

HaYidion: The RAVSAK Journal

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From the Editor

■ by Barbara Davis

LL societies have a moral or ethical code, and schools have long been given the responsibility to transmit it to the young. Since the word "moral" comes from the Latin *mos*, meaning the code or customs of a people, it is clear that Jewish education is moral ed-

t is clear that Jewish education is moral education, education for life, and more specifically, for a Jewish life.

Although at its inception, public education was likewise expected to instill ethical values, over the centuries, this imperative changed and, in America at least, concerns over the separation of church and state and fear of state-sponsored "secular humanism" have diluted public moral education into vaguely-defined "character education."

Compared with the public sector, our task as Jewish educators is far more challenging and goes well beyond teaching academic subjects.

So where does that leave Jewish educators with regard to ethics? How can we instill Jewish values in our students in an effective manner such that concepts such as tikkun olam, derekh eretz, gemilut chasadim, rodef shalom, etc. become integral parts of their nature, enduring aspects of their character? Can such concepts be taught in a vacuum, in a course, or must they be modeled on a daily basis by all in the school community?

And who can live up to that standard? The moral and ethical dilemmas that face a Jewish community day school administrator or board leader each day are daunting. In addition to student-centered issues like cheating, bullying and substance abuse, schools today have to take on newer challenges like "sexting," cutting, gender identity, eating disorders, suicide, etc. Schools also have to wrestle with questions of best placement for children with disabilities, appropriate financial assistance for middle-class families, hiring and retention of quality teachers, humane replacement of ineffective staff, dealing with families who are themselves beset by issues such as divorce, intermarriage, unemployment, bankruptcy, domestic violence, etc.

As a principal, I would often discuss with colleagues those questions that kept us up at night: do we call Child Protection Services about a family whose child has a bruise, when we know that this is really a good family? Do we give scholarship assistance to a family which goes each year on an expensive vacation to Disney World (always taking the children out of school a week early)? What do we do when a family threatens to pull their child out because they don't want him to have a teacher they heard was "too strict"? What do we do about a teacher who feels that the child with Tourette's Syndrome is "just acting out"? How do we handle the parent who "borrowed" money

from the PTO funds and "forgot" to pay it back? Or the family that insists on having their child tested over and over again, seeking a label that will provide him some unspecified "benefits"? Or the par-



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ents who refuse to have their child tested, for fear of having her "labeled"? Or the board member who asks that grades be changed?

Rabbi Simlai taught (Makkot 24a), "Six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses; then David came and reduced them to eleven in Psalm 15; Isaiah (33:15), to six; Micah (6:8), to three: 'To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God'; Isaiah again (56:1), to two: 'Maintain justice, and do what is right'; and Habakkuk (2:4), to one: 'The righteous person lives by his faithfulness'." It takes a certain amount of chutzpah to produce one issue on the theme of ethics in Jewish day schools. The articles contained in this issue deal with a very broad, complex and difficult subject, which nonetheless lies at the very core of Jewish education. We hope that you will be challenged and provoked by what you read here, and that you will use this issue as a springboard for serious and significant conversations about a vital topic.

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From the Desk of Arnee Winshall, RAVSAK Chair

HE focus of this issue led to me to re-read a 2006 column written for *Sh'ma* by Dr. Bruce Powell, one of RAVSAK's board members and head of school at New Community Jewish High School in West Hills, California (see page 22 in this issue). Bruce talks about the importance of "culture and context" vs. "pedagogy and curriculum." The work of the RAVSAK board operates in the realm of culture and context. As I hope is true for the boards of our schools, we work in three realms:

fiduciary, strategic, and generative. But there is another element that cuts across these realms—that is, how we operate as a role model; how we walk the walk and talk the talk.

I believe that Bruce captured the importance of this when he wrote, "The ethical examples of ... teachers, administrators, parents, and friends create a seamless context and culture for ethical thinking and behavior."

As we focus on strengthening and expanding RAVSAK's capacity as an organization, what does it mean for us to think and behave ethically? For me, it means to keep in mind that our reason for being is to serve our schools, to raise the profile of Jewish day school education and ultimately to ensure that the staff, students and families and friends of our schools reap the benefits.

We are cognizant that the questions we ask and the decisions we make reflect our view of what is important to the future of Jewish community day schools, and what we value as an organization. And since we are an organization that exists to serve you, our schools, it is important that our values reflect your values and stem from an understanding of what is in the best interest of the day school field.

As we engage in the next phase of RAVSAK's business planning and attempt to envision what RAVSAK's needs will be in the future, we must strive to understand the following: What umbrella structures and what competencies will serve day schools going forward? What role can RAVSAK play to impact the culture of philanthropy such that our day schools and support structures for serious Jewish education will grow

and thrive? How does RAVSAK collaborate with other Jewish educational organizations and philanthropic partners, along with academic expertise, to ensure that we are a conduit to make the aspirational possible? How do we maintain focus on the future while we attend to the present?

In our effort to respond to the initiatives and insights of the field, we are seeking answers to the following questions:



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How does RAVSAK create value for the Jewish educational community?

Are there areas that RAVSAK should not be focused on today, or areas that RAV-SAK should not pursue in the future?

Looking to the future, where should RAVSAK'S focus be pointed?

These are the questions that often keep me up at night—not tossing and turning, but gazing at the stars and imagining the possibilities the future holds and thinking about the questions that will in fact impact the vision and make these possibilities a reality.



RAVSAK Jewish High School Network

Moot Beit Din

Florida 29 March - 1 April 2011

For more information, please contact Dr. Elliott Rabin at 212-665-1320 or erabin@ravsak.org.

Recruiting Schools for Moot Beit Din

Registration is open for this year's Moot Beit Din, a premiere program in Jewish Studies for North American high schools. Don't miss out on this unparalleled opportunity for your students! Through Moot Beit Din, your students will:

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- Write up their own ruling based on the sources they discover
- Present their decision orally before a panel of judges expert in Halakhah
- Socialize with like-minded peers from throughout North America who are passionate about Jewish study
- Bond with their peers through sightseeing, a chesed project, tefillah, study sessions and catered Shabbat meals

Moot Beit Din is a recipient of the prestigious Covenant Signature Grant. Thanks to the generous support of the Covenant Foundation, RAVSAK is able to offer this program at rates significantly below actual cost. Travel stipends and teacher honoraria are available again this year.





■ by PA

Tuition Assistance Headaches

■ by **Paul Shaviv**

HE Jewish school system has an inherently selfcontradictory aspiration: it wants to combine

every desirable feature of the most elite and well funded private schools with the "as of right" accessibility of the public school. We want to give every child a Jewish education—but many cannot afford the tuition fees that we must perforce charge.



 Vote to turn down their request for tuition assistance? (The system loses

Paul Shaviv is Director of Education at TanenbaumCHAT, the high school of the Greater Toronto Jewish Community, and is the author of The Jewish High School: A Complete Management Guide. He can be reached at pshaviv@tanenbaumchat.org.

The answer is, of course, that those who can afford to pay do so; those who cannot are generally given tuition assistance. (Uncomfortably, Jewish schools from the getgo are a central, costly part of the expensive hobby of being Jewish.)

Life, however, is not so simple! Every school is aware of the multiple practical and ethical dilemmas that the system generates. You may find the following sample case studies familiar—all names are imaginary, but the circumstances common.

1. Family spending priorities in the upwardly mobile middle class

David and Zara are both successful professionals. David is a rising partner in a successful law practice, and Zara is an accountant. Between them, they are earning well into six figures. Their three children have attended Jewish day schools. As their first child enters high school (and the others are not far behind), the parents are arguing with the tuition committee about the jump in the tuition fee. Fees are being paid out of current income. David and Zara have worked hard for their beautiful home, and are proud that they both drive fashionable SUVs. Their family expenditures, they feel, are not excessive and are appropriate to their social class. "We just can't afford these fees," they complain. "Our mortgage is high, and the monthly costs of our autos are also high. This year we have the bar mitzvah of our middle child, and we are taking the entire family to Israel to celebrate. Plus—we are not eligible for summer camp subsidy. We are prepared to continue to pay at the same level as we are paying for day school, or we are taking all three kids out of the system."

On the committee sits Naomi. She and her husband, probably earning similar incomes to those of David and Zara, are totally committed to Jewish education for their children. They recognize that they are earning high incomes, and have made a decision never to apply for assistance. Two of their children are already in Jewish high school. They cover the cost of tuition fees by a combination of careful budgeting, foregoing expensive holidays and the like; driving decent but not extravagant autos; and living in a decent, but not extravagant house. They expect that at some stage they will remortgage their home to cover tuition fees when all of their children reach High school, or to cover college expenses.

The reader's dilemma: The committee has to vote on David and Zara's application. You are Naomi. Do you:

three children, and much revenue).

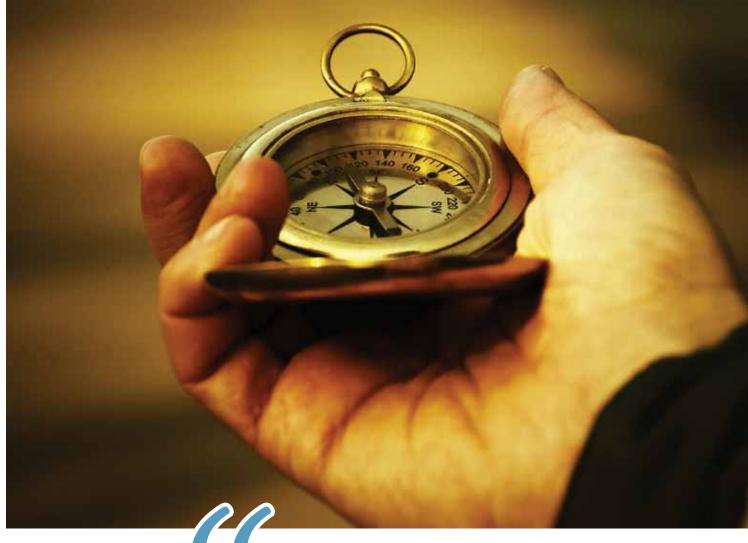
- Ask the committee chair to try and negotiate a midway position?
- Recognize reality, approve the request, and make a mental note to have a serious discussion with your husband when you get home? ("Are we suckers?")

2. Is this family on the level?

Your school has a rigorous system of allocating tuition assistance, requiring comprehensive disclosure of tax returns and other financial documents. The process is well administered, complaints are few, and confidentiality watertight. Family H are well known in the community; they are originally Iraqi Jews, and live in modest housing. Mrs. H is a secretary in a local Jewish organization, and Mr. H, apparently retired early "on medical advice," worked in the mailroom of another Jewish institution. Their only daughter is a conscientious and admired student. Based on their very modest salary income, they have enjoyed extensive tuition assistance throughout their daughter's schooling, paying minimal sums.

You are the chair of the tuition committee. Your executive director calls you, and brings to your attention that on the documents submitted this year, there is





a puzzling reference to "income from rental properties." When this is queried, and details requested, the father turns up at the school within hours, claims the tuition documents back, and says there has been a "mistake." Two days later, he submits another set of documents, in which no references to the additional income appear. He also claims that he "doesn't have" tax documents for the year in question. The school turns down his request for assistance, pending full and satisfactory disclosure. Calls from outraged community personalities and rabbis follow, alleging discrimination and a list of other unpleasant things. The school, bound by strict confidentiality, says nothing. The girl has one more year at your school.

The reader's dilemma: As chair of the tuition committee, your executive director is requesting instruction. Should you avoid a furor, and just let the situation go for a final year? Or, in fairness to other parents, dig your heels in?

Should you avoid a furor, and just let the situation go for a final year? Or, in fairness to other parents, dig your heels in?

3. Special treatment

The school has strict policies regarding unpaid tuition fees. Parents more than one year in arrears of the agreed tuition fee are required to withdraw their children from the school, and, painfully, this happens. But you—as head of school—suddenly discover that two long-term board members, both socially and professionally very much connected to the school's leading families (and, in one case, president of a local synagogue), are several years in arrears. One of the families has a new child due to enter the school in a few months' time. When you carefully raise this with the president, you get a dark look and s/ he says curtly, "Leave that alone."

The reader's dilemma: Do you stand by

and see other children forced to leave the school, while these families continue to enjoy special treatment? Interfering here will bring you into serious conflict with the president and (the very close-knit) board.

Alternate / similar scenario:

Your school is relatively young, and still controlled by the "founding families." You have a long way to go to regularize governance. From the beginning of the school, assessment of tuition assistance was undertaken by Morry, the first president's brother-in-law. He retains the job, and every time this is challenged, he protests loudly about the amount of time he spends on this each year. But rumors abound that he exercises a lot of personal preferences, treating some families very

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differently from others, and is also very much influenced by calls from community personalities pleading the cause of this or that family.

The reader's dilemma: Choose your role (head? executive director? president? treasurer? board member?) and decide how you deal with it!

4. "The school gave me a special deal!"

Two sets of parents ask you for a meeting. They come into your office very angrily, and explain that they are outraged because their common neighbor ("Mr. K"), who lives in the same street, has been bragging that he is receiving tuition assistance for his three children, while they are paying full fees. Has the school not noticed that the "K family drive large cars, take fabulous holidays, and last year married off their eldest child with a sumptuous wedding at the local country club, while we are honest and struggle to pay full tuition"?

5. "Why am I subsidizing the other parents?"

After dealing with "l'affaire K," the school now has to deal with another group of angry full-fee paying parents. The school has limited endowment funds available to fund the school's operating budget against the loss of in-

give them the same pro-rata assistance as their parents receive for tuition? How do you react when a parent who claims extensive tuition assistance suddenly pays large sums of money for the student to participate in a school ski trip? How can the school navigate the battles over tuition where the parents are separated, divorced, or-as is reasonably common-

How do you react when a parent who claims extensive tuition assistance pays large sums of money for the student to participate in a school ski trip?

come arising from reduced tuition fees. Low interest rates in recent years have aggravated the situation. In fact, quite a lot of the gap between income from families on reduced tuition and the per capita cost of running the school is simply borne by the operating budget as reduced income. Effectively, therefore, every full-fee paying parent is subsidizing others on reduced tuition. A group of parents are demanding that the board either a) limit tuition assistance dollars to the resources available, or b) only accept students on

simply do not agree whether their child should attend a Jewish school or not?

In the nature of the issue, there are no magic formulae. However, application of a few simple operational principles will go a long way to pre-empting argument and conflict:

- Most of all-in almost every case where you apply stringency, you are penalizing a child for their parents' actions or decisions.
- School documents should state clearly that tuition assistance is offered according to the school resources available, on condition that applying families make appropriate financial disclosures, and on the assumption that all families "will allocate tuition as an appropriate priority in the family budget."
- Tuition assistance should be handled by a totally confidential, "arm'slength" lay committee-perhaps composed of former, not present parents-with professional support in the school tuition office.
- The process, the application forms and-most of all-the criteria should be clear to all parties; some schools automatically send application forms to all parents, so that parents do not have to ask for them.

The committee should be prepared to consider reasonable special circumstances, and should process requests quickly and efficiently. An appeal process should be available.

A few simple operational principles go a long way to pre-empting argument and conflict. Most of all—in almost every case where you apply stringency, you are penalizing a child for their parents' actions or decisions.

Well, it turns out that Mr. K, who actually pays full tuition for his children, normally in a single check at the beginning of the year, is a very canny businessman. He is always pleading poverty ("Times are hard") to suppliers ("I can't pay a fraction of a cent more") and customers ("I just can't lower the price any more, believe me!") alike. On this basis, he is actually making an excellent living! Challenged publicly about how he could afford three children at private school, he apparently claimed that "I went to them and they gave me a special deal on tuition!"

The reader's dilemma: How do you pacify the complaining parents?! And do you say anything to Mr.K?

tuition assistance to fill classes after all full-paying students are offered places, or c) not allow students on tuition assistance under any circumstances to be a source of added expenditure to the school.

The reader's dilemma: You are chairing the board meeting where this is to be tabled. How do you introduce the discussion?

The administration of tuition assistance. however well set up, is frequently beset with moral, ethical and practical pitfalls. Similar considerations apply to students who ask assistance to go on school trips, where documentation is not usually rigorous (if requested at all). Do you simply

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Removing Underperforming Teachers:

Navigating Dilemmas and Challenges

■ by Barbara Gereboff

N the best of worlds, no teacher would ever need to be let go. He or she would have undergone a rigorous vetting when hired and received high quality mentoring to become more effective. But sometimes neither of these strategies succeeds, and an administrator encounters perhaps the most unpleasant task in his or her portfolio. Because we work so diligently to make our schools "caring communities," removing

someone from it creates a difficult rupture in the system. Yet if we fail to remove some people, we are subjecting students to poor teaching and we place our schools in serious jeopardy. This article explores the ethical dimensions of this issue and some steps we should consider in minimizing the damage to our school and to the integrity of the teacher whose contract has not been renewed.

Heads of school know that outstanding teachers in every class is a hallmark of excellent institutions, yet most of us have kept on, or inherited, staff who are not outstanding. Sometimes, we find ourselves defending a subpar teacher even as we know that they are not performing to the level that would be a standard in the industry.

We may have several very good motivations for retaining these teachers. Sometimes they are highly entrenched in the school community; they are the ones who always make a cute card for other people's birthdays or are frequent guests at a family's personal events. We see sparks of goodness amidst the qualities that are not so wonderful. Perhaps we think that under a previous administration they did not perform well because of poor morale. We hope that under our direction that will change.

Sometimes our defense of these teachers revolves around a desire not to be perceived as being influenced by parental pressure. Other times, we fear the inevitable legal wrangling that happens all too often in this business. Justifiably we fear a decline in morale when a colleague is asked to leave. Even when many staff members complain about a poorly performing peer, they will often rally around this person when the person's job is in jeopardy.

The ethical dilemma derives from our very real belief in the dignity of all and

our desire to refrain from putting this teacher and his or her family at risk by losing a job. The other side of the issue is the dignity of each child and the health of our school. Ultimately, the latter concerns should guide our actions, since our primary responsibilities rest with the school and the students. We can and should make attempts to mitigate the teacher's loss, but each child



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in our charge stands to be greatly damaged by retaining an underperforming teacher. We jeopardize enrollment and fundraising efforts as well if we fail to appropriately staff our schools.

So how do we decide which teachers need to be coached to a better place and which need to be asked to leave? Todd Whitaker (Dealing with Difficult Teachers) classifies teachers as superstars, backbones and mediocres. He notes that superstars are somewhat rare, backbones make up the majority and need continuous coaching and mediocres are the ones that need to be removed. I would argue that in a Jewish day school, we cannot afford to give our children less than superstar teachers. They are indeed the essence of an excellent educational institution. We need to coach our "backbones" to superstardom and if they cannot get close to that, then we

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 12]

Four New Middle Schools Join JCAT

ello, Rabbi Nachman, my name is Emma
Lazarus. I want to tell you about an event that happened during my life that shaped my beliefs."

Thus began the conversation at the "opening banquet" of the teacher training for JCAT, Jewish Court of All Time, held at the School of Education of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor this past June. Funded by a grant from the Covenant Foundation, JCAT represents a collaboration between RAV-SAK, the Interactive Communications

SAK, the Interactive Communications and Simulations (ICS) group at the University of Michigan, and the University of Cincinnati's Center for the Study of Jewish Education and Culture. The program will engage over 200 students and their teachers interacting with dozens of graduate student mentors, all acting in character on an online platform as figures from Jewish history.

