Tribute to Jerry Berlin a'h**  
Sam Glaser  
**Freemiddleeast.com**  
Jonathan Bash, Mitch Goldstein  
**The Impact of "Relentless"**  
Rabbi Shalom Schwartz  
**As We Move Forward**  
The Rosh HaYeshiva, Rav Noah Weinberg  
**The Power of One Award**  
Presenter: Rabbi Shaul Rosenblatt
- 10:45 PM **Dessert Reception** Le Grand Jardin  
11:00 PM **Sam Glaser in Concert** The Grove  
11:00 PM **Don't do to Yourself What You Don't Want** Elm  
**Others to do to You**  
Rabbi Efim Svirsky

**Sunday, November 9th**

- 7:00 AM **Daf Yomi** Oak  
Rabbi Hillel Weinberg
- 8:00 AM **Shacharis** The Grove
- 7:30-9:15 AM **Continental Breakfast** Le Grand Jardin
- 9:30-10:30 AM **Learning Sessions**
- Science as a Portal to Hashem** *All*  
Rabbi Menachem Zupnik
- Energized through Mitzvot** *Intermediate*  
Rabbi Eliyahu Bergstein
- Ten Secrets to a Great Jewish Marriage**  
Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik
- Shalom Bayis** *EYAHT alumni and Aish wives*  
Rabbi Menachem Zupnik
- Answering the Misconceptions about Israel**  
*Practical kiruv*  
Rabbi Shraga Simmons, Elliot Matthias
- The Cutting Edge: MP3 Technology and Kiruv**  
*Practical Kiruv*  
Aaron Dayan, Mimi Janovitz, Rabbi Shmuel Veffter
- 10:40-11:30 AM **Learning Sessions**
- Tales of Ordinary Madness: Reaching the next generation of Jewish Leadership** *All*  
Rabbi Tzvi Gluckin
- "Love your Neighbor" Ideal and Reality**  
*Beginner, Intermediate*  
Rabbi Ari Kahn
- Who me? Finding Our Unique Contribution**  
*Intermediate*  
Rabbi Efim Svirsky
- Taking the Partners Conference Home** *Practical*



*kiruv*

Rabbi Shalom Schwartz

**Teaching Marriage Classes to Others** *Practical*

*kiruv*

Marc Firestone

**Building EYAHT - Together!** *Alumni, students and Aish wives*

Rebbetzin Karlinsky, Bonnie Cohen

11:45-1:00 PM

**Partners Conference Closing Session**

The Grove

**What next?**

Rabbi Yaakov Salomon

**The Noviminsker Rebbe, Rabbi Yaakov Perlow**

Head of Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah of Agudath Israel

**Closing Message**

The Rosh HaYeshiva, Rav Noah Weinberg

**Evaluations and Raffle**

1:00-3:00 PM

**Lunch**

Le Grand Jardin

2:00 PM

**Final Check Out Time**



## 9. EXECUTIVE LEARNING AS FUNDRAISING - TORAH ETHICS AND PRACTICAL ADVICE

Building and creating relationships with Jewish executives in a position to easily support and fund other outreach efforts is a secondary, if crucial, part of executive learning. We have already talked about the Aish HaTorah idea of partners, which naturally leads to a feeling of responsibility, including financial responsibility, on the part of the partners. Many *mosdos* have staff who study with wealthy *baal habatim* with the specific intention of soliciting donations from them. We wish to deal here with some of the *halachic* background to this latter type of fundraising.

The *Gemorrah* in *Nedarim*<sup>1</sup> says that one should not take money for teaching Torah. The Sages learn this from the verse:

ואותי צוה ה' בעת ההיא ללמד אתכם וכתוב ראה למדתי אתכם חוקים ומשפטים כאשר צוני

Moshe commands the Jewish people to teach Torah exactly as he taught them. Since Moshe took no payment for teaching Torah<sup>2</sup>, so are we not to take payment.