JCAT welcomes four new RAVSAK middle schools into the program:

- Addlestone Hebrew Academy (Charleston, SC)
- Austin Jewish Academy (TX)
- Donna Klein Jewish Academy (Boca Raton, FL)
- Hillel Academy of Tampa (FL)

Students from these schools join their peers from eight schools that participated last year:

- Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School (Northridge, CA)
- Bnai Shalom Day School (Greensboro, NC)
- David Posnack Hebrew Day School (Plantation, FL)

- El Paso Jewish Academy (El Paso, TX)
 - Jewish Day School of Metropolitan Seattle (Bellevue, WA)
 - N E Miles Jewish Day School (Birmingham, AL)
 - Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School (Toronto, ON)
 - Rockwern Academy (Cincinnati, OH)

The June training was run by professors from Michigan and Cincinnati who lead the JCAT team during the online simulation. They showed the teachers how powerfully students in JCAT

can enter into the minds and voices of

historical characters; introduced them to the ins and outs of the program's website; and helped them strategize ways that JCAT will fit into the larger curriculum of the class in which it is embedded. Most of all, they shared the sense of excitement that participants feel when they wrestle with historical and philosophical challenges in character.

This year's program features a new scenario that will involve the students with issues of responsibility and retribution surrounding the Shoah. It concerns the *MS St. Louis*, the famous ship full of refugees from the Nazis that was denied safe harbor in the US and elsewhere. The scenario: descendants of 27 passengers who perished in the Shoah seek a formal apology and \$75 million from the US government. Participating students form the "Jewish Court of All Time" that must issue a decision. The JCAT website will include an archive of primary documents concerning this incident that students will study and respond to in the voice of their characters.

For more information about JCAT and inquiries about joining next year, contact Dr. Elliott Rabin at Elliott@ravsak.org.

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Superstars are not all cut from the same cloth. Each teacher may have strengths in particular areas and varying and even quirky characteristics. But in addition to pedagogic knowledge and ability, all teachers must embrace the concept of each person created betzelem Elokim. The dignity and deep regard of the students, their parents and all members of the community must be observable as a core value of every teacher. Additionally, each must score high on the following standards: a strong work ethic, enthusiasm for their own learning as well as that of each of their students, a well developed reflective practice, superb interpersonal skills, outstanding communication skills and a positive outlook. This list looks quite different from the one that we often use to evaluate staff, but these are the very qualities that schools that focus on character as much as on content knowledge need to embrace. If we really want to teach children the concept of betzelem Elokim, then this needs to be their lived experience with each of their teachers.

When measuring each staff member (this pertains to more than teachers) against these standards, one needs to take stock of staff members who may have become

> negative or disgruntled during the uncertainty of leadership

formative process to present our observations. But these meetings will inevitably change the dynamic of the relationship. While we want to maintain a warm welcoming relationship, we need

> to remember that these conversations need to describe obser-

the head of school may be able to maintain a mentoring relationship whereby the teacher is coached into a more suitable job somewhere else.

Mentoring a staff member into a more suitable setting presents an interesting

In a good situation, the head of school may be able to maintain a mentoring relationship whereby the teacher is coached into a more suitable job somewhere else.

vations that are not positive. We should include a written document with the information that we're sharing, and the presence of a document that we want signed will change the dynamic of the relationship.

Generally, the teacher in this situation will argue or try to justify his or her behavior. The teacher should write reactions on the document that you've provided and/or email you a response. In the event that the teacher refuses to sign the document, the written responses to yours will serve as an adequate record that he or she was presented with performance information from you. There should be subsequent meetings to chart progress or lack thereof.

If there has been little or no progress, than the conversation needs to shift to counseling out. The most positive outcome is the teacher deciding on his or

opportunity. In this case, the head of school has determined that the person is not suitable for the school, but may be able to brainstorm with the teacher some career options that might be more suitable. It could be the case that the teacher is gifted in one-on-one tutoring but is not effective in a classroom. Or the teacher may have valuable talent or skills (in technology, web design, the arts, writing, for example) that could be parlayed into a career. If these efforts are successful, this could be a win-win for the school and for the teacher.

The worst outcome is the staff person who thinks he or she has been wronged and attempts legal action, perhaps engaging in some sort of negative campaign. At this point (or earlier if the head anticipates this), the head needs to contact the school's insurance carrier and a labor attorney. The board of trustees should also be alerted. In this scenario, the fair and well documented process will protect you and the school, and the goodwill that the head has cultivated among the school leaders (parents, teachers and board members) will assist you in combating any derogatory messages.

Removing staff members is probably the most disliked task of any school head, and the task for which most of us receive the least training. But it is a necessary part of the job, and it is one of the key factors in the success of great schools. Understanding the task within the context of an ethical dilemma of the countervailing needs of employees and children helps us navigate these waters.

We can and should make attempts to mitigate the teacher's loss, but each child in our charge stands to be greatly damaged by retaining an underperforming teacher.

change in an institution. We do need to give them the chance to turn themselves around (teshuvah), but if there is no movement on the core values listed above, we need to begin the process of moving them out of our school.

Every step along the way in this process presents further dilemmas. We must meet with the teacher early to begin a her own that he or she will leave at the end of the year. To maintain the person's dignity, the head of school may give the teacher time to interview elsewhere. The next outcome, which is where the rest of our dismissals should fall, is that the staff person does not agree with your assessment but knows that the process of remediation and documentation was fair and universally applied. In this situation,



Interview with Matt Heilicher, Member of RAVSAK's Board of Directors

1) Tell us something about yourself.

Growing up in a typical Midwest Jewish family, I attended a Conservative synagogue on high holy days and went to Hebrew school to study for my bar mitzvah. My father was active in raising money for the Minneapolis Federation and occasionally went on missions to Israel. Somehow I managed to get through all this with a strong Jewish identity but very little knowledge and involvement until I made my first pledge to the Federation campaign at 26.

As I became active in raising money for Jewish causes, I began to wonder why supporting the continuation of the Jewish people is so important. It was then that I was nominated to join a twoyear study program modeled after the Wexner program staffed by CLAL scholars. This was my first real exposure to Torah study, and I found it fascinating to learn how the values and stories of the Torah could inform my life today. I have been active in Jewish communal causes ever since, with a focus on building community, Israel advocacy and Jewish education.

2) Why do you believe that Jewish day school education is important?

When we were exploring schools for our first son, the answer for me was obvious: public school. However, concerned about his Jewish identity, my Israeli wife thought that a Jewish day school would be a better environment. Little did I know that 14 years later I would become the board president of the very same school! What I learned along the way was the power of day school to provide an excellent secular education and to immerse my children (all four attended, with the last finishing this year) in Jewish values and culture that are part of the fabric of their being.

We see the benefits in their interac-

tions on a regular basis. Jewish education based in critical thinking is a must for their future success. This skill helps them analyze data, debate important issues, deal with interpersonal relation-



has a chance at a good and fulfilling life.

What strengths do you bring to the RAVSAK board?

I have spent the last 24 years volunteering in various Jewish organizations, from Federation to our community afternoon Hebrew school. As an executive board member and leader in a strategic planning process for the supplemental school, I learned one very important lesson: you can create the best curriculum ever, but if you do not have a teacher who can deliver it, it will be useless. Conversely, if you have no curriculum but a great teacher, good things will happen.

After this, I worked with Federation to revamp a teacher resource center that had fallen into disrepair into one that

What I learned along the way was the power of day school to provide an excellent secular education and to immerse my children in Jewish values and culture that are part of the fabric of their being.

ships and view the world in a sophisticated way so future decisions will be well thought out with better results. As they move on to high school, college and beyond, the chances that they will see the world through a Jewish lens, retain some Jewish practice and marry a Jewish spouse to pass on this tradition increases dramatically.

But why is this important? Jews were meant to be a light unto the nations, and providing these skills will hopefully empower our children to help create a world in which we all would be proud to live in. Where we care for the needy, build strong institutions, debate challenging issues with respect and tolerance, and are a partner with the Creator in making the world a place where everyone, not just the rich and powerful,

provides professional development opportunities for all Jewish educational institutions in the community. This organization still exists and perpetually reinvents itself to keep up with the changing landscape. I continue to take on leadership positions that will strengthen Jewish community and make the world a better place for everyone.

Do you have a favorite Jewish teaching?

My favorite teaching is from Pirkei Avot: "Rabbi Tarfon used to say, 'You are not required to finish the task, yet you are not free to withdraw from it." Many of the things we do for the Jewish people will not show results in our lifetime. With our current society's need for instant gratification, it is critical to remember this lesson.

Grade Inflation:

Should Day Schools Answer to a Higher Authority?

■ by **ALLEN SAKS**

AY schools today face tremendous financial uncertainty, especially in today's struggling economic climate. Since the majority of a day school's budget comes from tuition dollars, heads of schools

feel pressure to attract new students in addition to maintaining the ones already enrolled. For school administra-

tors, one tempting method for preserving and boosting enrollment is to make sure the school gives the parents what they want.

along with grade inflation comes the issue of academic integrity. Most schools have very strict guidelines surrounding the issues of cheating and plagiarism. Wouldn't grade inflation be considered academic dishonesty?



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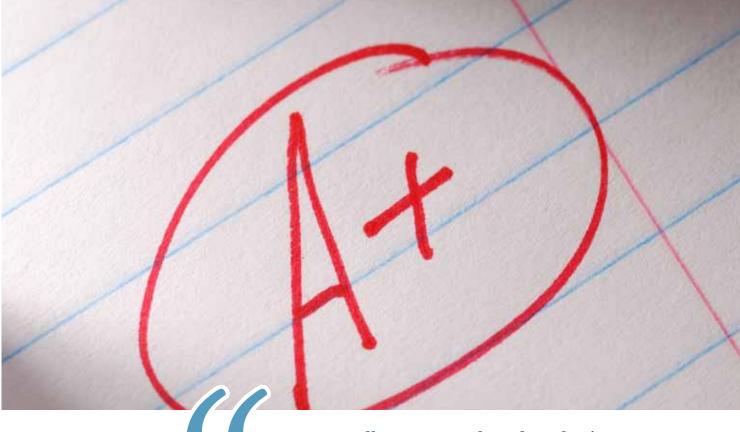
If one asks parents what they really want from a school, they will say that there are really only two needs: the child's happiness and sense of success. A trend today among many schools seeking to accomplish these two goals is to inflate grades, especially in Judaic subjects. Parents will often comment to a principal that they don't want a Chumash or Talmud grade keeping their child from a Harvard education. Consequently, many school heads are encouraging teachers to be lenient when grading students. In some cases, schools will actually change the grades that a teacher has given to ensure that parents stay happy and their children remain in the school. According to one principal, "When test scores are all that matter, some educators feel pressured to get the scores they need by hook or by crook. The higher the stakes, the greater the incentive to manipulate, to cheat."

Many principals will justify this action by saying, "It is only a Navi or Chumash or Hebrew and it is not as important as math or science." There are many Jewish studies teachers who feel that it is essential for the student to feel good about being Jewish than being honest in giving an accurate grade. Other Jewish studies teachers believe that in order for the students to benefit from Jewish studies, the teacher needs to be loved. One method of accomplishing this is to inflate grades.

One can pose two kinds of questions about the practice of grade inflation. First, are we really helping the student or the school by giving grades to students who don't deserve them? Or does grade inflation wind up hurting the reputation of a school that uses this practice, and by extension the reputation of its students? Second, is this truly ethical? Day schools profess to emphasize to parents that middot, character training, is a crucial part of their day school education. By inflating grades, are schools really adhering to their mission statements?

There are several colleges and universities that do not accept Jewish studies grades from day schools because of existent reputations of grade inflation. In addition, Leviticus 19:14 states, "You shall not put a stumbling block before the blind [lifnei iver], but you shall fear your G-d, I am the L-rd." Our Sages interpreted this verse in a very broad fashion. The Sifra (an early midrash collection) says, "'You shall not put a stumbling block before the blind'-before someone who is blind in that particular matter. Don't say to your neighbor 'sell your field and buy a donkey,' when your whole purpose is to deceive him and buy his field. And if you claim, 'But I gave him good advice!' [remember,] this is something which is hidden in the heart, [and therefore] the end of the verse says: 'but you shall fear your G-d, I am the L-rd."

Many halakhic principles are derived from this principle of lifnei iver, the oral Torah expanding its ramifications beyond a purely literal interpretation. In classical rabbinical literature, lifnei iver is seen as a figuratively expressed prohibition against misleading people; the Sifra above argues that since the recipient of advice would be metaphorically blind in regard to its accuracy, they would metaphorically stumble if the advice was damaging or otherwise bad.



To apply this principle to our situation, grade inflation would be a type of *lifnei iver*, putting up a stumbling block. To mislead a student into believing that he has actually performed work on that inflated grade level would make the student believe that wherever he or she moves on after that school, all that needs to be done to achieve that grade is to put forth that same effort. When another institution grades on a more honest level, the student will now feel that he has been cheated. Naturally, no school or individual purposely intends to mislead students, but grade inflation does just that.

There are solutions to help prevent the escalation of grade inflation in our day school system. The first would be to offer a different grading system for Jewish studies. For example, all Jewish studies courses could be graded on a pass-fail system. This would permit a teacher to have much more flexibility in grading a student and would ultimately allow what each school really wants; that is, for students to come out from their Jewish studies programs more knowledgeable in Jewish text as well as individuals who will apply what they have learned from their Jewish studies classes to their everyday lives.

A second possible solution would have

Parents will comment that they don't want a Chumash or Talmud grade keeping their child from Harvard. Consequently, school heads encourage teachers to be lenient in grading.

teachers, if not in the entire school, then at least in the Jewish studies department, grade students with anecdotals in place of traditional grades. Obviously, this would be more successful in lower and middle school than in high school, where it would require some modification. This system would force a teacher to truly put the time and effort into getting to know the whole of a student, not just how well one can perform on tests. As a parent, I am always thrilled when I read the comments teachers write about my children as opposed to just the grades they have been given. It is the comments that tell a parent how much a teacher really knows their child. There are more colleges now that, before accepting a student, want to understand how that student truly performs and what makes him or her tick. Anecdotals can give us the opportunity to transmit this information, much more so than grades.

Thirdly, if we continue to use the traditional grading system, then schools should encourage teachers to be more creative in

testing their students. Teachers should not limit their testing to just multiple choice or true and false but can have students be more reflective in their answers by using essays, art projects, reports, etc. This would allow schools to be more consistent across the board with how grades are assigned. Schools must treat both general studies and Jewish studies equally. If students are expected to maintain academic integrity, then schools must, as well. The bottom line is that if parents know that all subjects in school are treated equally, with no exceptions, then they will respect the school more than if it inflates grades primarily in the Jewish studies department.

Lastly, for any of these suggestions to succeed, there must be a respectable working partnership with parents, teachers, principals, and boards. Only if there is a solid relationship between these different constituents can schools eliminate the practice of grade inflation and then truly declare that we are practicing a Jewish ethical life in our day school system.

Ch/eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

■ by Jan Katzew

are wrong? This question has plagued every ben Adam and bat Sarah, i.e., every human being, since our creation. "G-d now said, Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness; and let them hold sway over the

fish of the sea and the birds of the sky, over the beasts, over

all the earth, over all that creeps upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26). Everything else except for a human being could be created by divine fiat, e.g., "Let there be light, and there was light" (1:4).

knowing full well that lying and cheating are wrong. Therefore, instead of thinking that we can find a method of eliminating cheating in schools and in life, we would do well to consider alternatives to the status quo that would accept cheating as a reality, and try to limit it by reducing the incentive to cheat. Furthermore, we should reconsider the options for teshu-



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The first "us" in the Torah is the "us" required to make the first person. The "us" is a fertile subject for the rabbinic mind. According to one midrashic source (Bereishit Rabbah 8:5):

When the Holy One of Blessing came to create Adam, the ministering angels formed themselves into groups and parties, some of them saying, "Let him be created," while others urged, "Let him not be created." Therefore it is written, "Love and truth fought together, righteousness and peace combated each other" (Psalms 85:11). Love said, "Let him be created because he will dispense acts of love"; Truth said, "Let him not be created because he is compounded of lies"; Righteousness said, "Let him be created because he will perform righteous deeds"; Peace said, "Let him not be created because he is full of strife." What did G-d do? G-d took truth and threw it to the ground. Said the ministering angels before the Holy One of Blessing, "Sovereign of the Universe! Why have you despised your own Seal [Truth]? Let truth arise from the earth!" Therefore it is written, "Let truth spring up from the earth" (Psalms 85:12).

Although much has changed since Bereishit and Bereishit Rabbah, respectively were composed, one of the constants seems to be human nature. We are indeed capable of dispensing acts of love and performing righteous deeds, yet we are also purveyors of lies and conduits of strife. If, as the Sages teach, G-d experienced a profound ambivalence in the creation of a human being, the malady lingers as we often find ourselves on the horns of the same dilemma as children and parents and as students and teachers. G-d threw truth to the ground in the hope that it would arise again. Sometimes it does not, and we leave truth alone and inert.

Is there now alive or has there ever lived an adult who has never lied or cheated? In theory, it is a possibility. In reality, it is descriptive of an exceptionally rare individual. Such a person would be at least like Noah, righteous in his or her generation, an extraordinary human, humane being. The overwhelming majority of us lie and cheat

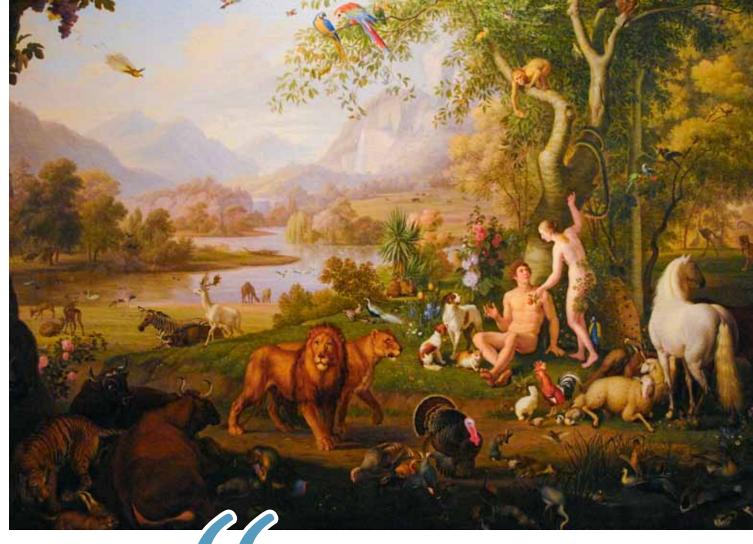
vah once a student or a teacher has been caught cheating.

Parents can also play a significant role in this drama. I vividly recall receiving a phone call from a powerful member of the learning community who informed me that his son could not get a "B" in math. I assured him that it was not only possible, but that indeed his son had earned and received a "B" in math. It does not take much of an imagination to project a conversation in their home.

Not that research is required, but research that is cross-cultural and intergenerational has documented the prevalence of cheating, yes even in Jewish day schools. Recently, as teachers' tenure and compensation have been tied to student performance, scandals have erupted as teachers and their supervisors have been found cheating. We should not be surprised that there are those who believe that the prize is worth the price, or at least the risk of being caught.

Lying or cheating can be the result of





ratiocination, the deliberate calculation that the reward is worth the risk and that immediate gain trumps any ultimate long-term pain. Lying can be perceived as promoting one's self-interest, and therefore, a justified action. However, lying is a complex, compound phenomenon that also includes non-rational elements. Knowing that something is right is not enough to cause us to act in consonance with what we know, just as knowing something is wrong is not sufficient to deter us from doing what we know is wrong.

In addition to being rational occasionally, people are also emotional. Our feelings can overpower our thoughts. Consequently, one of the rabbinic insights into human nature is contained in the following aphorism: "In three ways a person's true character can be perceived: 1. liquor, 2. lucre, 3. anger; some add 4. laughter" (BT Eruvin 65b). When our proverbial masks are off we cannot hide what we look like underneath. Our raw emotions

eliminate cheating in schools and in life, we would do well to consider alternatives to the status quo that would accept cheating as a reality, and try to limit it by reducing the incentive to cheat.

come to the surface and aspects of ourselves that we may otherwise be able to keep in check are bared for everyone to see. A person that is deliriously happy when drunk reveals a jovial self. A person that is truly generous will have a checkbook that proves it. A person that is irascible will have witnesses. A person that laughs with others will be seen differently from another that laughs at them. How we are goes a long way in defining who we are. Emotions can and do get the better of us, sometimes to our benefit, other times to our detriment.

We all err. We all have vices. Will we mas-

ter our impulses or will our impulses master us? This is the question behind the maxim from Pirkei Avot 4:1: "Who is a hero? One who conquers his [her] evil impulse?" The evil impulse, the Sages hasten to note, is not purely evil. It enables us to create and procreate. In these cases we use the evil impulse to achieve a worthy, if not holy goal. The end justifies the means. We need the desire to win and the will to power in order to grow and succeed.

Do we also need to lie and cheat? "Most Americans condemn cheating in sports, business, and marriage, yet our culture

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Ethics in Jewish Schools

■ by **Bruce Powell**

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or those of us who spend our professional and often personal lives living and learning among high school students, we understand that hormones are far more powerful than Halakhah. Thus, teaching ethics to high school students is

far more about culture and context than about pedagogy or curriculum. Jewish tradition suggests that in order to learn to become a great scholar, one should "sit at the feet of those scholars" and soak up their every thought and every action. So too with high school students: they must attend a school where the ethical examples of their teachers, administrators, parents, and

friends create a seamless context and culture for ethical thinking and behavior. Lawrence Kohlberg refers to this as the "just community"; Abraham Joshua Heschel explains that we need fewer textbooks and more "textpeople." Ethics and moral behavior are learned within the powerful forces of context and culture.

Of course, the obvious question is, "How does one create the context and culture within a formal educational setting?" Conceptually, the answer is simple; the hard part is execution.

Conceptually, school leadership engenders a core values shift, thereby changing the values language, metaphor, and allusion used by all members of the school community. For example, in American culture, "knowledge is power" is a core value and key metaphor. Children are urged to learn because they will become powerful, successful in the monetary sense, or politically powerful. From a Jewish perspective, whereas knowledge is certainly a source of power, it is, more importantly, a source of wisdom. But how does knowledge promote wisdom? How do we define wisdom, and what are the actions of wise people?

Other language shifts may include notions of "rights" becoming ideas about "obligations"—"animal rights" becoming human obligations to animals; "charity" in the sense of doing that which is loving, becoming tzedakah, doing that which is just. In addition, popular ideas of beauty as an external, material notion, as displayed on the cover of almost every consumer magazine, transforms to "beauty as the inner spirit" of every human being. Language shifts help students change their perceptions of what is truly important and the context in which they think about ethics. All of these language transformations are part of what I call the "Jewish Values Matrix," which encompasses a long list of widely accepted core values that undergo radical shifts in meaning and action when carefully dis-

aggregated within the prism of Jewish thinking and ideals.

Perhaps the most powerful shift in language and thinking is found in a phrase of Rabbi Harold Schulweis, "the best is the enemy of the good." In creating a high school context and culture that transforms and educates, that leads



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to ethical thinking and action, I have found no better axiom. America idolizes the "best." But the notion of "best," by definition, is an ethical anathema. If I am the "best," then you are not. If I am the best Jew, then you are not; if I am the best ethicist, then you are not. Moreover, what does it take to become the best? Athletes are pressured to use steroids; students are pressured to cheat or participate in ethical lapses when finding information on the Internet. Indeed, striving to be the "best" may counteract our value for learning lishma. And what about humility?

To execute this values shift is the core challenge.

First, it takes constant education of faculty. The teachers, office staff, janitors, and administrators must learn and speak the new values language. In 1965, had you visited a NASA base and asked the janitor what his job was, his answer would be, "To put a man on the moon." (Hopefully, today, that same janitor would say, "To put a woman or man on Mars.") So too with executing a rich Jewish ethical context and culture: everyone must be, literally, on the same page. Everyone's job is values and ethics education.

Second, parents need education in how to speak ethical language, in how to recognize what is important. For example, when a child comes home from school, parents, including myself, will ask, "How was your math test? Or how was the athletic tryout?" Rarely do we ask, "Did you do a mitzvah today?" "Did you invite a lonely classmate to join you for lunch?" What parents ask is what we value. Changing the questions changes the vision for our children; changing the vision engenders ethical actions.

Third, the school's trustees need education on how their language, decisions, and financial support impact the overall institution. What they spend and how they spend it is, perhaps, the most powerful

creator of culture and context. I often teach school boards that

The notion of "best," by definition, is an ethical anathema. If I am the "best," then you are not. If I am the best Jew, then you are not; if I am the best ethicist, then you are not.

the school's budget is really a statement of what we, at our very core, believe and value. If there are large allocations for technology, then we value technology. If, however, there is serious discussion about teacher benefits, and large allocations for pension plans and medical care, then we value our faculty and their most basic human needs. In essence, we value our ethical obligations, our Jewish obligations, if you will, to our professional community in whom we place the ethical education of our children.

Faculty who know this kind of support act in accordance with the board's vision for the school, a vision that, without exception in our nation, includes in its mission a mandate to raise up a generation of successful people and ethical human beings.



When Justice and Peace Collide

■ by **Jorje H. Zalles**

ULLYING of students by schoolmates, a deeply troubling phenomenon, has arisen and, as some available evidence appears to suggest, may be growing in many schools and countries around

the world. In addition to abuse of schoolchildren by their peers, schools are also visited, some less, and others, sadly, more frequently, by abusive exercise of authority on the part of teachers and administrators, different from bullying only in the fact that the bully is an adult.

spective object of displacement like the perpetrator of a bullying incident appears on the scene, the opportunity for guiltfree displacement can be quite welcome.



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This article explores two different approaches to these serious problems, which are manifestations of the more general and also highly pervasive social phenomenon, present worldwide, of abuse of power asymmetries by the more powerful party. It first describes the essential nature of each of the two approaches, then addresses the relation between them, exploring whether or not they are mutually exclusive and, finally, considers the provocative possibility of reconciling them.

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The "justice" approach involves confronting the perpetrator, submitting him or her to some form of judgment proceedings, and eventually imposing punishment, something many describe as "meting out justice."

Two fundamental objectives underlie this essentially punitive approach to attempting to deal with student-to-student, teacher-to-student or other types (teacher-to-teacher, principal-to-teacher) of abuse. The first objective is deterrence of similar future behavior on the part of the perpetrator or of other would-be perpetrators, and the second is the provision of some form of satisfaction (righting the balance or providing a sense of, again, justice) for the victim.

The justice approach to bullying and similar abusive behavior appeals strongly to many of us for several reasons. It allows us to express, and even to revel, in the emotion of indignation with neither inhibition nor remorse. Feeling indignant, a combination of anger and a sense of moral outrage, is normally not a mild emotional state. On the contrary, it is generally intense and can last for a considerable period of time. The mere rush of intense emotions, whatever their nature, can be appealing in itself.

This approach can be appealing also because it can provide an outlet for aggressive and even vengeful feelings towards others, different from the perpetrator, that have originated in some other context but that we can feel relieved to be able to displace towards the perpetrator. Displaced aggression is most often unfair, but when a pro-

A third reason why this approach can prove appealing is related to the very legitimate idea that we—bullies as well as all others—must take responsibility for our actions, our omissions and their consequences, including most especially those that are harmful.

The main attraction of the justice approach for many is the belief that retribution is necessary both as a means of deterrence and because it is appropriate that the balance between perpetrator and victim be "righted" in some manner.

The latter belief is a major element of moral thought from its very beginnings. All systems of human ethical and religious thought have assigned major importance both to rules and commandments for appropriate interpersonal and social behavior and to the consequences of not observing those rules and commandments. Those consequences have variously included loss of divine favor, visitation of trials and tribulations, and condemnation to a wide and horrendous variety of conditions and sufferings, some limited in time and scope, others far-reaching and eternal.

By contrast, the "peace" approach involves assigning highest priority to the





relation between the perpetrator and the victim and attempting to change that relation from a condition of destructive confrontation to one in which there is, at minimum, peace between the parties and, at best, what the great social psychologist Herbert C. Kelman describes as "mutual enhancement."

The peace approach appeals to many of us, first, for reasons intrinsic to the approach itself. Foremost amongst these is the belief that the establishment of such "mutually enhancing relationships" is the prime, most essential of all social and ethical objectives. Closely related to that belief is another, verbalized with eloquence by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in a lecture on the peace and reconciliation process in South Africa: "We are made for goodness.

Many of us question how effective confrontation and punishment are as a deterrent of abusive or other forms of unacceptable behavior.

are made for love. We are made for togetherness. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders."

The peace approach also appeals to many of us for reasons that lead us to question the justice approach. Clearly implicit in assigning primary importance to mutually enhancing relationships is the moral judgment that establishing those relationships, not punishing those who are "bad," should be the paramount objective of ethical systems and of their expression in

social policy, including, specifically, school policies.

Additionally, many of us question how effective confrontation and punishment are as a deterrent of abusive or other forms of unacceptable behavior. A wide variety of studies of human violence tends to suggest very strongly that until and unless the underlying sources of the anger and resentment that are manifested through bullying and other forms of abuse are suc-

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The two approaches—justice based on retribution and intended deterrence and peace based on attempts to change the nature of the relationship between the bully and his victim—are clearly mutually exclusive in at least two regards.

First, they reflect two different approaches to moral responsibility. Under the traditional conceptions underlying the justice approach, the essential problems in ethics are the definition of right and wrong, the attribution of right or wrong behavior to persons or groups, and the meting out of the corresponding rewards or punishments. Moral responsibility therefore emphasizes compliance with laws, rules, and commandments. Under the peace approach, the essential problem in ethics is the establishment of mutually satisfactory and enhancing relationships among human beings, and moral responsibility therefore emphasizes acknowledgment and recognition of the "other" and of his/her/their needs, aspirations, pains and fears, and the quest for peaceful resolution of controversies.

Second, the two approaches involve completely different procedures and attitudes. The justice approach

whereas the bully or abuser was previously engaged in "I win-you lose" behavior, the intent of the justice approach is to generate precisely the opposite outcome, with the bully or abuser becoming the "loser."

> The peace approach, on the other hand, requires that, despite the

fail to deter them?" My proposed answer is "No, not at any cost." There must be limits. Bullying and other forms of abuse are not acceptable, simply because they do not meet the critical criterion for judging a relationship to be a good one, namely, the fact that it is "mutually enhancing."

Despite the apparently stark contrast between the two approaches, justice and peace, each one has its strengths and weaknesses that render it only partially effective.

anger or sense of hurt that might have been caused by the acts of abuse that have occurred, the parties work jointly attempting to understand and negotiate their differences, set aside the issue of blame, and seek some form of mutually satisfactory resolution in which neither loses.

It would therefore seem that, faced with cases of bullying and/or other forms of abuse within a school community, its policymakers are faced with a clear choice between the two approaches: either justice or peace.

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Despite the apparently stark contrast between the two approaches, each one has its strengths and weaknesses that render it only partially effective. I propose the possibility of reconciling the two approaches in search of both justice and peace.

The first step involves the resolution of the pacifist's dilemma, that is best verbalized with the question "peace at any cost?" or "peace even at the cost of allowing bullies to keep bullying if we fail to deter them?"

requires that the act of bullying or other abuse, once brought to light by the victim's accusation or by other means, lead to confrontation with authorities or other defenders of the victim and to some variation on the concept of a trial. The attitudes of all parties involved are clearly zero-sum: The first step in the underlying logic involves the resolution of the pacifist's dilemma, that is best verbalized with the question "peace at any cost?" or, in the specific context of this article, "peace even at the cost of allowing bullies and other abusers to keep bullying and abusing if we

The second step involves attempting to better understand the psychology of retribution, revenge and the acquisition of some sense of justice on the part of victims. Very valuable thought has gone into this in recent years, and it has become increasingly clear that mere retribution against a perpetrator, the classic expression of which is "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," is not the only means by which a victim can eventually overcome the residual anger and other psychological and emotional states that are the essence of what is described as "unforgiveness."

These steps help us to move away from the extremes-either retribution, no matter how harsh, for the sake of justice, or nonretribution, no matter how heinous the hurt or offense, for the sake of peace. Only then it becomes possible to visualize a set of beliefs, attitudes and procedures that can accomplish a reasonable reconciliation between justice and peace:

—the belief that the perpetrator is a troubled human being whose circumstances and behavior very probably reflect insufficient emotional and psychological growth.

—an attitude that assigns high priority to acting on behalf of both and, therefore, of establishing a constructive relationship between them.

—working with the perpetrator to: (a) help him or her understand that he or she has caused pain, suffering and offense that are not acceptable, even though the reasons why he or she caused them could be understandable; and (b) help him or her process the possibly understandable reasons for that unacceptable destructive behavior. The concept of "understandable even if unacceptable" behavior requires a brief explanation: bullies and other abusers most often act as such because they in turn have been bullied or abused. An essential part of helping them to stop behaving in that destructive manner is helping them to move beyond the hurtful and vengeful feelings within them that are the roots of their own destructive behavior.

—based on the previous work with the perpetrator, attempting to convince him or her to acknowledge the pain and offense that has been caused and to ask the victim for forgiveness.

—helping the victim to explore the possibility of moving out of unforgiveness and into a sense of "righted balance" on the basis of the perpetrator's request for forgiveness rather than on the basis of more traditional retribution and punishment of the perpetrator. This does not necessarily mean that the victim *must* forgive. I do not agree with placing the essential onus for finding both justice and peace on only

the victims, or with the unfair thought that they "must" forgive. But helping victims to move towards other roads out of unfor-

giveness does mean something closer to forgiveness than to an

of justice—not the punishment that the pure-case justice approach might advocate, but certainly something akin to it inasmuch as the fact of moral unacceptability of his or her behavior has been clear

Most critically, the perpetrator will succeed in preventing a repetition of the abusive behavior, and will be willing and able to enter into mutually enhancing relationships with others, including the victim.

infinitely destructive will for revenge.

If successful, the approach I have just outlined would lead to several desired, even necessary results. The victim would have been helped out of unforgiveness and would therefore be open to the possibility—utterly unlikely while unforgiveness is still present—of entering into a mutually enhancing relationship with the perpetrator, rather than seeking to take revenge or demand punishment, thus fueling an endless cycle of mutual violence. The perpetrator would face an undoubted form

throughout the process, and he or she has therefore had to admit, in what is usually a humiliating and painful experience, to ethically unacceptable behavior.

Most critically, the perpetrator will have been helped out of the psychological and emotional problems that caused the abusive behavior in the first place. He or she will succeed in preventing a repetition of the abusive behavior, and will be willing and able to enter into mutually enhancing relationships with others, including the victim.

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Negotiating Boundaries in a Jewish Community Day School

■ by **Dean Goldfein**

NDEPENDENT school conferences and publications wisely stress the importance of drawing clear boundaries. But the interaction of stakeholders in a day school

is rarely cut and dried. In real life, these lines frequently appear blurry, and heads of school are required to negotiate boundaries as they shift and are contested.

an opportunity to strengthen our community vision. I was approached by some parents concerned about the quality and nutritional value of our catered lunch



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Our schools gather people passionate about Judaism and education who frequently disagree with each other but find themselves united in friendships and the work of schools. Our leadership structures interweave personal and professional relationships in complex ways: board members are parents, parents are staff members, your

rabbi is a mom in your son's class, the teacher next door is your close friend. The tone and shape of these relationships provides an important measure of school health.

As head of school I am charged to sustain and tap these passions and encourage staff and lay leaders to do the same. I proactively engage informal conversation about ideas and teaching methodologies with parents, board members and students. I share curricular ideas of major stakeholders in our staff curriculum committee. I hear from prospective, current, and alumni families to both maintain core values and react well to changing community priorities.

An example of how heads manage all this can be found in how we respond to the continuous stream of new ideas from community members. A few times a year a key stakeholder will send me a link to an exciting new educational program. It is tempting to react defensively with a statement that, while I appreciate their interest, we have a curriculum in place and it isn't wise to ex-

pend time exploring the latest flavor of the month. I've found that responding with a live conversation in which I show an understanding of the topics considered allows me the chance to respond more effectively to the concern that lurks not too far beneath the surface of the new idea. Engaging new ideas with patience and respect strengthens staff's ability to shape the curriculum and instills community confidence.

The Judaic vision of our community schools must also negotiate perspectives carefully to manage tension between personal and professional. The diverse range of families in our pluralistic Jewish schools must connect meaningfully to the Judaism of our classrooms, tefillah and community events. Too many times families depart because we've never made this vital personal connection. Here too, the head must listen to and advocate for a variety of voices being part of the community DNA.

This past year the challenge of providing healthy kosher lunches offered my school

program. They wanted the parent community to run the lunch service. I was impressed by their resolve and, after sharing my concerns about potential pitfalls and outlining our kosher guidelines, signed off on the transition. The midyear expansion of the program certified its success but more important than the great food was the lesson reinforced. Boundaries are best negotiated when

Boundary management work can both depress and invigorate. The pressures of advocates pressing for their desires can cause sleepless nights. But when done well, I feel I am at the nerve center of a vibrant learning community of dedicated professionals, lay leaders and families.

> there is a consistent genuine feeling of participation in a process. There are practical reasons why we could have avoided the transition: past attempts at a parent lunch service had failed, and the impact on our small facility of three times per week lunch preparation is considerable. But in the end, the community building benefits far outweighed fears and minor downsides. A periodically contentious area, kosher guidelines, is now seen as an area that binds us, rather than divides.

> Teachers with children in the school face

the toughest boundary test. Such teachers affirm the value of our school, but as heads we need to be ready to accept a different kind of parent-school relationship. Establishing guidelines for staff around this challenge in summer staff meetings, and even having one-on-one meetings with teachers if there is a particular concern about a potential problem, helps to prevent some of the challenges that arise, but it won't eliminate them.

In past years teachers have come to me with concerns about the quality of another teacher, sometimes a teacher of their child and sometimes not. This access to me as head of school is open to all parents, including employees. But when I face a teacher for such a conversation I face an educator who sometimes can claim to have seen behind the curtain. They might share comments made in the staff room, observed work habits, or claim to speak for a general "word from the parking lot."

While this information is valuable to a head, acting on it directly is dangerous. Even a valid claim will be fraught with intricate relationship dynamics. Information that comes from teachers as parents must be explored in greater depth than another claim might. I have found that by investigating the issue more fully with other stakeholders, I become more informed and can attack the problem appropriately. Sometimes I find myself in agreement with the teacher who brought the issue and sometimes I am able to return to them for a difficult but healthy conversation on how, after spending time carefully considering their concerns, I have a different perspective.

This boundary management work can both depress and invigorate. The pressures of advocates pressing for their desires, sometimes against the policies of the school or a competing interest group, can cause sleepless nights. But when done well, I feel I am at the nerve center of a vibrant learning community of dedicated professionals, lay leaders and families. Understanding our unique role as heads in these negotiations helps limit the stress and instills confidence to act, one hopes, with wisdom and compassion.

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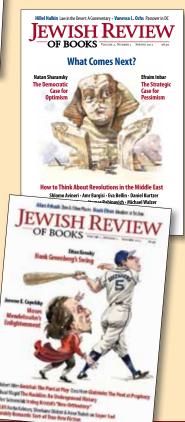


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The Derekh Eretz Committee

■ by Judd Kruger Levingston

VERYBODY put your heads down with your eyes closed. Raise your hand now if you have ever copied a homework assignment from a classmate."

"Now raise your hand if you have ever looked at another classmate's

"Now raise your hand if you've ever gone online and cut and past-

ed information into a paper without citing the source."

"Last question: raise your hand if you've ever felt entitled to cut in the lunch line in front of a younger student, and keep your hand raised if you actually did cut in line."

Not surprisingly, a high proportion of hands go up when these questions are asked in the relatively informal and intimate setting of an advisory group of ten students.