מה אני בחנם אף אתם נמי בחנם<sup>3</sup>

The *Gemorrah* concludes that this is talking only about teaching the Oral Law. However, a teacher may take payment for teaching the Written Torah<sup>4</sup>. Two reasons are given for this. *Rav* says that since *Chumash* is normally taught to children<sup>5</sup>, one draws a salary on the supervision involved in looking after the children<sup>6</sup>, and keeping them out of mischief. This is certainly applicable to smaller children, but also applies to any age where classroom and playground management is integral to the teacher's job<sup>7</sup>. *Rebbe Yochanan* is of the opinion that one may take money for teaching פיסוק – cantillations – how the words are enunciated (sung) and broken up when the

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<sup>1</sup>ר"ן נדרים דף לז ע"א: מאי שנא מדרש דלא דכתיב ואותי צוה ה' בעת ההיא - האי קרא מייתי לאשמעין דמשה נצטווה ללמוד תורה לישראל וכתוב ראה למדתי אתכם חוקים ומשפטים כאשר צוני ה' - כלומר שצוני ללמוד בחנם

ועיין בפחד יצחק שבועות מאמר יז אות ב ואת ג

שם<sup>2</sup>

שם<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup>ר"ן: רב אמר שכר שימור - דמסתמא לומדי מקרא קטנים וצריכין שימור

שם<sup>5</sup>

<sup>6</sup>כתב השו"ע הרב שאפילו כלפי גדולים שייך שימור אבל לא כתבתי כן דשאר מפרשים לא הביאו זה דזה כנגד פשוט דגמ' שכתב וגדול בר שמירה הוא בתמיה. ומתוך בקטן.

שם<sup>7</sup>



Torah is read for the public<sup>1</sup>. Since these are not *Deoraisa*, they are not included in the prohibition<sup>2</sup>. *Rav* would still prohibit teaching *Chumash* to adults, whereas *Rebbe Yochanan* would allow this<sup>3</sup>. The *halacha* follows *Rebbe Yochanan's* opinion<sup>4</sup>. One could extend *Rebbe Yochanan's* opinion even further, allowing payment for teaching *halachos* or *mitzvos* that are *Mid'rabanan*<sup>5</sup>.

The *Yerushalmi*<sup>6</sup> brings two further reasons, one of which considerably broadens the *heter*. First is a verse that teaches us that it is permissible to teach *Chumash* and *Targum* for pay<sup>7</sup>. Second, a teacher can take *sechar betala*, the equivalent of unemployment wages<sup>8</sup>. Since the person is teaching Torah at the expense of working in a profession, he may receive wages for the loss of work that he endures as a result of teaching. He is not taking money for the teaching, but for not working. The *Ran* states that this latter *heter* applies also to the Oral Law<sup>9</sup> and the *Meiri* writes that many impoverished teachers relied on this *heter* in practice<sup>10</sup>.

A further extension was brought by many of the *Rishonim*<sup>11</sup> who state that one who has no other source of income may receive a wage for teaching. The *Rishonim* seem to be referring not only to *sechar betala*, but also to a real salary<sup>12</sup>. This *heter* is also brought down in the *Shulchan Aruch* (following the *Rambam* and the *Tur*), stating that what has become customary is permissible<sup>13</sup>.

Another *heter*, suggested by the *Meiri*, is based on the suggestion that the prohibition only applies to fathers who are commanded to teach their smaller children

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<sup>1</sup>ר"ן: ואיכא בין רב לרבי יוחנן ללמד מקרא לגדול דלא בעי שימור דלרב אסור דס"ל דפיסוק טעמים דאורייתא ולרבי יוחנן שרי משום שכר פיסוק טעמים

<sup>2</sup> שם

<sup>3</sup> שם

<sup>4</sup>ר"ן: הלכך לענין הלכה כיון דקיי"ל דרב ור' יוחנן הלכה כר' יוחנן נקטינן דאפי' מגדול שרי ליטול שכר על המקרא וכך הם דברי הרמב"ם ז"ל בפ"ו מהלכות נדרים:

<sup>5</sup>וכן כתב המאירי וז"ל מאירי: שכר שמור ר"ל שהוא שומרם שלא לילך אנה ואנה ומתוך כך יש פוסקין שבקטן בכל לימוד יכול ליטול שכר ומצד שכר שימור ואף על פי שהלכה כדברי האומר טעם שכר פיסוק טעמים פירושו אף שכר פיסוק טעמים ולהתיר אף בגדול וכל שכן שכר שימור ר"ל למי שראוי לו והוא הקטן

<sup>6</sup> שם

<sup>7</sup> שם

<sup>8</sup> שם

<sup>9</sup> שם

<sup>10</sup>מאירי: ונראה שעל זו סמכו הרבה ליטול שכר בלימוד שמתוך שעניים הם צריכים להתעסק במלאכתם לצורך מחייתם ומחיית טיפולן ונטולין שכר אותו ביטול

<sup>11</sup> תוספות בכורות כט ע"א והראש שם והר"ן בנדרים

<sup>12</sup> אמנם בשו"ע כתוב: ד[מי שאין לו מה להתפרנס] אין לך שכר בטילה הניכר ומוכח גדולה מזה לפי שאילו לא למד עמהם בודאי היה מוכח לעשות איזה עסק להחיות נפשו ונפשות ביתו ע"כ משמע שגם זה לא קאי אלא על שכר בטילה

<sup>13</sup> מאירי



Torah. Fathers teaching older children, and certainly non-paternal teachers, may take reward<sup>1</sup>.

The *Pischei Teshuvah* throws a bit of a wrench into this *heter* by questioning whether a person who teaches, or a person who receives a kollel salary, can consider this a part of his requirement<sup>2</sup> and the *Rambam* speaks sharply against those who do not earn a living from an independent profession<sup>3</sup>. For many centuries, the *Gedolim* have all agreed that, even if this would be *lehalacha*, it would not apply in our times – עת לעשות לד' – for today a dedicated application to learning and teaching Torah is the only workable model<sup>4</sup>. As the *Aruch Hashulchan* puts it:

וכבר כתבו הקדמונים שאלמלא היינו נוהגים כן כבר בטלה תורה מישראל<sup>5</sup>

Rav Moshe Feinstein goes so far as to call those *avreichim* who refuse *kollel* stipends in order to fulfill the *Rambam* as following *eitzas hayetzer*<sup>6</sup>, even if they have another profession<sup>7</sup>.

The *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>8</sup> brings the *halacha* down as follows:

*It is permissible to receive pay for teaching Tanach where this is the custom, but not the Oral Law. If one did not find someone to teach oneself for free, one should pay for this. However, one should still teach others for free. For those who have no other source of income, it is permissible to follow the dominant custom today to always teach for pay. And even those who have other sources of income, it is permissible for someone who is giving up all other financial pursuits to accept Sechar Batalah. Ramo: So too one may teach Derabanans for pay<sup>9</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> מאירי

<sup>2</sup> פתחי תשובה רמב"ם: עיין בש"ת בא"ח ס' קנה סק"א שכתב דבברכ"י כתב בשם מז"ה דן את הדין בלא נטילת שכר עולה לקביעת עתים אבל בשכר וכן מלמד תינוקות בשכר אינו עולה וע"ש שמסופק מי שלומד בישיבה בעת קבוע ומקבל פרס אם עולה וגו'

<sup>3</sup> עיין את המקורות בהמשך ועיין עוד ביביע אומר ח"ז ח' י"ד ס' יז

<sup>4</sup> שם

<sup>5</sup> אגרות משה י"ד ח' שני ס' קטז: ולכן הוא דין ברור ופשוט שנתקבל בכל הדורות ... ואני אומר כי אלו המתחסדים מצד שיטת הרמב"ם הוא בעצת היצ"ר ... כי אם הראשונים כמלאכים אמרו ... כ"ש בדורנו ... וגם אין לנו הנשים צדקניות שירצו לסבול עוני ודחקות כבדורותם