If we had asked the question differently, however, using such negative phrasings as "How many of you have ever plagiarized?" or "How many of you have ever cheated?" or "How many of you have ever bullied someone else?", then fewer hands are likely to have gone up because nobody wants to think of themselves as a cheater or a bully.

At Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy (formerly known as Akiba Hebrew Academy) in the Philadelphia area, the Derekh Eretz Committee was established in the 2008-2009 school year as a multigenerational group of students and teachers to discuss ways of raising the level of derekh eretz in the school. The committee came to understand derekh eretz as a combination of courtesy, academic honesty, and respect.

In its first year, this committee decided to focus on academic honesty by administering and analyzing a survey about dishonest practices on homework, on tests and in other areas of school life. The committee then created a video in which a number of students were interviewed about how they interpret plagiarism, cheating and academic honesty.

This video was aired at an all-school assembly, creating quite a stir among teachers and students. In particular, many faculty members were shocked when some students in the video looked straight into the camera and declared that copying homework is not a violation of a teacher's trust and that letting someone copy their work is an important affirmation of a friendship.

In subsequent discussions of the video in advisory groups, many students agreed that it might be better to do the work by themselves than to copy from someone else, but in a pinch, they felt that if the assignment seemed dull or repetitive, then it didn't seem particularly dishonest to copy.

On the one hand, we shouldn't be surprised to hear about cheating among our

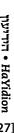
students in light of national statistics described in James Davison Hunter's book, The Death of Character and in more popular newspaper articles. The research suggests that students at our Jewish day schools are not immune from dishonest behavior or from the trends in society beyond our walls, so perhaps we shouldn't have been surprised by the seemingly nonchalant student attitudes.

Rabbi Judd Kruger Levingston, PhD, the Director of Jewish Studies at Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, teaches at the middle school and high school levels and is the author of Sowing the Seeds of Character. He can be reached at ilevingston@jbha.org.

On the other hand, shouldn't Jewish day school students be responding "to a higher authority," as the Hebrew National advertisement used to say? Those of us on our school's Derekh Eretz Committee became convinced of the importance of our mission to promote derekh eretz in as many forms as possible.

The student government leadership from the Class of 2010 became convinced that the student body needed more formalized education and training so that they could understand why copying homework represents an act of academic dishonesty. They passed along this mantle of concern along to the four incoming Class of 2011 leaders who asked the Derekh Eretz Committee to go beyond cheating to explore other areas of derekh eretz from sportsmanship to modesty, truth-telling, self-reflection, bullying and faculty-student relations.

As the committee head was nearing retirement, he encouraged the committee to bring these discussions to a new level and develop a code of derekh eretz for the school, not unlike an honor code that one might find at independent and public schools.





When I became the committee head, I worked with the new Class of 2011 leaders, bringing my own research on moral education and character education. We studied honor code texts from a variety of schoolssingle-sex, faith-based, non-sectarian independent and public and established a timeline for the completion of a code of derekh eretz with the aid of resources from the Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education (CSEE), a national organization that serves both non-sectarian and faith-based independent schools. The CSEE Handbook for Developing and Sustaining Honor Systems by David B. L. Gould and John J. Roberts was especially helpful.

These are the steps that the committee undertook to prepare for the launch of a new schoolwide derekh eretz code:

Shouldn't Jewish day school students be responding "to a higher authority," as the Hebrew National advertisement used to say?

Involvement of student government leaders. The committee worked with student leaders from the Classes of 2011 and 2012 to identify areas that should be covered by a code of derekh eretz, to agree upon the meaning of the concept of derekh eretz and to begin to draft the code.

A derekh eretz sourcebook. Teachers on the committee developed and distributed a sourcebook of traditional and contemporary texts for discussion in Jewish studies classes. The sourcebook included the well known phrase from Vayikra Rabba, "Derekh eretz kadma la-Torah," "Derekh eretz is a prerequisite for the study of Torah"; a responsum from Rabbi Moshe Feinstein

that relates leshon hara (evil speech), intellectual theft and deceit; and a passage from Abraham Joshua Heschel about the urgency of educating for integrity.

Case studies for advisory groups. The guidance counselor and students on the committee developed and distributed two case studies about peer pressure and derekh eretz for advisory group discussions.

Faculty discussion. The committee introduced the faculty to the derekh eretz sourcebook and case studies and to the general idea of a code of derekh eretz that applies to every individual in the school

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 28]

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27]

from the students to the adults. These discussions will continue while the final drafts of the code are being prepared.

Drafting committee. Three students and four adults developed a working draft of a derekh eretz code for the school. The student members of the drafting committee included the seventh grade president of the Middle School Council, a ninth grade class representative to the upper school student government and a tenth grader who also was a member of the gay-straight alliance. The Student Association president was informed of the discussions. Faculty members on the committee included myself, the school guidance counselor, a Jewish studies teacher with a background in philosophy and a Hebrew teacher who had been a committee member since its inception because of his abiding interest in the moral welfare of our students.

Iewish tradition informed our conversations in unexpected ways. One day over lunch our students all agreed that they did not want to see our honor code require that students report another student's violations to a teacher. Upon looking for support from Jewish tradition, they learned that reporting on another student is objectionable because it could become a form of leshon hara.

As this article goes to press, the code is in a draft state, ready to go to the student government leaders for further discussion in the fall. Here are some anticipated challenges:

Forming a student judiciary committee. Interestingly, our school's Student Association constitution provides for a judiciary committee to consider disciplinary issues at the request of a student who is charged with a significant disciplinary violation, but most students do not know about the committee, as it receives little publicity from the Student Association. Thus, it has been dormant for several years. As a result, each time a case of bullying or plagiarism has come before the school administration during my time at the school, adults have handled the case privately. This could be for the best because it preserves a student's desire for confidentiality; on the other

Jewish Sources on Derekh Eretz

Vayikra Rabba 9:3

דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה.

Derekh Eretz is a prerequisite for the study of Torah.

Ramban, Commentary to the Torah, Genesis 20:12

יב) **וגם אמנה אחותי ב**ת <mark>אב</mark>י - לא ידעתי טעם להתנצלות הזה, כי גם אם אמת הדבר שהיתה אחותו ואש<mark>תו,</mark> וברצותם באשה אמר להם אחותי היא<mark>, לה</mark>טעותם <mark>בדבר,</mark> כבר חטא בהם להביא עליהם חטאה גדולה, ואין חילוק והפרש כל<mark>ל ב</mark>ין שהדבר אמת או שקר.

"And besides, she is in truth my sister, my father's daughter though not my mother's; and she became my wife."

I don't understand what kind of excuse this is, because even if it was true that she was his sister and his wife, when they were interested in a woman he said to them "She is my sister" in order to deceive them. At that point he had already sinned by leading them to commit a great sin, and it didn't matter whether it was literally true.

Talmud Bavli, Hullin 94a

דאמר שמואל: א<mark>סור לגנ</mark>וב <mark>ד</mark>עת הבריות, ואפילו דעתו <mark>של</mark> עובד כוכבים.

Shmuel said: It is forbidden to deceive [literally, "steal the mind of"] people, even of idol worshippers.

Tosefta, Bava Ka<mark>ma</mark> 7:8

שבעה גנבין הן הראשון שבכו<mark>לם גונב דעת הבריות.</mark>

There are seven kinds of thieves; the most egregious is the one who steals people's minds.

Igros Moshe (the resp<mark>on</mark>sa of Mosh<mark>e</mark> Feinstein), Yoreh Deah, Volume 2, Siman 103

In the matter [regarding whether] it is permitted for a teacher to say to students that if they know [the one] who did the disreputable act [they should] inform him—this is a vile thing to do as it will cause them to be lax with [regard to] leshon hara (evil speech).

hand, a process that involves a student and faculty committee would create public precedents so that students would see the same predictable consequences meted out each time a case arises.

Creating the right conditions for academic honesty to flourish. With an honor code in place, teachers will need to continue to

be mindful about helping students understand what is and what isn't permitted when they prepare assignments and assessments. Students will need to learn the limits of collaboration so that they can avoid copying, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. The Derekh Eretz Committee and each of the academic departments will need to educate students

about the mechanics of citation and also about the larger principles involved in respecting intellectual property.

Responding to objections. Some teachers might object to a code of derekh eretz in spite of the discussions we had last year about holding everyone in the community accountable. They might feel that it is demeaning to sign onto a pledge that is meant for students and not for the adult members of the community.

Some students may object because the code may seem like a judgment against them. One student asked if the teachers were more suspicious of the students these days, inferring that things must be bad if we are creating an honor code. Another student indicated that he and his friends might sign the code and then ignore it if it is not enforced.

I remain an optimist and I anticipate that most students will be happy to sign onto the code and to affirm their own integrity as members of the school community. I anticipate that students who tend to do their assignments in a timely fashion will feel empowered to decline to help their classmates who ask to see their homework. The committee's work has been inclusive and it has engaged every Jewish studies class and every advisory group this year. The drafting process will have received constructive input from dozens of students and teachers whose voices have contributed to each draft.

We all want to see our students prepared for college. A code of derekh eretz can help to prepare our students for the life dilemmas that they are likely to encounter in college and beyond on exams and in dissertations; in preparing briefs and presentations; in working on production teams or creative teams; in developing software and new products; in holding positions of leadership in the community, when raising their own families, and even when they are around the dinner table, deciding whether or not to make an off-color remark. A code of derekh eretz is one way in which we can fulfill our school's mission of preparing our students for moral responsibility and for moral leadership long into their adult lives.

Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy Derekh Eretz Pledge

Draft, 8 June 2011

As a member of the Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy community, I pledge to conduct myself with a sense of derekh eretz—honor and integrity. At Barrack, this also means...

- Representing myself honestly;
- Demonstrating self-respect and respect for others;
- Drawing inspiration from the activities, efforts and achievements of others;
- Speaking, acting, and dressing modestly in school, on stage and out on the playing fields;
- Supporting and encouraging others when they face challenging times;
- Remaining committed to the welfare of my community;
- Encouraging others to live by the same values even in the face of peer pressure;
- Practicing fair play and good sportsmanship, and working well with others;
- Seeking time to reflect on my words and deeds while considering their impact on others;
- Respecting the religious views of others;
- Appreciating that humor and casual comments may not be heard in the way
 that they are meant;
- Accepting diversity in race, sexual orientation and gender expression.

I pledge to uphold the highest moral values in keeping with the teachings in Pirkei Avot 3:21, which teaches that both Torah and Derekh Eretz should be studied and practiced together. At Barrack, I accept that learning and proper conduct must come in tandem: it is not enough to study without behaving properly and it is not enough to be on my best behavior without also studying the Torah for all that it teaches.

Student signature

Student name (printed)

Date

Prepared by a subgroup of the Derekh Eretz Committee, including Dr. David Rabeeya, Mrs. Tasha Vigoda, Devorah Treatman '13, Avi Romanoff '14, Elliot Bernstein '16, and Rabbi Levingston, Committee Head

Ethics in Technology:

A Challenge for Jewish Day Schools

■ by **Jane Neubauer**

T has never been more important to use the word "like" with caution. Clicking a button bearing this word on a social media page can often lead to perceived indiscretions, whether intentional or not. Ethically, it's mandatory to think twice before every click of the

mouse is executed. This applies to students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community-at-large.

conditions for agreeing to utilize technology responsibly are nonnegotiable. The

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by both parents and students, since the school provides students with opportuni-

ties to use technology and to access the

Internet for educational purposes. The

The challenges for schools are enormous, for educational tools in the 21st century are truly fluid. As students in classrooms throughout the country, and the world, settle into their learning environments in 2011, they may be situated at desks or portable iPad carts. They may be navigating their laptops while a teacher

using Google Docs on a SMART Board explains that upcoming notes for a classroom project will be shared and edited by classmates, not on paper or even on the school's Intranet, but rather by way of "the Cloud"—where everyone's comments will be visible to one another. Students may stay informed about upcoming school Booster Club or PTO activities via an officially sanctioned Facebook page, "tweet" or e-newsletter. They then may share their experiences with global classmates signed on to Skype.

Added to the challenges of understanding this often "foreign" world is the fact that Jewish day school educators are charged with infusing values, morals, and menschlichkeit.

ETHICS THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

At Donna Klein Jewish Academy, we have instituted a Technology and Internet Use Policy to explain and regulate the institutional use of technology equipment, software, and systems (e-mail, Internet, networks, etc.), and other communication systems. Additionally, staff and faculty handbooks contain specific information on policies and procedures that are updated annually and must be adhered to on a daily

Ethics guidelines are imperative for many reasons. Specifying what may appear to be understood or "common sense" often is an enigma in the digital generation. What happens if a well meaning teacher, intending to facilitate information sharing, becomes Facebook friends with her students so that posts to this personal blog of sorts can be shared in one quick click? Yes, the information is disseminated easily. But what if the teacher's privacy settings are not "private enough," and activities deemed inappropriate for students to know about are suddenly common knowledge within the school community? Once viral, the damage may be done. Was it unethical for the teacher to execute the post? Did he or she violate an ethics policy?

DKJA's Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy must be electronically signed

document specifically outlines "Acceptable Use" relating to technology both at DKJA and out of school. This is where ethics in technology directly go handin-hand. Technology is not contained within the classroom. "Cloud computing," sharing information collaboratively on Google Docs, and simply logging on to Facebook are ways of life today.

DKJA's Parent/Student Acceptable Use Policy also specifically outlines that, "in some cases, use of personal electronic devices at home or away from campus are covered by this policy where such communications impact the school, are to/from employees and students, parents, or third parties, such as communications on the Internet or on social networking sites. Violations of the following guidelines may result in the revocation of access privileges and possible disciplinary action, including expulsion for serious offenses... This policy also applies to the use of any personal electronic devices (computers, cameras, phones, video cameras, PDAs, etc.) on school property or at a school-related event. Failure to abide by these rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action determined by the school administration. All technology should be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner."

In their haste to quickly race through the registration or re-enrollment process, parents and students may tend to take this lightly and not reflect upon the relevance and importance of these ethical requirements. The ramifications, however, are quite serious.

The following situations presented unintentional violations—but violations nonetheless-of the Acceptable Use Policy at DKJA. During one incident involving students participating in a video project, the intended goal was to encourage creativity and competence by conducting interviews. Student reporters, wearing school uniforms, carried out the educational interviews with fellow classmates as well as teachers. The project was then "shared" on the popular and easily accessed site YouTube, where the entire world could easily view the project. This not only violated the Acceptable Use policy's specific directive that "No one is permitted to post the DKJA name or the names of any person identified as a DKJA student or employee on any Internet site without the school's prior consent (including Facebook, MySpace, etc.)," it also was not cleared through the Communication Department. One of the roles of the Communications Department is to ensure that the wishes of parents/guardians who request to opt out of all media/publicity materials involving their respective students are respected. Like the Acceptable Use Policy, this individual preference is made electronically during the enrollment process.

In this particular incident, the administrator in charge of the video project was educated about the "unacceptable" scope of the video project, and the You-Tube post was removed. No student reprimands were necessary. A teachable moment was provided when the explanation for the removal was presented, and the

need to ensure respect for other students' privacy was reinforced.



What if the teacher's privacy settings are not "private enough," and activities deemed inappropriate for students to know about are suddenly common knowledge within the school community?

In a separate incident involving parents, concerning respect for others' privacy and reputations, Facebook came into play. Although a personal Facebook page—not school-sanctioned—was the forum through which an inappropriate post about a school administrator appeared, it too necessitated removal. The negative post did not specifically name the administrator, but traits of the person were alluded to in such a way as to be offensive. The parent was contacted and instructed to remove the post because it violated the "acceptable use" outlined in DKJA's policy.

These examples illustrate the dangers and possibilities that need to be considered,

A positive, ethical, virally broadcast news clip can generate thousands of "hits" to a website, and that is a priceless commodity.

the consequences that must be addressed, and the education that is imperative in the multi-faceted scope of ethics and technology in the school setting, on and off campus.

In contrast to the negative aspects of multimedia information sharing, positive stories can also be the end-product and can shine brightly on behalf of the school community. Information sharing is marketing that can be invaluable, especially in today's lightning-speed communications environment. Families researching educational institutions utilize the Internet as a "first step" in the information gathering process. A positive, ethical, virally broadcast news clip can generate thousands of "hits" to a website, and that is a priceless commodity. Sharing a positive story did just that in the following example, which garnered international media attention because it focused on an act of lovingkind-

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 69]

Making Ethics Personal: **A Three-Minute Solution** to Combat Bullying

■ by **Jeffrey Leiken**

NYONE raised in the Jewish tradition has been taught that every human being is an image of G-d. Great philosophers and teachers throughout history have echoed how vital it is that we honor this. The great principle of the Golden Rule—treat others as you

wish to be treated—has appeared in cultures throughout history, across all of the world's great religions. Some say that it is the only value that is universal in the world's great religions.

There must be reason it has been so emphasized and passed down through thousands of years of human history.

In the past thirty years the teaching of this principle—like many of the teachings of religion in general—has been widely displaced or even disregarded in our culture. It is certainly inconvenient, and in a culture that so values winning and self-aggrandizement, it may even be considered by some to be irrelevant.

In spite of this, it is still possible to teach this principle, instill and inspire our youth to embrace and embody its value, and enlist its help in creating a culture where the blatant disregard of dignity towards others is no longer tolerated.

It can even be done in three minutes.

A true story:

There was a boy in my class in sixth grade named Roger. His hair was always messy, he wore the same clothes to school most days and he smelled bad. No one wanted to sit next to him, and at recess all would run from him if he came close.

I can still picture the packs of kids running from him at recess, and can hear the girls screeching aloud any time he would approach. "Running from Roger" was a game we created. To him it must have been a hell he couldn't escape.

It has been over thirty years since I was in sixth grade at Northmore School in Peoria, and since I last ran away from Roger. Roger was part of the group of kids who were bused in from "the south side." Unlike the other kids who rode that bus, he was white like us, but we definitely knew that he wasn't one of us.

Most of us came from middle class homes. We showered every day, wore clean clothes and got new shoes every time our feet grew bigger. Roger didn't. He wore the same tethered boots to school all year, and had to change into "lost & found" shoes when we went to PE. He was just creepy to us.

One week Roger didn't come to school.



Jeffrey Leiken (www.Leiken.com), President of Evolution Mentoring International and creator of the Boys To Mensch® Rite-of-Passage program, specializes in meeting the unique needs of gifted and sensitive youth, empowering them to lead extraordinary lives, and training others to do the same. He can be reached at Jeff@Leiken.com.

When it was time to go to recess one day that week, Mr. N. asked us to stay behind for a few minutes. He closed the door to the classroom, came around to the front of his desk and leaned against it.

What he said next is something I will never forget, that quite literally changed my life. It is also something no teacher in America would say today.

I want to talk with you about one of your classmates. I see the way you all run from Roger on the playground, and the way no one sits with him at lunch.

I want to tell you all some things about Roger's life.

I have been to his home. He lives in a rundown building in the government projects on the south side of town. His dad isn't in his life. His mom works the night shift as a waitress at the Steak-n-Shake down by the river. He has two younger brothers he shares a room with. They sleep on the beds, he sleeps on a mattress on the floor. They have no car and no washing machine. They have to take the bus everywhere and have to

do laundry at a Laundromat. They barely have enough money to pay rent. Some days he has no food at home.

Last month his mom didn't have the money to pay their electricity bill and for five nights in the middle of January, they didn't have heat. Roger got sick because he gave his blankets to his younger brothers and slept in the cold all week. That's why he's not in school this week.

The shoes he wears at PE are not "lost & found." They are shoes I brought in for him. The hat and scarf he wore last week are ones that several teachers brought in and gave him.

I thought you all should know this about your classmate.

You can go to recess now.

We got up and walked out in stunned silence.

When Roger returned the next week, we invited him to sit with us. We shared our food with him. At first he didn't believe it. Then he accepted our food and eventually would bring a small collection of food home with him most days. This continued through the end of the year, which was the last time I ever saw him.