<sup>6</sup> שם

<sup>7</sup> שם בשם המהרש"ל

<sup>8</sup> שו"ע יורה דעה סימן רמו

<sup>9</sup> מקום שנהגו ללמד תורה שבכתב בשכר מותר ללמד בשכר אבל תורה שבע"פ אסור ללמד בשכר לא מצא מי שילמדנו בחנם ילמוד בשכר ואע"פ שהוצרך ללמוד בשכר לא יאמר כשם שלמדתי בשכר כך אלמד בשכר אלא ילמד לאחרים בחנם ומה שנהגו האידנא ללמד הכל בשכר אם אין לו במה להתפרנס שרי ואפי' יש לו אם הוא שכר בטלה דמוכח שמניח כל עסקיו ומשא ומתנו שרי היג"ה: וכל חידושי סופרים דהיינו מה שנתקן מדרבנן מותר ליטול שכר ללמדו) (הגהות מיימוני פ"א ע"כ



The situation of learning with an executive for the purposes of soliciting a donation from him afterwards (usually by the head of the organization) seems a little different. It is one thing to be paid for the Torah one teaches. The teaching is the focus and the pay is the facilitator. But what of the other way round, where the teaching appears to be the *heichi timtza* for soliciting money? We asked this question of HaGaon Rav Moshe Shapiro Shlita and he replied as follows:

It is definitely permissible to engage in such learning, even with a completely secular person, as long as the learning is real Torah learning and there is some chance that the person will get some Torah benefit out of it. In other words, the learning should create a חיבור to the Torah, which can and should be explained to the person. When the student gives money, it should again be explained to him that this is a great *zechus* because it connects him to the Torah. There are two ways of connecting to the Torah. There is a connection of *Yissachar* and there is a connection of *Zevulun*. By donating money, the person is choosing the connection of *Zevulun* and this a great *zechus*.

In any case the desired *Yissachar/Zevulun* partnership will not flourish, unless the teacher finds common ground with the student so that a relationship exists beyond the level of “just” learning. People smell a phony a mile away. If a teacher’s sole reason for learning with someone is agenda-driven (whether the agenda is donations or compelling him to become more observant), a real relationship will not develop.

On the other hand, when a true and mutual relationship is formed and the rabbi’s investment in the ‘student’ is clear and genuine, the executive most often wants to reciprocate. As a businessman he understands that nothing is free and no organization can operate on thin air. When the learning is right, he feels that he is getting far more than he is giving (bargain vs. university!).

Many organizations feel that the staff member who is actually studying with the student should not be the one to ask for the money. Often the teacher simply does not have the right personality to ask for money; however some also feel that it is insensitive to use the relationship so directly as a vehicle for fundraising. Others feel that the teacher is in the best position since the student has directly benefited from the organization through this person and thus understands the benefit of the organization's mission. While there are sometimes a few moments of discomfort as the teacher postures for the “ask”, in general, business people are savvy enough to recognize that outreach people wear many hats, and that, while they usually experience the friendship and teaching side of the person, there is an administrative and fundraising side as well.

Even where the staff member/teacher is not going to be the one to ask for the donation, he ought to find opportunities to share some of the dreams of the

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organization with the student as the relationship progresses. This more or less updates the student with regard to direction of the organization, and he just needs to be filled in on some of the specific needs when he is ready to give.

For a western Jew looking for a chance to give, there are countless philanthropic opportunities available, from one's alma mater to the professional, recreational and cultural realms. To compete with secular causes, and to inspire Jewish philanthropy, executive learning begins the task of emphasizing the joys of Jewish education as a means of personal and communal enlightenment and enrichment, and Jewish causes as personally relevant and vibrant today.