It is interesting when I reflect back on what Mr. N. did in having that "chat" with us that day in school. He opened our eyes, opened our hearts and made the concepts we spoke about in religious school something totally real. The thing is that this wasn't religious school; it was public school—the place our parents sent us to prepare us for college and eventually a job.

This chat wasn't in the curriculum and certainly wasn't in the textbooks. It was something quite real in our life, and the lesson offered was critical for our development into moral and responsible people.

Jewish day schools are charged with the challenge to teach morality, along with helping these students get the grades and test scores to get into college, and to do so by creating a safe, conducive environment for all that learning to take place. Talking about the concepts in classes on Jewish ethics, though, rarely has the impact to change lives. Making it so utterly, undeniably personal, as Mr. N. did with us in those three minutes in 1980, still does.

Had he just implemented a policy that it was no longer okay to run away from kids on the playground, or created assigned seating in the lunchroom so we had to include him, it wouldn't have had the effect. Ironically, even if he had told us about Roger's life, then told us precisely how he wanted us to treat him differently than we had been, it wouldn't have had the effect. Instead he left it to us.

Mr. N. knew—whether through pure genius or just simple luck—exactly what to say to us to make it real, to appeal to something we all had the potential for and then leave it to us to create a bully-free environment. Through the rest of middle and high school, I can't recall a single student who was in our sixth grade

class who ever participated in teasing another student or who meet academic standards and the expectations of parents.

However, as Mr N. demonstrated, the opportunities exist, and the time it takes can be three minutes or less. The question is, will you create a context and culture in your school that will prioritize this, personalize the issues and do so with the intensity it takes to make a legitimate impact?

WHAT MADE MR. N.'S THREE MINUTES LAST FOR SO MANY OF US?

Three things that made it last:

• He spoke to us directly, person-toperson. He wasn't just being an adult whose job it was to teach us what was in the textbooks. He was being the model of a humane, ethical man—a true mensch. In our world then, just as in today's world, meeting someone who was the "real deal" (or as they say now, "legit"), who truly lives in integrity with these higher order values, is a rare experience. Such people tend to

The question is, will you create a context and culture in your school that will personalize the issues and do so with the intensity it takes to make a legitimate impact?

didn't stand up for someone whom others teased. I can recall at least a half-dozen incidents where this proved true.

To say that this was all due to Mr. N.'s talk that day would be an exaggeration. His talk was the tipping point. It began with a thousand messages from parents, clergy and others that created the groundwork for the impact of that experience to last as long as it did.

In many ways, the great challenge schools face in creating a compassion-driven, emotionally safe culture is compounded by the lack of prevalence of these messages in the world outside of school. School personnel also often cite the lack of time and opportunities they get to address these issues in school, due in large part to the pressure to

stand out, and the words they speak carry far more gravitas in kids' lives.

- It was real and it was raw. There was nothing clichéd, pre-packaged or scripted about it. It wasn't a "Chicken Soup For The Soul" well edited story designed to tug at heart strings. It wasn't a YouTube video with a moving story, set to inspirational music—things that are easily dismissed by today's youth who have a discerning resistance to what they find "phony" or inauthentic.
- It was personal, tangible and specific.
 It wasn't talking about a parable from a great work written thousands of years ago. There was no interpretation

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היריעון • HaYidion

Case Study: Critical Issues in

HOSE are my principles, and if you don't like them... well, I have others." Groucho Marx

The articles in this issue highlight the vital importance for schools to develop sound policies based upon core values. The ethical character of the school starts with its vision rooted in Jewish tradition and proceeds to permeate the work of every stakeholder. But Jewish tradition teaches us that principles can only get us so far. Talmudic law is based not on the application of inflexible principles but on the study of cases that require and inspire responses. In that spirit, we present a case study on a maverick donor that we encourage you to use in your discussions with your board and development team. Additionally, RAVSAK will conduct a discussion of this case with board members throughout the field, taking place in September. Details will be announced shortly.

Robert Zimmerman, a senior partner in a major law firm and a well-known local philanthropist, agrees to be the honoree at the next Goldman Jewish Day School donor dinner. He has no direct ties to the school other than having an important business relationship with an influential day school parent. Mr. Zimmerman, through his assistant, agrees to lend the school "my name, my Rolodex, and my time for one night, that's it." He does not offer to make a donation.

Unbeknownst to you, the chair of the Development Committee invites Mr. Zimmerman for a personal tour of the school. He declines, although his assistant offers to "send" Mrs. Zimmerman in his place. Wendy Zimmerman arrives at GJDS at the appointed time, expressing disappointment that the tour would not be led by the head of school. She appears to be mildly disinterested in the school and before she even steps foot in the first classroom, Wendy offers: "I sent my daughters to Country Day. We are not religious at all." Panic-stricken, your development chair pulls you from another meeting, fills you in on what has occurred, and asks you to do what you do all of the time—drop what you are doing and save the day!

By the end of the tour, Mrs. Zimmerman seems impressed. She asks a number of meaningful, if oddly worded questions: "How do the children learn Hebrew at such a young age?" "Do you really have 3rd graders testing at the 9th grade level in math?" "You mean that not everyone here is super crazy kosher religious?"

Immediately following the tour, your development chair offers to take Mrs. Zimemrman out to lunch. Within the hour you are getting barraged by text messages: "askd abt mortgage" "calling hsbnd L8r" "wants to get invlvd w/brd" "do u have stats on acceptnce to top cliges?" "E-mrgncy brd mtg nxt wk."

The next day you get a call from Robert's assistant, who states that the Zimmermans were considering a gift to the school. Members of the Finance Committee meet with representatives from the Zimmerman family, returning to the board with a pledge equal to that of the payout on the mortgage. After the applause dies down, the committee chair reports that Robert has only one request: That his wife be made a permanent officer of the board with veto power.

So...

- 1. How do you help the board structure its deliberations on this matter?
- 2. What role(s) do you play in this discussion?
- 3. What are the pros and cons of accepting this gift?
- 4. What do you think the school *should* do? What do you think your school *would* do?
- 5. What Jewish values, texts, customs, etc. inform your thinking about this dilemma?

Day School Leadership

Response by Adina Kanefield

I first confronted the Zimmermans this summer at Project SuLaM, when I was surrounded by some of the most intelligent, engaging, and devoted day school leaders in the country. These colleagues could eloquently decipher the challenges facing Balak and Bilaam, and yet were at first glance stumped by the Zimmermans. It turns out that the angel facing Bilaam on his donkey was easier to confront than the angel investment of Robert and Wendy.

There are three wonderful things happening in this case study that should be noted at the outset. First, there is much passion, energy and commitment on the part of the lay leader development chair who is giving her time to bring in a member of the community and develop a relationship. Second, there is a motivated day school parent who was apparently willing to use his influence to entice a local philanthropist to become connected to the school in some way. Third, there is a noted philanthropist who is adding stature to the school by lending his name, even though he initially did not offer a donation when agreeing to serve as the honoree. These are three incredibly positive aspects of the case, and they make me optimistic about the future of the Goldman Jewish Day School.

The problem in this case lies in the lack of structure and proper process to provide support for the work of the lay leaders. The enthusiastic development chair needs to remember that she must work in partnership with the professional staff. Her primary contact should be with the school's director of advancement or development who can provide a coordinating role and a holistic view of the fundraising needs of the school. The advancement professional should inform the head about the visit from the honoree's wife. A professional staff member, preferably the advancement director, should join the guest on the tour, along with the development chair, to ensure that questions can be properly addressed. In certain circumstances, especially if the guest has the potential for a transformative gift, the head should devote the time to joining a tour, but this should of course be planned in advance.

Much good work can be conducted during lunch or coffee gatherings amongst lay leaders. Lay leaders should keep in mind, however, that they must draw upon the strategic plan and vision of the school, along with the clear goals of an annual or comprehensive campaign plan, in proceeding with deliberations on support for the school. Donor directed gifts are wonderful as long as they align with the vision of the school. The development chair should temper her justified excitement and slow down just a bit the deliberative process of this exciting opportunity.

A strategy session with the board president, development chair, head of school, and director of advancement should follow the lunch meeting; members of the finance committee should provide support to these leaders' efforts, and should offer necessary documentation and information, but they should not lead the negotiations with a donor. The school must pick one lead contact with the Zimmermans to ensure a coordinated approach in outreach and negotiations. Similarly, the negotiations should ensue directly with the Zimmermans, not

through their representatives. Every attempt should be made to build relationships with donors, especially major ones like the Zimmermans, and thus a concerted effort must be made to connect with both Robert and Wendy, along with their representatives.

Finally, with regard to the request to have Wendy Zimmerman be a permanent officer of the board with veto power, the path is simple. The day school has a set of bylaws providing a structure for board nominations and a list of powers and duties, including rules governing board voting. Wendy Zimmerman, along with others, should be considered during the nominations process for new trustees. Her candidacy should be evaluated, along with others, and should be voted upon in accordance with the school bylaws. A donor, and the school leaders, would have to respect that process in order to safeguard the stability of the school.

As we learned in Balak, we must ensure that we understand and properly face the challenges presented by our angels. The Goldman Jewish Day School, relying on the processes, structures, and bylaws of the institution, should be able to enthusiastically embrace this angel.

Adina Kanefield is the Director of Institutional Advancement at the Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital, and a humble member of Cohort IV of RAVSAK's Project Sulam. She can be reached at Adina.Kanefield@jpds.org.

Response by Barbara Rosenberg

believe that Wendy Zimmerman should be made a member of the board, but I feel strongly that she should not be granted either veto power or an office at the beginning of her service. In order to be a good and productive board member (and officer), she needs experience and knowledge about

Jewish day schools. Goldman Jewish Day School needs to help educate Wendy, as well as her husband Robert, about the basic foundational pieces of Jewish day schools—including the critical issues they face—in order to enable the Zimmermans to become Jewish leaders of the fu-

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Case Study: Critical Issues in

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ture. Once she has gained some valuable skills and learned more about day school education, I would feel better about considering her for an officer position.

From the perspective of the school, inviting Wendy onto the board makes good community and business sense because she and her husband most likely have friends and business associates they can involve in the school's work and activities. One of the most important roles a board member can play is introducing new people and resources to the school to help make it stronger and ensure continuity. Wendy and Robert certainly have the resources to fulfill this role.

Equally as important as how Wendy can help the school is how a role on the board can help Wendy. In my experience, I have found that being a board member can encourage people to increase their connection to Judaism. In my own family's story, a glorious by-product of my grandson's Jewish education has been the increased Jewish involvement of his parents. My son has recently been accepted into a national Jewish leadership program, and my daughter-in-law has accepted a position on the board of her local day school and is considering a

women's mission to Israel.

When Wendy toured the school with the chair of the Development Committee, she said, "I sent my daughters to Country Day. We are not religious at all." Being granted board membership might open up new doors for Wendy in her own Jewish journey and help her become a true Jewish leader. It behooves the school to consider the future of Jewish leadership, and not only the here and now, when adding members to their board.

I believe that involvement in Jewish day schools, whether on the board or in ancillary groups, is beneficial for the school, the community and the individual. Yet all too often, we tend to overlook or underplay all that can be done with these tools of connection. It is our duty to think about the school's, the community's and the individual's well-being, as well as long-term and short-term goals, when considering board membership.

Dr. Barbara Rosenberg, a ten year board member and executive committee member at Jewish Community High School of the Bay in San Francisco, has served in a variety of leadership positions in both Jewish and general community organizations. She can be reached at bcrsf@pacbell.net.

Response by Behzad Dayanim

evelopment" is not ideally represented by a single meeting that ends in a gift, particularly one with strings attached; rather, it is the cultivation of relationships that builds sustainability and investment as well as a connection between the donor and the school. The Zimmerman family's new interest in the school is exciting but also feels impetuous. The board needs to consider whether the financial state of the school is so dire that an immediate bailout is its only recourse.

While there is no direct indication that this is the case, few schools would not be thrilled at the prospect of paying off a mortgage. Assuming for a moment that there is no immediacy behind this need for funds, I would urge the board to consider the longer term benefits of cultivating a relationship that has been sparked. Accepting a gift no matter how significant the size with the restrictions indicated effectively turns the school into "Zimmerman Academy."

This would not necessarily be a problem if the mission and vision of the school are not out of sync with the donor family; however, the concept of having veto power could very easily undermine the school's autonomy. The board and by extension the head of school could be held hostage. Yes, financial support is an important facet of building and sustaining a school, but the price may be too high to pay for this support. In addition, it would benefit both the Zimmerman family and the school to better understand each other. Respectfully engaging the Zimmerman family in direct dialogue and developing a logical path through which they can become more involved would be preferable.

The board and head in this situation have a number of challenges to address on top of the pressure of accommodating the whim of a potential significant donor. The manner in which this whole situation evolved is troubling as it indicates potential deficiencies in key areas of the school. The misperceptions surrounding the school as alluded to by the potential donor indicate that there may be marketing and branding needs that are not sufficiently being addressed. In addition, the whole manner in which the newly interested donor was engaged leaves a lot to question in terms of the development approach.

Many boards have guidelines for trustee induction, and it might be prudent to cite whatever guidelines may be in place. Should there be room for another board member in the next year's cohort, Mrs. Zimmerman could be a candidate. This would give significant time for the head of school and development team to cultivate a relationship with her and to expose her to the many facets of the school. Perhaps after learning more about the school, the restrictions surrounding this significant gift might be eased or removed altogether. I would respectfully recommend the board review its charter, consider the ramifications of its decision and recommend that the head of school personally reengage the Zimmerman family (as apparently this first encounter was well received).

Based on her initial questions and percep-

Day School Leadership

tions, the Zimmerman family may not be ideally suited to be shaping the direction of the school. Money is important, but it does not and should not automatically enable one to effectively direct an organization. This would be doing a disservice to the board, the donor and the school and sends a message that "wealth denotes worth" which is inconsistent with Jewish values. Furthermore, it could be a tragic misstep to place someone with such a limited understanding of the school and its mission into such an influential role. That said, over time and through more direct experience, the Zimmerman family may prove to be a wonderful advocate and supporter, and developing a relationship should certainly be explored and cultivated.

There is good reason why the Jewish census involved a contribution of a half-shekel from every person, and that donations to the Mishkan (Tabernacle) could be of copper, silver or gold. A person's value should not be determined by the money they have, but rather by the type of person they are. Everyone is important and deserves to be treated with respect, and this is particularly well exemplified in a community day school environment where the diversity of the community is one of its core strengths. It is through this range of ideas and perspectives that a community truly grows and develops.

Behzad Dayanim is Head of School at MetroWest Jewish Day School in Framingham, Massachusetts. He can be reached at behzad.dayanim@mwjds.org.

Response by Barbara Davis

The first thing that comes to mind when reading this scenario is the absolute necessity for all members of the school team to be on the same page and in constant communication with one another prior to donor cultivation, so that a situation like this is never allowed to develop. Gift acceptance policies, donor stewardship policies and procedures, school priorities and the hierarchy of development work should have been discussed, understood and agreed to by ALL members of the school staff and board before any solicitation of donors in any form whatsoever was undertaken. This is a challenging task, as often the fiscal needs of a school or organization are so critical to its continuing existence that all lay and professional leaders feel that they need to reach out to whoever is likely to provide the needed funding. But absent the requisite framework, guidelines and relationship building, this scattershot approach cannot result in healthy and productive outcomes.

The state of affairs (or "pickle") in which the Goldman Jewish Day School finds itself is dire indeed. They risk tremendous embarrassment, ill will and loss of reputation if they fail to find a way out. The leadership of the school must regain the upper hand in this situation and do whatever it takes to recover. This clearly is a "teachable moment," and prior to dealing with the specifics of the case, the lessons involved should be studied and learned. The board and staff need to review the policies of the school (including board by-laws dealing with membership

and "vetos") as well as the fiscal realities of the school. This must be done first, in a calm and dispassionate manner, prior to any discussion of how to extricate themselves from the situation they are in. Blame and finger-pointing are useless and should be forbidden. The head of school and board chair should also have prior discussions, to be sure that they are in agreement and accord as to what policies must be upheld regardless of the consequences (i.e., no board seat is permanent; no board member can have veto power).

Then, of course, there is the matter of dealing with Wendy and Robert-poised to be honored at a big banquet, eager to give a much needed gift, and making impossible demands. The full panoply of diplomatic and social skills of the head of school, board chair and development director/chair must be called into play. (Where is King Solomon when you need him?) Unless the school's financial need is so desperate that the survival of the institution is at stake, and they are willing to do anything to stay afloat (a sad state of affairs which does not bode well for the future), clearly, they cannot accede to the demand for a permanent seat and a veto. However, how they explain this with grace and humility, how they explicate the reasons in legal and organizational terms, how they leave the donors feeling happy and appreciated and needed, will make or break the situation.

Dr. Barbara Davis is the Secretary of RAVSAK, Executive Editor of HaYidion and retired Head of School at the Syracuse Hebrew Day School in Dewitt, NY. She can be reached at bdavis74@twcny.rr.com.

Response by Alan Brodovsky

y first reaction when I read this case statement was, "who is running this show?" It seems to me that the school has put the board, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Zimmerman, in

a tough and unfair position because of a lack of planning. The school has a fiduciary responsibility and communal trust to create a process, including a clear delineation of authority, when working with donors. It needs to create a set of appropriate actions to take in solicitations as well as a set of expectations and benefits that comes with large donations.

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is pervaded by cheating. Premier athletes use performance-enhancing drugs, cheating in business ravages our economy, and the media regularly exposes infidelity by prominent personalities and politicians.

"But it gets worse. Atlanta's public school system, which won national recognition and millions of dollars of awards for apparent improvements in student test performance, is embroiled in the largest school cheating scandal ever: 44 of 56 schools and 178 teachers and principals allegedly were involved in altering student tests; eighty-two have confessed" (from the blog Commentary by Michael Josephson, "Even our Schools are Cheating," http://goo.gl/DhlJk).

This excerpt captures just the latest in a series of indictments questioning the ethics of the educational system in American culture. Taking Vince Lombardi's statement "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing" to the extreme seems to be a powerful magnet. It may not be reasonable to ask of a person never to lie or cheat. Indeed, there are sanctioned, if not sanctified lies in Jewish life. They include lies to promote shlom bayit that find their textual origins in Torah and lies to promote a person's physical, emotional or mental health at pivotal moments

in their lives that have Talmudic

at all ages grow to their potential.

norm? One failed attempt from which we can learn is the status quo. Currently, the prevailing attitude towards cheating is the threat of punishment—failing a test, detention, suspension, or expulsion. The threat of punishment alone is clearly an

ineffective deterrent to cheat-

tionships, on taxes, in sports and in business are examples of cheating that prove it is much more than juvenile behavior. The consequences for cheating escalate over a lifetime, and cheating in school can have lifelong effects, whether or not the cheater is caught. The drive to excel at seemingly any cost—financial, social,

It may be utopian to imagine a school that would eliminate punishment for cheating, but the current assessment system is broken and it needs a radical tikkun.

If punishment is not a deterrent, then perhaps it is an effective means of holding a person who is caught cheating accountable. However, I question the efficacy and the wisdom of this rationale as well. If the punishment is to remove a person from a learning environment for a class, a week, a semester or an entire life, what is the underlying message? To be part of a learning community is a privilege, and a person that cheats has forfeited that privilege? Who suffers as a result of these consequences? I submit that it is the learner and the learning community. We all lose in this calculus. It may be utopian to imagine a school that would eliminate punishment for cheating, but I confess to being a mite quixotic. The current assessment system is broken and

support. Truth may not be an it needs a radical tikkun. If a purveyor of goods and services can track my purchases and activities and suggest new ones, those of us in education should be able to help learners

absolute Jewish value, but there is all too much lying and cheating in our society and our schools are a microcosm of our culture.

What can students, teachers, and parents do to limit cheating to extreme and egregious cases rather than be the accepted It is possible to suggest that without the threat of serious consequences there would be even more cheating, but in this case, such a claim seems weak at best. Cheating in school is just one manifestation of the midrashic claim that human beings are inveterate liars, inevitable prey to the lure of falsehood. Cheating in relaand ethical—can be an addiction, and in the most extreme cases, a lethal one.

Even if there is no panacea, no intervention that would result in a profound reduction in cheating, we may make meaningful gains by considering values in Jewish education. The teaching in Proverbs 22:6, "Educate a child in the way he ought to go; he will not veer from it even in old age," can be interpreted to suggest a lifelong learning strategy. Instead of the competitive environment we have cultivated with a valedictorian and salutatorian in every class, we could assess every child in accordance with her own past performance and his own future potential. Rather than an educational system that fosters competition to the extent that winning effectively becomes the only thing, perhaps we should take seriously the challenge to educate every single student uniquely—not just those that are outliers on the learning spectrum, but every student.

It is time for us to harness the technological power we possess to individuate learning throughout one's life. If a purveyor of goods and services can track my purchases and activities and suggest to me what future purchases I may want to make and what future activities I may want to pursue, those of us in education should be able to help learners at all ages and all stages grow to fulfill their potential. When economic competition yields a chasm be-

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Thank You to Our SuLaM Campaign Donors

In recognition of the powerful experience of Project SuLaM, RAVSAK's intensive Jewish leadership development program, eight alumni launched a campaign to encourage their peers to give back to RAVSAK. By participating in this campaign, "SuLaMites" demonstrated their appreciation for RAVSAK's investment in them as individual leaders and how that investment has enabled them to transform their schools and enrich the field of Jewish day school education.

RAVSAK is pleased to acknowledge and thank the following donors to the SuLaM campaign who together donated more than \$10,000 to RAVSAK. With their help, we are strengthening and sustaining the Jewish life, leadership and learning of Jewish day schools, ensuring a vibrant Jewish future.

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Teaching Ethics

■ by **David Streight**

y least favorite experience as a conference presentation attendee was the time I heard a school administrator describe his school's ethics initiative. Why? Because the "initiative" appeared to be a single, mandatory, one-semester course. This was not the only time I've heard such a statement, but this one was just so blatant. And it was a school with a great reputation. The implication

was—is—that first, it is important for schools to prepare students for ethical lives (this school had decided to do so) and second, that the preparation of an ethical person can be covered in a semester. Fifty minutes a day, five days a week, sixteen weeks. And voilà!

to create school cultures 1) where ethical life includes a certain amount of knowledge, 2) where a certain number of ethical skills are taught, and 3) where we have helped students to learn to *feel like acting* positively on the knowledge and skills they acquire. In other words, the formation of ethical individuals includes developing "heads" (knowledge), "hands" (skills), and "hearts"—the disposition to use, to act on, ethical knowledge and skills. After all, the tremendous ethical breaches so visible



David Streight is Executive Director of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Education (www.csee.org). He can be reached at ds@csee.org.

The course itself seemed fascinating: Ethics and Film. Great film clips from relatively recent, good films, and discussions about the ethical situations they portrayed. Probably a paper at the end. A good, solid research paper where students needed to read and cite noted experts, a paper designed to maximize the chances that the semester's ethical lessons—or at least one of them—might stick.

I listened, hoping that what the administrator really meant to say was that the course was the most exciting part of a broader, more overarching initiative at the school to accomplish a set of carefully defined ethical goals. Unfortunately, such did not seem to be the case. Rather, the message was, and I quote, "This is how we do character education at our school."

The school in question is far from the only one like it in North America. Many either allow or lead people to believe that they are creating ethically solid citizens for tomorrow's world by virtue of mandatory course on "ethics." Whether the course is one on moral philosophy or one studying and debating moral issues in a field like biomedical ethics, there is too often a disconnect between what we offer as coursework and what people think the outcome will be. There is a similar disconnect between what our goals are as teachers or schools and what we accomplish in a single ethics course.

Teaching ethics can be a great and important endeavor. But it is only great and important if what is done in the course is consistent with both the school's mission statement and the public's impression regarding the reason for, and assumed outcome of, the course. If we are to be honest, we must make sure our students, their parents, our prospective students and their parents are aware that what will be covered in this course is only a tiny piece in the large, complicated, yet immensely important responsibility we as educators have to lay ethical foundations for tomorrow's citizens.

And, if it is indeed our goal as educators to lay ethical foundations for the world of the future, then our ethics course should be integrated into a broad, comprehensive effort

in the Enron fiasco, in parts of the recent financial debacle, and in too many other news headlines in recent years were not perpetrated by individuals who did not know better, or who did not have the skills to act otherwise, but rather by individuals who were more disposed to think of inner circle gains rather than wider community benefit.

The message here is not that we should give up ethics as a course of study. After all, in the head, heart, hand framework, an ethics course can offer important knowledge. The message is, rather, that an ethics course can add greatly to a school's character / ethical education initiatives if it fits into the school correctly.

Let me offer suggestions regarding how to do this by way of two questions.

What are your school's goals for ethical education?

All schools have mission statements. All mission statements entail academic growth, of course, but well over 90% of schools men-

tion character goals, also. Sometimes they are stated in terms of creating responsible citizens for tomorrow's world, or compassionate leaders for the 21st century; sometimes they mention creating ethical people or individuals of character. Or sometimes they mention their ethical goals in terms of important virtues, like respect, responsibility, compassion or integrity.

Since those "character terms" are your school's goals, then—in theory—everything at the school (including its ethics course) should lead toward one, and preferably both, of the mission goals: academic excellence, and citizenship, or leadership, or character.

An ethics course can then best contribute to the quality of tomorrow's citizens, leaders, or people of character if it is designed to complement and fulfill a school's mission statement.

HOW CAN YOU BEST CREATE A CLASSROOM CULTURE THAT WILL FOSTER ETHICAL EDUCATION?

Ideally, this question follows from the first. Here are four solid suggestions toward fostering the kind of classroom climate that will help students want to act ethically (i.e., the "heart") on what they know to be ethical (i.e., the "head"), assuming that knowledge about what is ethical is gained from the course in question.

Be a role model. Talk about ethical situations and your views on them. If possible, let students know about ethical situations you personally have faced. Let them know about struggles you might have had in dealing with a certain situation. Doing so helps students understand that ethical choices and ethical actions are sometimes complicated, and often not easy. We are the most powerful tools of ethical education we have.

Foster the building of relationships. Diminish competition, maximize cooperative goals and projects. Put students in groups, or in situations, or involve them in tasks where they have the opportunity to get to know others in the class and to work with them. By diminishing competition we raise the level of trust and support that allows students to practice the skills of ethical development—

skills most of us are reluctant to practice when we feel like we are living on the defensive.

Create democracy, empower students. Yes, adults must be in charge in the classroom, and everywhere else at school. There are nevertheless countless opportunities to hand responsibilities to students. When we do this the right way, students feel empowered; when they are empowered they have more investment in their learning, and they care more about the place where they are learning.

Make rewards intrinsic rather than extrinsic. There is far more impetus for positive growth in a teacher's sincere, face to face statement that "I was really appreciative of the way you worked to make today's discussion better" or "The way you broke down that issue in your paper into its discrete parts—and then dealt with each separately—was amazing" than there is in "You got an A for the day." In most of our schools, we

need to give grades. Whether grades are seen as carrots or as sticks, they do little to foster academic growth in most students, and they do nothing to foster ethical growth in any student. If you must give letter or number grades, find other ways to validate students wherever they excel, and find better ways to correct them when they need correction. Rewards are powerful, but if we want them to be both powerful and positive, they must be intrinsic. They must be as far from "if you do this, I'll do that" as possible.

Spread the word. And last, help colleagues understand that ethics is being taught throughout the school, whether we think this is true or not. In a sense, everyone is an ethics teacher; their work complements what is being done in the school's ethics course, just as the ethics course complements what everyone else in the school is, presumably, doing. The more of your colleagues who can join in the effort—regardless of what they teach—the better off all will be.

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Harnessing Lawrence Kohlberg

for Tanakh Education

■ by **Chana Tannenbaum**

N every generation, religious educators face new obstacles in transmitting their belief and value system to their students. External influences serve to shape adolescents' scope of interests as well as impact their personal moral code, adding to the challenges that re-

ligious instructors may encounter. Contemporary students are undoubtedly adversely influenced by the prevailing morality that they are exposed to in the media and on the Internet. Using Lawrence Kohlberg's famous theory of moral development in the classroom can help educators instill Jewish morality and values in teenage students while simultaneously helping students connect to the texts.

guments on a higher level (through their peers' or teacher's probe questions) and to role play. In this manner, students had the ability to achieve advancement in moral reasoning.

Besides the moral benefit of the dilem-



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Briefly, Kohlberg describes moral judgment development as proceeding through three levels, with each level containing two stages (see sidebar). In level one, the first two stages are referred to as "preconventional," where people interpret right and wrong in terms of the egocentric consequences of the action (for example, punishment or instrumentalism). Kohlberg considers level two "conventional," where the person focuses on maintaining the expectations of significant individuals and upholding conformity to the social order. "Postconventional" reasoning includes stages 5 and 6, where morality is defined apart from authority, is more internally based, and revolves around moral principles.

According to Kohlberg, all of mankind begins life at the lowest, "preconventional" level. Since the stages are natural steps of development, most people will advance to stage two, followed by stage three at approximately nine years of age. It is only in middle or late adolescence that individuals ascend to level four. If it is to occur at all, people may advance to stage five around the late teens or early twenties. Only 5-10% of the American population will ever reach this stage. Advancement through the stages occurs in a sequential pattern. There is no skipping of a stage. Once a stage has been achieved, one will not regress to an earlier one.

Besides the obvious need for increased cognitive ability, stage transition occurs primarily because of exposure to real life or hypothetical dilemmas which present an unsolvable conflict and makes the individual uncomfortable. In addition to this dilemma, experience with the next higher level of ethical reasoning as well as role playing will cause people to advance to a higher stage.

Kohlberg and his associates experimented and proved that deliberate attempts to facilitate stage changes in school were successful. Using hypothetical dilemmas to trigger discussions, Kohlberg presented conflict, allowed students to confront arma discussions, there are many practical educational goals that can be achieved through these exercises. Firstly, students can learn basic participatory skills such as listening, critically analyzing, formulating their own opinions, responding to others, clearly and cogently expressing their position and attitudes and defending their adopted position. Each student should be given an opportunity to express his/her ideas, thereby promoting self-worth and esteem. Before expressing their own ideas, the students should be asked to respond to the previous speaker's (classmate or teacher) points. This technique encourages the student to listen and evaluate their peers' thoughts and not just espouse their own. Generally, students feel good when they speak and everyone listens—their opinion mat-

Presenting students with dilemmas facilitates the acquisition of knowledge making the information more relevant to the students' lives then it would otherwise seem. The reasoning ability of the students also increases in that they are forced to defend their opinions logically. Their abstract reasoning talents should improve as well as their ability to understand values.

Besides explaining the developmental nature of moral development, Kohlberg's main contribution was the methodology that he created in order to stimulate growth through the stages. His thought provoking and engrossing dilemmas force students to become involved in the learning process. These dilemmas not only encourage moral development, they can also connect students to their Judaic studies.

There is much to be gained from introducing into the religious studies classroom discussions designed to advance moral development. Kohlberg's methods encourage students to explore different issues and internalize them. Students are allowed to understand and relate to the ideas on their own level of moral reasoning as opposed to being force fed ideas that they can't comprehend from their teachers. In addition, if the subject can be taught including relevant dilemmas to the students' lives it will help make the information more meaningful. According to Dorothy Rubenstein, by presenting a variety of levels of reasoning the teacher will enable "each student [to] buy in at her stage of cognition, while at the same time he begins to hear other levels of meaning and reasoning." There have been a number of attempts to preserve the power of Kohlberg while at the same time successfully pursue the aims of traditional Jewish education.

Although recently there has been much excitement about the inclusion of the Kohlberg model into the Judaic studies classroom, it is not without reservations. Kohlberg denies any member of a formal religion a position as a stage six thinker. He categorizes them at stage four moral reasoners. Torah living is essentially a heteronymous existence since Jews' actions and beliefs are believed to be divinely dictated. Kohlberg's ideal of autonomous, self-directed choices based on universal principles is perforce at loggerheads with religious dogma.

Barry Kislowicz suggests that Kohlberg's philosophy can be compatible with traditional Jewish thought, if we do not demand that a traditional Jew use autonomous reason to create morality but only act as if he/she had created that morality.

Using Moral Dilemmas in Teaching Torah

LEVEL 1 (PRE-CONVENTIONAL)

- Obedience and punishment orientation (How can I avoid punishment?)
- 2 Self-interest orientation (What's in it for me?) (Paying for a benefit)

LEVEL 2 (CONVENTIONAL)

- Interpersonal accord and conformity (Social norms)
 (The good boy/good girl attitude)
- 4 Authority and social-order maintaining orientation (Law and order morality)

LEVEL 3 (POST-CONVENTIONAL)

- 5 Social contract orientation
- 6 Universal ethical principles (Principled conscience)

Using hypothetical dilemmas to trigger discussions, Kohlberg presented conflict, allowed students to confront arguments on a higher level and to role play. In this manner, students had the ability to achieve advancement in moral reasoning.

A rational Jew can accept G-d's moral will as one's own without obviating autonomous moral judgment, because one believes that G-d by definition commands the good (according to the natural morality to which he, as it were, is bound). A number of different approaches have been developed to integrate Kolhberg into the Judaic studies classroom. Some choose just the technique (Norman Amsel), some choose the whole package (Earl Schwartz) while others adapt the method (Morris Sosevsky).

A more universal problem with Kohlberg's stages is that he is not interested in

how someone should act but rather why an individual would respond in a certain manner. Moral thinking does not necessarily translate into moral behavior. Jewish education provides an initiation to a specific lifestyle, including specific behavior patterns as well as a worldview, while Kohlberg is interested only in patterns of moral thought.

Within Jewish education, the dilemma situations have been used in the teaching of Jewish history and Halachah. I would like to suggest that we can incorporate these dilemmas into the Torah curriculum

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 46]

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as well. The purpose of the dilemmas would be to allow students to relate to the biblical texts and characters as role models that have real struggles, conflicts and choices.

Using Moral Dilemmas in Teaching Torah

When approaching Genesis 14, the war of the four and five kings, one might see little relevance to the life of the fourteen year old. In order to make the information come alive, one might begin the lesson with the story of Entebee or Nachshon Waxman, raising the question, should an individual jeopardize his own life in order to save another's. Probe questions would revolve around the number of people being saved, the relationship of the savior to the hostages, the likelihood of success, etc. When the discussion shifts to Abraham, students can explore his own reasoning and calculations in his willingness to save Lot. The story also helps the reader to understand his character, his dedication to acts of kindness and why this is considered a

The story of baby M and the issue of surrogate motherhood provide marvelous dilemma material for the story of Sarah. Can one sell a baby, can you make a legal contract over a life, who is the mother of a child, why would someone use a surrogate, are all situations the same, etc. Af-

ter the students explore the concept of barrenness, the desire for school classroom is lying. A dilemma can be presented where the main character lies. The students should be asked why would someone lie. Is a lie ever justifiable. This discussion brings to life Gene-

> sis chapter 21, when G-d changes the truth and acts as a role

diers in connection with the disengagement from Gaza (or earlier, Yamit). Is it right to defy and order? What if it means risking your life? Risking your job? What happens if no one follows the rule of the authority?

The students should be asked why would someone lie. Is a lie ever justifiable? This discussion brings to life Genesis chapter 21, when G-d changes the truth and acts as a role model for humanity. The story of Jacob deceiving his father is on the same plane.

model for humanity. The story of Jacob deceiving his father is on the same plane.

To establish the expulsion of Lot (Genesis 13) or Ishmael (Genesis 21), one could present the dilemma of a principal having to decide whether to expel a student. Is expulsion ever appropriate? For what offenses? What if the school is a Jewish school and the alternative is a public school? The biblical stories suddenly become very relevant to a teenager's life.

Introducing stories where a biblical personality sinned can also lead to important learning outcomes. Is it morally justifiable to put someone else in danger to save yourself? What if the person agrees to it? Was Abraham correct in putting Sarah in danger when going to Egypt in Genesis 12?

The purpose of the dilemmas is to allow students to relate to the biblical texts and characters as role models that have real struggles, conflicts and choices.

children and definition of motherhood. they see the actions of Sarah with Hagar in Genesis 15 in a different light.

An issue of major importance in a high

The midwives in Exodus 1 provide an opportunity to explore the question of whether one can or should refuse a direct order. This story can be introduced with the dilemma faced by Israeli solEven a small biblical story can be used to discuss and develop values. The story of Eldad and Medad in Numbers 11 can be taught with an opening dilemma of freedom of speech. Can people say whatever they want, whenever they want? Can one yell "fire" in a crowded movie theater?

The most problematic dilemma in Genesis is the binding of Isaac in chapter 22. This chapter provides a wonderful opportunity to discuss what is morality and how do we combine moral reasoning with G-d's word. As we use dilemmas, there are times when one can accept Gd's will as one's own, when one can understand the good in G-d's commands, and when one can only attempt to do so. When one cannot, as in the case of Abraham and the binding of Isaac, one may choose to allow, in the opinion of Rabbi Walter Wurzberger, the "prescriptions of an omniscient and omnibenevolent G-d [to] override those deriving from [one's] more limited intelligence."

Once a teacher starts thinking in this direction there are many useful dilemmas that can be successfully introduced to the Judaic studies curriculum in general and the Chumash curriculum specifically. Through this technique, firmly grounded in Kohlberg's work, students will develop moral reasoning and behavior and see that Torah does relate directly to their life experiences.

Making Ethics Personal: A Three-Minute Solution to Combat Bullying

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33]

or translation needed. Today's youth are often ill-trained in regard to thinking in metaphor. They need things spelled out for them with specificity.

How can you replicate this in your school?

- Encourage (or require!) your faculty
 to share stories of real life incidents
 they witness, hear of or participate in,
 that demonstrate or emphasize the
 enormity of what it takes to live a truly
 moral, compassionate life. These stories should also include the mistakes
 they made or the opportunities they
 missed. Offering personal stories of
 shortcomings tends to build credibility for today's youth.
- Ask faculty to regularly "catch" students in moments when they behave like mensches. They need to personally commend the student in a way that makes lasting impact.

Thus, saying to a student, "Josh can you stay behind a minute... Listen I think the way you always help people out with their math is really great" is one thing.

However, saying instead, something like this is in an entirely different league: "Hey Josh. Stick around for a minute.... Listen, I don't know whether anyone else notices it or not, but I want you to know how much I respect you for being so willing to help Jennifer and Alex with their math. In a world where it seems so few people really take the time to help others out, you really are a rare kind of guy. I don't know where it will lead you in your life, but I do know that it really says something about your character. I truly believe that if we had a whole world filled with people who did little things like I see you do, we'd have a whole lot less problems."

Ask your faculty to catch every student at some point during the year and give them a message like that.

 Build discussion and training of how to handle complex social issues and difficult conversations into curriculum. You will have your students' rapt attention because the learning is so immediate and so relevant to their lives. You will also be training them in real life skills that will transcend just helping them cope with the pressures of youth social culture.

Where we place our attention is where we get our results. It is also what we teach kids is most important.

Somewhere along the way the top priority for many schools has evolved into an almost constant competition to be the

highest achieving academic environment. In winning at that race, we are losing our chance to play a serious role in helping to raise moral citizens who possess the values and the character to ensure we live in a healthy, thriving society.

We will probably never give up the obsession with standardized tests and the race to compete with China and India in cutting edge discoveries in science and math.

But we can become excellent—even the best in the world—at raising our youth to embrace the most ancient and universal wisdom of all and in so doing, solve many of the problems science and intellect will never be able to solve.

1+1=3

Oranim Educational Initiatives has recently been purchased by Egged Tours & Recreation, a subsidiary of the Egged Bus Cooperative and one of the most established tourism companies in Israel.

Oranim has been a motivating force for innovation and creativity in Israel travel, developing unique products as well as bringing more Jewish schools to Israel than any other travel company.

Egged Tours is known world-wide for its tours to Israel's leading sites such as Jerusalem and Masada that depart daily and service thousands of tourists annually. The company also focuses on the Israeli market, providing educational tourism services to two-thirds of the Israeli school system. Egged also excels in event planning, incentive tourism to hundreds of Israeli organizations, and organized tours and vacation packages for Israelis travelling outside of Israel!

Dani Mor, the former CEO of the Israel Experience Ltd., joined as CEO, along with key staff members from the Israel Experience. Esteemed educator Avraham Infeld has taken on the position as the company's new President. Amnon Weigler is still looking after Jewish Schools and all other groups originating from North America among his many responsibilities and Micky Zoldan will continue to head the office in the US.

The new company will continue branching out into new markets in Europe and Russia as well as developing its Torani department for religious travel headed by Mickey Katzburg.

"When you combine the highly-experienced staff and the innovative and dynamic spirit of Oranim with the capabilities and infrastructure of Egged Tours" said Mor, "you have a true winner".



Wrestling with Ethically Challenging Rabbinic Sources

■ by Aryeh Klapper

This article is abridged from a presentation at "Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy," a conference organized by the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University.

HOULD we teach ethically troubling rabbinic texts to students whose commitment to Jewish tradition is limited or shaky? If yes, how should we teach them, especially when those texts plausibly represent the mainstream of our tradition?

This article records my experience teaching one ethically troubling talmudic passage to the top section of sophomores at Gann Academy, a pluralistic high school in Waltham, Massachusetts. My teaching goal is to give students the experience of and strategies for wrestling with the tradition, rather than ignoring those parts of Judaism that do not immediately appeal to them, or rejecting Judaism because of such elements. I also see value in challenging students' ethical presuppositions (even when I largely agree with them) so as to enable them to develop

more nuanced and reflective positions. Finally, students should have strategies available for defending their commitment to Judaism against critiques based on these texts.

For the material under discussion here I adopted three basic teaching approaches:

- a) present the text to students unadorned and let them decide whether to accept it, struggle with it, reject it, or reinterpret it.
- b) present apologetic reinterpretations of the text that mitigate or even eliminate the ethical difficulty.
- c) use the tools of historical and literary scholarship to uncover traditional counterpositions that lost the argument—voices more in accordance with the students' ethical intuitions that were marginalized or suppressed in traditional texts.

Each of these approaches has intellectual, religious, and pedagogic strengths and weaknesses. My hope is that sharing some work by students who were taught via all three approaches above will enhance our understanding of how students are affected by each type of presentation, with special focus on c).

BACKGROUND SOURCES AND RESOURCES

Students were taught the following background perspectives to help them frame the discussion of the challenging text below:

A) David Halivni's theory that halakhic change in response to moral critique is possible only so long as the moral critique is not explicit. Once the moral critique is explicit, Halivni argues, a change in Halakhah runs a much greater risk of undermining the authority of the Law as a whole, and hence is generally rejected. The idea is that if we are willing to judge even one halakhah morally deficient on the basis of an external standard, we

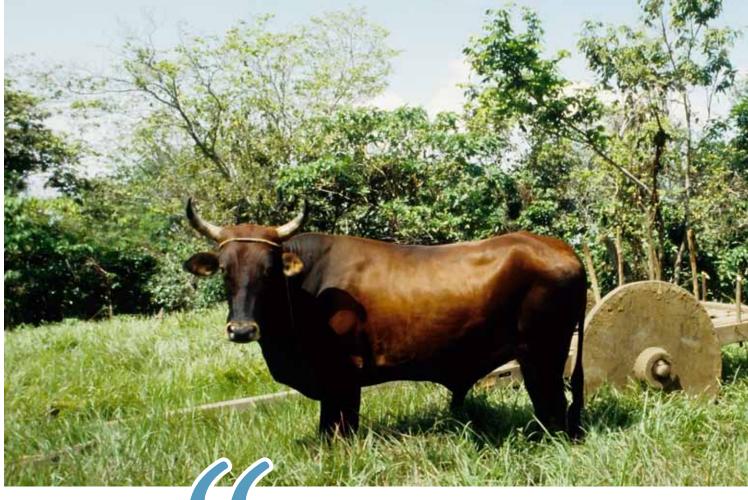


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have essentially declared that standard a better reflection of the Divine Will than halakhah, and have no argument against anyone who chooses to live by that standard rather than in accordance with Halakhah.

- B) Mishnah Eduyot 1:5-6—two justifications for the preservation of minority opinions:
- 1) so that they can be rejected summarily in the future on the basis of precedent. This shows how the reconstruction of minority opinions in past texts can make Halakhah less rather than more flexible.
- 2) so that they can be relied on in the future.
- C) Yaakov Kaminetsky's argument that the possibility of conversion to Judaism is an adequate defense for Judaism against the charge of racism; since anyone can





become a Jew, it follows that Judaism cannot believe that Jews are biologically or genetically superior to the rest of humanity.

D) My own concern that the technique of reconstructing minority or suppressed voices can be applied to almost any issue in rabbinic texts because of those texts' dialectical structure, rooted in discussion and argumentation, and that this approach therefore runs the risk of undermining all authority unless reliable criteria can be established for distinguishing convincing from unconvincing reconstructions.

TEACHING THE SUGYA

A) TAKING THE SUGYA AS-IS

Mishnah Bava Kamma 4:3 presents as law what seems an obvious inequity:

An ox owned by a Jew that gores an ox owned by a non-Jew, [the owner] is exempt [from paying damages]; an ox owned by a non-Jew, whether the ox was marked as violent or not, that gores an ox owned by a Jew, [the owner] pays full damages.

My teaching goal is to give students the experience of and strategies for wrestling with the tradition, rather than ignoring those parts of Judaism that do not immediately appeal to them, or rejecting Judaism because of such elements.

Non-Jews are liable if their ox gores an ox belonging to a Jew, but Jews are not liable if their ox gores an ox belonging to a non-Jew. The Babylonian Talmud ("Bavli") claims that this result requires an inconsistent reading of the relevant biblical verse as well. In an extended and discursive discussion, the Talmud apparently concludes that this ruling can be justified by, and only by, denying all non-Jewish property rights. One element of this discussion is a statement by Rabbi Meir that non-Jews who study Torah are equivalent to the High Priest. Another is a story in which Roman inquisitors raise the issue of the inconsistent biblical reading; they are given no reply, but forgive this in their view solitary flaw in light of the rest of Torah. The Talmud then segues into a set of apparently unconnected narratives.

The simple reading of this discussion as I presented it in class is that the Talmud sees no moral difficulty with this halakhic discrimination against non-Jews, only the intellectual difficulty that it appears to require an incoherent reading of Torah. Even the Roman inquisitors object only on the ground of intellectual incoherence. As the discriminatory legal conclusion goes against just about every American Jew's moral instinct, this sugya is a "difficult text" for students.

B) APOLOGETIC

Students were taught that Meiri (13th century Talmudic commentator) restricts the sugya's discriminatory impact to bar[CONTINUED ON PAGE 50]

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barians, as well as a similar limitation explicitly offered as apologetic by Rabbi Yehonatan HaCohen meLunil.

C) RECONSTRUCTING MINORITY VOICES

Students were shown that in the Jerusalem Talmud ("Yerushalmi"), the Roman inquisitors make the moral critique explicitly about several laws discriminating against gentiles, and Rabban Gamliel responds by unilaterally altering one law, although not the law of our Mishnah. Furthermore, the halakhic midrashim provide two exegetical solutions that enable the Mishnah to read its biblical sourcetext coherently. As the editors of the Bavli were likely aware of these solutions, and of Rabban Gamliel's position, I suggested that the Bavli deliberately avoids both mentioning the moral critique and responding adequately to the intellectual critique. The Bavli thus makes the Mishnah's law dependant on disregard for non-Jewish rights.

Students were then shown that the apparently irrelevant narratives following the sugya can each be read as critiques of the rationales for discrimination against gentiles offered in the halakhic sugya. Finally, students were shown that the statement by Rabbi Meir that non-Jews who learn Torah are considered equivalent to the High Priest originally referred to converts.

These points were collectively marshaled to make the argument that the editors of the Bavli sugya were Instead, they exposed the problematic basis of the law, rather than veiling it in exegetical technicality; they included the moral critique implicitly, via the narratives; and they created a halakhic countertext by transferring Rabbi Meir's statement to the context of still-gentiles.

The Bayli thus contains a sub-

of and did not consider.

B) Answer the following question in approximately three paragraphs and post it to the conference. Same rules as last time: no direct responses to classmates, and put your text in the body of the email.

The students' relationship with rabbinic literature is enhanced by finding their presuppositions in it, even as a minority or "losing" voice. They are willing to engage with the rabbis so long as they have the sense that the rabbis would have engaged with them.

surface editorial voice that supports the students' intuitive sense that the Mishnah's law is unjustifiable. This voice is more explicit in the Yerushalmi. In both Bavli and Yerushalmi, however, this voice fails to muster a halakhic majority, or even a formal halakhic minority opinion, that overturns the Mishnah.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

A) Write three paragraphs total responding to the argument below. Please note that I do not endorse the argument. The evaluation rubric will consider your understanding and accurate citation of ideas and texts we learned in class as well as the strength of your arguments and the clarity of your formulations.

The discovery of a suppressed voice in the Babylonian Talmud that ethically critiques the discriminatory rule of our

I would show those who felt the moral problem with the double standard that there are people who agree with them, and that they are not alone: that there is legitimacy to thinking about morality when following Halakhah.

deeply troubled by the Mishnah, but did not see themselves politically capable of overturning it. They therefore chose not to include the moral critique explicitly, fearing that this would lead to the Halakhah being permanently frozen.

Mishnah re: goring oxen makes it harder to overrule that Mishnah and change the halakhah in our day, as we can no longer claim that contemporary ethical discomfort with the Mishnah is based on new arguments that the Tannaim were unaware If you were teaching the Mishnah about "An ox owned by a Jew" to a 10th grade class at Gann, which of the sources and arguments we've learned would you think most important for your students to read and consider? Which would you think least important?

EXCERPTED STUDENT RESPONSES

VALIDATING THEIR OWN POSITIONS IN A JEWISH CONTEXT

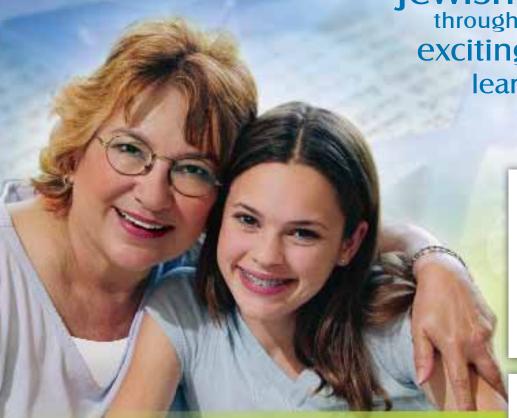
a. I would teach them the texts that helped us to see the hidden voices who had moral arguments against our Mishnah. Despite the argument that finding a moral argument in the text can undermine our ability to support that argument, I think that for many of the students at Gann, they would rather know that some of the writers of the Talmud felt the same way that they do about how to relate to gentiles than find a way to lawfully justify a law that, from their life, they cannot understand.

b. It could be easy to be put off by this sugya and one might think that any traditional scholar agrees with the obvious prejudices towards gentiles expressed in this sugya. Therefore, we must show that there may have been a group of equally informed and smart scholars who also saw a problem with this text.

c. I think one of the most important [CONTINUED ON PAGE 52]



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things to point out is how Rabban Gamliel too knows that there is a moral problem with how Jews treat non-Jews. This way, the students are less concerned with the fact that it seems like the rabbis and maybe even Judaism think lowly of non-Jews.

LOOKING TO CHANGE THE MAJORITY POSITION

a. Even if one were to say that the arguments we have are not new at all...that does not necessarily mean that we cannot accept those arguments too. There are two opinions given as to why the Talmud included the minority opinions. ... The second, which in this situation I think is easier to apply, is that they are so that some day after the text was written, if the minority opinion is found to be more relevant, it can be accepted.

b. I think that when there is a moral critique of Halakhah, the response should not be to refuse to change the Halakhah because that validates the idea that there are morals external to Halakhah, the response should be to evaluate the critique from the standpoint of Jewish morals. As we know from the story of Daniel the Tailor, there are Jewish moral concerns that are not incorporated into Halakhah. The idea that every moral critique is external to the halakhic system is deeply problematic because there are Jewish morals separate from the way the law might be currently.

LIKING APOLOGETIC

a. While teaching this sugya, perhaps it is natural to feel the ethical problems with the apparent superiority Judaism has over other religions. It is of utmost importance that the students understand that such is not the case. Kaminetsky's commentary should come in here.

WRESTLING

a. By bringing up the moral argument, students are challenged to come up with a way to solve these types of problems in Jewish texts. Perhaps not to solve them for good, but to recognize that these types of moral problems exist in the Talmud and one must get to a point where one can at least begin to reconcile the problem for oneself.

b. As for big-picture issues, there are two that I think are appropriate to bring up in the study of this sugya: the role of and rationale behind the preservation of minority opinions in the Talmud, and the conflict Halakhah has with the external laws of morality. ... Not only is this a very interesting notion—the presence of inherent danger in changing Halakhah for moral reasons-but it is also a very important one that provides a new way to think about the laws of our people.

c. I think that I would have the students struggle with the double standard (or agree with it) and possibly write a paper

trying to understand the sugya without help from deconstruction. I'd try to place a lot of emphasis on the moral problems. Next, after the students have thought about the moral problems with the sugya, I would then introduce them to the Yerushalmi text. I would show those who felt the moral problem with the double standard that there are people who agree with them, and that they are not alone: that there is legitimacy to thinking about morality when following Halakhah.

Conclusion

It would be rash to draw conclusions from the essentially anecdotal evidence of one teacher with one class. But I think my experience supports the thesis that for students not previously committed to the authority of the rabbis, apologetics have limited appeal. Furthermore, such students are unlikely to reexamine their own deeply held positions because of an encounter with rabbinic texts.

However, these students' relationship with rabbinic literature is enhanced by finding their presuppositions in it, even as a minority or "losing" voice. In other words, students are willing to engage with the rabbis so long as they have the sense that the rabbis would have understood and engaged with them. Furthermore, students are willing to accept the "democratic process" of Jewish tradition and be outvoted without "checking out," so long as they are assured their voice is heard.



Join RAVSAK's High School Youth Philanthropy Program, Project ROPE

roject ROPE gives students the skills, tools and dispositions to become lifelong leaders in Jewish philanthropy and communal service. The program empowers students to take the ethical teachings learned in school and put them into practice by confronting social issues both locally and in Israel.

Students from all participating schools form an Israel Committee, which meets under the guidance of RAVSAK staff. The Israel Committee learns about social issues as they affect Israelis, the nonprofit organizations that work with particular populations, and specific initiatives designed to address pressing needs. Last year the Israel Committee chose to issue a grant to the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews to support a private-governmental cooperative initiative promoting vocational training.

This year Project ROPE is growing,

with several schools exploring ways that the program can fit into their constellation of offerings. Schools enrolled in ROPE receive curricula, a detailed Teacher's Guide, and training and support from RAVSAK staff, as well as a cohort of other schools for partnership and collaboration. Don't miss out on this life-changing opportunity for your students! For more information or to register your school in ROPE, contact Dr. Elliott Rabin at Elliott@ravsak.org.



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Sofer On Site

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Teaching Ethics in "Real Time" **■** by **Ruth Schapira**

UR students live in a culture where the ethics of everyday speech and behavior are being compromised. They see images of professional athletes screaming, coaches having tantrums, and

celebrities flaunting rude behavior. To make matters worse, those same public figures are the ones getting press coverage on nightly gossip shows, being hounded by paparazzi and parading shamelessly in front of the big screen TV in nightly portrayals of the next "extreme act" of the day. They make the headlines that shout to be noticed.

may have been unclear, his quick responses reassured me. Several students who were not such enthusiastic scholars began subtly teasing and making fun of him. Soon their comments were more audible.



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Naturally, the world of popular entertainment exerts an enormous influence on our students, and the dubious ethics in contemporary society find their way into our classrooms. As much as we would like to insulate our students from the "real world," cheating and plagiarism are offenses that are no longer rare, and many of our students are exposed to this on a daily basis. Unfortunately, they are becoming more and more at ease with breaches of ethical conduct.

I've asked students if they report cheating when they see it. An overwhelming majority said no. I asked them if they know other things that would compromise any usual ethical standard. Heads nodded. So, how can we possibly teach ethics in this environment? As school leaders and teachers, how can we really know that students will internalize the concepts we are teaching, especially when teaching Pirkei Avot? How can we insure that the relevance of ethical conduct is not lost on them?

In addition to administering a school, I have the privilege of teaching as well. Last year my eighth grade students seemed to understand the concepts I was teaching in my ethics class, and they often responded with looks of acknowledgment as we learned middot such as yedidut (friendship), shelom bayit, derech eretz, and more. We discussed relevant source material, but I felt that there was something missing because the students did not seem to connect emotionally. We know that socialemotional learning affords us this opportunity, but how do we bring it into our everyday practice?

One day I was given an opportunity to bring what they were learning in texts to life in the classroom. I used a technique called "stop action" to discuss what was actually happening in class (the process, or the "how" of what is being taught, as opposed to the content, the "what" is being taught). I've also heard the term "transparent facilitation" used to describe this method.

One of my students eagerly approached each class with a passion to learn. He was the first one to shoot up his hand every time I asked a question. Sometimes when a topic Initially the situation seemed clear. The academically oriented student is a teacher's dream, right? Who wouldn't want an enthusiastic student who is highly responsive and obviously "into" what I was teaching? This student, whom we often categorize at the Pesach Seder as the "chacham," the wise child, can unintentionally distance other students with his knowledge, and inadvertently remove an opportunity for others to participate. He may also be unaware of the need of others to answer questions if he is always the first responder. Yes, it is up to the teacher to encourage others to participate. "Thank you, it's great that you have an answer, but can we hear from some of the other students?" is a typical response, but more often than not it tends to embarrass the student into not answering questions at all in the future.

The other students' behavior seems even more clear-cut: who could deny that the students teasing him were insensitive and unkind? They did not internalize the course content and that what we were learning was not just "text" but "text for life." This is the most difficult challenge that faces us as teachers. The question we might ask ourselves is, how much of what we're teaching in class actually translates to our students' actions both in class and outside of school? So both of the behaviors that created this incident were worth examination by the class, though at the outset there would clearly seem to be a "wrong" behavior and a "right" one.

Like every teacher, I had a decision to make. I could work through these issues in the usual manner (separation, talking privately to the students, calls home, etc.) or I could create a real-time opportunity to put the ethics we were learning into action by working through this in "real time." I decided to do the latter. Here's what happened:

My objective was to make the entire class aware of the behaviors that were going on. Immediately after the interaction between the students occurred, I pretended I was a director of a film and called "stop action," making a hand motion as well. I asked the class these questions which had these results:

CAN ANYONE DESCRIBE WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

Students began with responding in a cursory manner, but when pressed a little, the answers were quite detailed and rich. They knew exactly what had happened. They also accurately described both sets of behaviors. The students noticed that it wasn't only the teasers who were respon-

sible, but the student who always raises his hand first was also guilty of not thinking himself as part of the class. In his enthusiasm, he was only thinking of his own needs to be recognized and not that he might be preventing others from participating.

BASED ON THE SOURCES WE HAVE BEEN LEARNING HERE, WHAT CONCERNS OR ISSUES DO YOU HAVE WITH WHAT YOU JUST WITNESSED?

What ensued was one of the most productive and meaningful discussions we had up to that point. Students responded thoughtfully with source material that explained and gave a foundation for their point of view. They talked about how these values were relevant to this very day. They offered their own additions to the sources based on what they know about students today. We had an amazing lesson.

From that point on, our class became a different place. We continually used the "Stop Action" technique, and decided that anyone would be able to be the director if an ethical situation arose. Students were taking responsibility for what happened in the classroom. There were many times that we couldn't afford the time to process everything, but I felt that in the end with this technique, students were given real tools to work things through

themselves.

Ethics need to go beyond the page and into students' hearts. They experience challenges on a daily basis to what they are learning in class. There may be many "hidden" opportunities to make the classroom curriculum "real" that as administrators and teachers we don't always take.

Some of these program suggestions may help uncover ethical issues that students are facing, and ultimately may help drive school change:

Have students take an anonymous survey to share the challenges they are facing regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc.

Appoint a student-run ethics committee to work on ethical issues that are facing the student body.

Conduct an assembly featuring a student panel to discuss the relevance of ethics to their lives today, and what changes they might suggest to improve things. This can offer students a chance to give "real time" input with tweets about it.

Encourage students to "tweet" about this topic throughout the school day (on breaks, at lunch, etc.) using hashtags, and cull responses to use in an assembly.



RAVSAK's Board Spearheads the Development of a New Business Plan

ccording to Bill Ryan, an expert in board governance, an effective board engages in three modes of work for the nonprofit it serves: the fiduciary, the strategic, and the generative modes. Although RAVSAK's Board of Directors is still young (especially relative to RAVSAK's long organizational history), our board has been faithfully engaged in all three of these modes. Currently consisting of ten national leaders, including two experienced community day school professionals, RAV-SAK board members reflect the diversity of the community day school field and bring a wealth of experience and knowl-

edge to their new roles.

Over these past six months the RAVSAK board has put into place new committee structures and policies for RAVSAK and has shepherded the completion of an intensive Development Planning Study, designed to help RAVSAK increase its fundraising capacity among new friends and old. This summer RAVSAK has begun work with Wellspring Consulting to create a business plan that will allow RAVSAK to continue its trajectory of growth in ways that will enhance and increase our abilities to bring value to the day school field and each and every

school in our network.

In early September, just as the school year gears up, the RAVAK Board will meet in New York City for a two day retreat. Among the ambitious goals for the retreat are to engage in board training to help each board member become even more effective in their role, to delve into the work being done with Wellspring on RAVSAK's strategic priorities and to attend to fundamental board plans and policies. Of course, we'll make sure there will be time for Torah study together and for fun in the city.

Positive Responses to Misbehavior

■ by Kathryn Brady, Mary Beth Forton, and Deborah Porter

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> URING Morning Meeting, Janna rolls her eyes and snickers as Hector shares

details of his weekend visit with his cousins.

William takes a pencil from a neighbor's desk and refuses to return it when asked by his class-

At recess, Annie grabs the basketball from two smaller children, telling them they're not allowed to play.

Even when teachers carefully teach behavior expectations and support children throughout the year in choosing positive behaviors, students sometimes misbehave. They forget the rules, their impulses win out over their self-control, and they just need to test where the limits are.

When children misbehave, we adults need appropriate strategies for responding and help them learn positive behaviors. We also need to let their classmates know that we will keep them safe by insuring that rules are observed. The three strategies given here, from Responsive Classroom, a research-backed approach to elementary education that improves academic and social skills and decreases problem behaviors (www.responsiveclassroom.org), help adults do just that when children misbehave.

Holding onto Empathy for the Child

To respond firmly but respectfully when children misbehave, it helps to keep in mind the many reasons they might misbehave. Like adults, children have moments when impulse wins over reason, desire over logic, emotion over rational thought. As they learn to negotiate social expectations, children get curious and test limits, get carried away, forget, make mistakes.

Just as when we teach academic subjects, we can use students' mistakes around social expectations as opportunities for them to learn—in this case, to learn self-control and responsibility. Holding on to our empathy for the child who misbehaves helps us keep our responses positive. Having empathy doesn't mean letting go of accountability. The strategies in this article do hold children accountable, but with understanding and with faith that children can choose a better way when we guide them well.

The Goals of Responding to Misbehavior

In a positive approach to discipline, the overarching goal is to keep the focus on

learning, while maintaining a classroom that's physically and emotionally safe and orderly. With this in mind, when adults respond to misbehavior, their aim is to help children:



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- Stop the misbehavior and reestablish positive behavior as quickly as pos-
- Develop self-control and self-regulation skills
- Recognize and fix any harm caused by their mistakes
- Maintain their dignity
- Understand that the classroom rules will keep them safe and enable them and their classmates to continue learning

Strategies for Responding to Misbehavior

One of the most important things for teachers to keep in mind when responding to misbehavior is to address the behavior as quickly as possible. When children's behavior goes off track, they need immediate feedback from adults to help them break their momentum and get back on track. Although this might sound obvious, adults often let small misbehaviors go, waiting to address them until they've escalated and are much more difficult to reverse

Three response strategies that are especially effective when used before misbehavior escalates (and that also meet the other goals named above) are visual and verbal cues, increased teacher proximity, and logical consequences. Knowing which strategy to use, and whether more than one strategy is needed, is a skill that comes with practice and depends upon the teacher's knowledge of the children she's teaching. One child who's talking when she shouldn't may need only a cue to correct herself. Another child may need a logical consequence for the same behavior. Or the same child may need a cue on one day and a logical consequence on another.

Helpful questions to consider: Which strategy will stop the misbehavior and restore positive behavior as quickly, simply, and kindly as possible? Which strategy will maintain safety and order for everyone? Which one will help the child develop understanding and self-control?

Whichever strategies are chosen, it's important for teachers to remember to use them early, just as misbehavior begins. Doing so will prevent problems from mushrooming or becoming entrenched.

Visual and Verbal Cues

Once teachers have modeled expected behaviors and given children opportunities for practice, a visual or verbal cue will often stop children's misbehavior and help them get back on track. Simply looking briefly into a child's eyes can powerfully

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Logical Consequences

Logical consequences are one way of responding to misbehavior. Logical consequences are used to stop the misbehavior and help children see the effect of their behavior, take responsibility, fix any damage they caused, and develop self-control. Depending on the child and the situation, teachers might use more than one logical consequence. Or they might combine a logical consequence with other strategies, such as giving verbal or visual cues or moving closer to the child (or having the child move closer to them).

We recommend that teachers use three types of logical consequences.



"YOU BREAK IT, YOU FIX IT"

The teacher helps children take responsibility for fixing something they break or cleaning up a mess they make—whether accidentally or intentionally. If Adam jiggles the table and causes water to spill, the teacher would direct Adam to clean it up. If Joseph accidentally knocks Pedro down on the playing field, the teacher might prompt Joseph to help Pedro up, ask if he's OK, and go with him to the first aid office if needed. Besides helping children take responsibility, "you break it, you fix it" helps them see themselves as competent people who can fix problems they cause.



Loss of Privilege

When a child demonstrates that she's not ready for a particular privilege, she loses that privilege for a class period or a day. If Dana consistently uses the watercolor brush in a way that damages the bristles, the teacher may tell her she cannot choose watercolors during choice period until she's practiced correct use of the brush and demonstrated her understanding to the teacher. Once a child demonstrates understanding of and readiness to follow expectations, reinstating the privilege shows faith in the child's ability to behave responsibly.



POSITIVE TIME-OUT

Positive time-out offers children a way to calm down and recover self-control. If Mark disrupts math lesson by calling out answers without raising his hand, he goes to the time-out place for a minute or two. In time-out, Mark may use self-calming techniques. When he returns, his teacher welcomes him back and helps him rejoin the group in a positive way. It's important for children to know that everyone in a classroom will likely need a time-out at some point.

Time-out should never be used as a punishment. Because many children have experienced punitive uses of time-out, it's important for teachers to explain that "in *this* class, time-out simply gives us the time and space we all sometimes need to get ourselves in check when we begin to lose our cool." To help remove any stigma from time-out, teachers choose a comfortable time-out spot that's away from the hub of classroom action but not isolated so that the child can see the class and join in the work when she returns. (For safety, the teacher needs to be able to see the child from wherever she is in the classroom.) Many teachers further diminish any negative associations by not calling this strategy "time-out," but simply describing it and letting children choose their own name for it, such as "take a break" or "rest stop."

Re-Imaging the Ethical: Tzelem, Demut and A/r/tography

■ by **Karen Dresser**

ETSELEM Elokim—"in the image of G-d"—has been the watchword for beginning discussions about ethical behavior in the Jewish school classroom. The idea of being made "in the image" is introduced early in the education of students through the Genesis narrative, along

with a d'rash on how being made in the image doesn't mean we see G-d, but that we see the image of G-d in each other. The popular camp song by Dan Nichols tells us, "When I reach out to you and you to me, / We become betzelem Elo[k]im." The phrase, however, should be juxtaposed with the Hebrew word demut, "likeness." Arthur Green (Ehyeh: A Kabbalah

for Tomorrow) writes that tselem "refers to our hardwiring...[our] soul of a spark of divinity that is absolutely real and uncompromising. ... But demut is all about potential. ... We are the tselem of G-d; we can choose to become G-d's demut as we work to live and fashion our lives in G-d's image."

We, like creation itself, are in a process of becoming. We strive to stand firm as humans made in the image of G-d, but we are not there yet. Even G-d is imagined by the kabbalists to be in a state of constant motion through the flowing properties of the sefirot, and in the fire of the burning bush as the Voice declares "Ehyeh asher ehyeh," "I will be Who/What I will be."

Maxine Greene, a forerunner in educational theory, and a great supporter of arts education, remarked that she is what she is not yet, and states, "For me, the child is a veritable image of becoming, of possibility, poised to reach towards what is not yet, towards a growing that cannot be predetermined or prescribed. I see her and I fill the space with others like her, risking, straining, wanting to find out, to ask their own questions, to experience a world that is shared." Ethics for the classroom, then, become a matter of students and teacher striving towards being in the present by seeing the local and global communities as they are, while simultaneously striving towards that which is not yet—a healing of societal, political and other ills. It is the process of becoming that sees the Other/other as we ourselves wish to be seen with compassion, acceptance and lovingkindness.

How then shall we begin to combine the notions of image, likeness and becoming into a classroom in which ethics can be taught through art?

I have found the practice of A/r/tography to be of great use in my Arts and Jewish Studies classes (Bible and Art, Holocaust Imagery, Kabbalah through Art). The first three letters in A/r/tography stand for Art, Research and Teaching. Rita Irwin (http://ml.cust.educ. ubc.ca:16080/Artography/)



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that when teachers or students practice a/r/tography they "inquire in the world through an ongoing process of art making in any art form and writing not separate from or illustrative of each other but interconnected and woven through each other to create additional and/ or enhanced meanings." A/r/tography allows students to take responsibility for their own art, research inquiry, and teaching/text. This methodology can be used effectively for ethical change the process of becoming the likeness of G-d. Through this lens, I propose that the "t" in a/r/tography indicates not only teaching, but teaching from the text of Torah, from which all Jewish teaching proceeds.

An atmosphere of continual inquiry rather than lecture is necessary. The history of bnei Yisrael begins with Moses' questions: Why doesn't the bush burn up? and "When they ask me, 'What is [G-d's] name?' what shall I say to them?" Moses imagines that G-d that can't be understood except through questions. Standing in front of the fiery bush that does not burn out, Moses is who he will be, just as the Voice in the bush is *Who I will Be*. Moses undergoes a process of character change as he continues to question G-d through the forty-year meditative expanse of the desert.

For ethics through art to work, tselem and demut are of utmost importance. Artistic images of humanity abound in museums, local galleries, on the walls of coffee shops and many times in our synagogues. Students begin to inquire about those images in general ways: Why did the artist choose to use paint rather than graphite? Why did the artist sculpt this piece rather than draw it? How does the artist represent our society? What does this piece say about being human? How can you grow in your own code of ethics based on middot found in Jewish texts? This inquiry is easily accomplished in any academic or arts-based class.

Ethics and A/r/tography is also suited for in-depth Jewish textual studies. I have included some of the strategies I use in my classes. The first two sections, Text-Study and Visual Art, represent the Art and Research in A/r/tography. The final section, Ethical Inquiry through Art and Writing, encompasses both Art and Teaching/Torah aspects—"to be in the process of" behavioral and spiritual change for oneself and for the sake of others.

TEXT-STUDY

I introduce sometimes difficult stories from Tanakh with high school students, such as David and Batsheva. Using the text (II Samuel 11), we discuss the dynamics of power: Who had it when? What events signify the change of power? What does it mean to be "sent for" or "sent to" by someone in power? How is each character affected physically, spiritually and emotionally by events in the story? How is each one's own power to become the likeness" of G-d promoted or prohibited?

VISUAL ART

Students find selected artistic interpretations of the story (all of which are acces-



Ethics for the classroom is the process of becoming that sees the Other/other as we ourselves wish to be seen—with compassion, acceptance and lovingkindness.

sible on-line): Rembrandt's Bathsheba, Chagall's David and Bathsheva (1956, in which the heads of the two are merged), Lika Tov's Bathsheba and King David (in which Bathsheba takes the place of David's eye). Introduce images of the pair as contemporaries: Ivan Schwebel's David and Bathsheba (1932) and Mary McCleary's David and Bathsheba (1992).

Students first describe what they see in the art pieces. Keeping with the David and Batsheva example, they next inquire about the artist's interpretation of the story: Why did the artist use those colors? What objects are featured, and why (ex., the letter in Batsheva's hand in Rembrandt's painting)? What is of greatest im-

portance to the artist in this painting, and how is this determined? Why did the artist choose this part of the story to draw?

ETHICAL CHANGE THROUGH ART AND WRITING

Students then inquire about possible personal ethical lessons the David and Batsheva story and artistic representations hold for them: What meaning does the story hold for contemporary relationships? How does it translate into a dating situation? What are the ethics that are to be eschewed or sought after in the story and to which character did they belong?

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How can I change my own ethics for the better based on what I've read and seen here? Here, the subject of rape might come up with students, providing an opportunity for additional research into traditional, contemporary and feminist commentaries on the story. Students in my classes found that their own initial interpretations were wide-ranging: recalling the rights of the king; blaming Batsheva for bathing on her roof; castigating David for his unethical behavior in all aspects of the story. This diversity of interpretations gave them ample material for discussion, particularly concerning their own ethical behavior.

After the textual study and ethical discussion, students create a piece of art from various media that takes into account a personal process of ethical coming-intobeing in the likeness of G-d. This is what Rita Irwin and Stephanie Springgay (*Being with A/r/tography*) refer to as rhizomatic assemblage, in which art making becomes a process of ethical reflection and response that relates to a greater audience than the artist alone, and continually reconstructs meaning and methods, opening it up to what Jacques Derrida (*Writing and Difference*) calls the "as yet unnameable which begins to proclaim itself." This idea, when

translated to biblical texts and art, is midrash-aggadah—an art-mak-

is not, and journey into the interpretive space of their own ethical "becoming," opening themselves in that "white space" to the process of change for the sake of themselves, the future community of Is-

rael, and "the other."

R. Jeremiah ben Elazar explains that there is not a concrete separation of genders. Instead the androgynous creature shows that a person is a complex mixture of both female and male traits that cannot be exactly classified because there are "manly" girls and "feminine" boys. The mixtures

Students inquire about art images: Why did the artist choose to use paint rather than graphite? How does the artist represent society? What does this piece say about being human?

Another text I have used successfully in my classes is the creation of *ha-adam*. In addition to comparing and contrasting the two accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and 2, students are introduced to commentaries (Rashi, R. Samuel ben Nachmani, R. Jeremiah ben Elazar, the Zohar) that interpret *ha-adam* as first having been created as an androgynous being. Students then create their own art and artist statement. Inga Mamut, a senior, wrote the following based on her clay piece *Androgynous* (see photographs):

When reading commentaries about the creation of DTK in the Torah, I was captivated by a feeling of surrealism. It was as if my classmates and I were walking through Ripley's Believe it or Not, and the exhibit's name was Androgynous. Several sages created complicated explanations of the verses

that make up humans on earth are not all the same.

There was a time where things were thought of very narrowly. During that time different issues were faced by the different genders. There was no room for understanding the other person's role. Now women walk miles in man's shoes and vice versa. Society has been able to expand to let men be stay at home dads and moms providers of the household. At one point in history that idea was in itself unethical.

Unfortunately, society has not come far enough with being open-minded. There are still many communities that are targeted because of their differences. Some of these groups are the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and the transgendered communities. There is nothing less human about any of these people. Their biological mixing proportions are just different; therefore they feel differently and want different things for themselves.

Our world needs to deal with new issues. These issues should be world hunger, providing everyone medical care, fighting for equal rights and much more, not peoples' differences or who chooses to love whom. People should stop looking at other peoples' differences as problems. We all have differences, but our core structures are the same. We should learn to love each other and teach the coming generations to do the same. This is what it means to "love your neighbor as yourself."

Indeed, this is also what it means to become the demut of G-d even as we are made in G-d's tselem through a/r/tography.

I call it the *lekh-lekha* moment—when students are alone in-between what is said and what is not, and journey into the interpretive space of their own ethical "becoming."

ing process in which values and ethics are explored just as they are in the imaginative midrashic stories that are not halakhic in purpose. Through midrashic art, students examine and discover interpretive meaning in the white spaces of the text for themselves as they "create" a likeness of the text that furthers understanding of Buber and Levinas' "the other"—the one who, though seemingly different from us, is likewise made in the image of G-d. I call it the *lekh-lekha* moment—when students are alone in-between what is said and what

about how the first humans were made: that they were joined at the back having the inability to see the other; that was created from the rib of Rashi says that G-d was like a baker and kneaded them out of clay. My sculpture tries to incorporate all the midrashim using clay as the medium. I attached the male and female bodies at the back, and the rib is exposed. My artwork, the sculpture, and the story are all about piecing things together, mixing them instead of separating, understanding, and accepting them

Positive Responses to Misbehavior

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57]

send the message that "I know you know how to do this; now let's see you do it." Other effective visual cues are a writing gesture for "This is writing workshop; get to work" or a finger against your lips for "Remember, silent lips when someone is sharing."

Verbal cues can be as simple as saying the child's name. Reminding language can also be highly effective: Sonya, what should you be doing right now? Dante, what do our rules say about sharing materials?

Reminding language works best when a child is just beginning to go off track—about to open a book instead of getting out math materials, or beginning to reach to take the blue crayon away from a tablemate. If, however, the child is well into the undesired behavior, reminding language loses its effectiveness. At that point, a clear redirection is needed: *Sonya*, put

the book away now and get out your math materials. Dante, choose another color. It's Ellen's turn to use the blue crayon.

Increased Teacher Proximity

Sometimes all that's needed to reestablish positive behavior is for the teacher to move next to a child. If children have

> been taught how to sit safely in chairs, the teacher's closeness to

teacher's staying nearby for a bit helps the child understand that she must *continue* to sit safely.

Bringing the child closer to the teacher, instead of the teacher going to the child, is another option. Suppose Darren turns around and begins fiddling with items on a shelf during Morning Meeting. The class has learned meeting rules, and they also know that their teacher will sometimes di-

What's important is that the teacher conveys her belief that children can and will learn to choose positive behaviors and that her responses to their mistakes will help them do so.

Maria, who's just started tipping her chair back during direct instruction, can communicate "Sit safely" without drawing undue attention to Maria or disturbing other children. Once Maria sits safely, the

rect them to change their seats if they're beginning to misbehave. A quiet "Darren, come sit next to me" brings Darren to his teacher's side in the circle and gets his at-

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SHANA TOVA 5772

JEXT YEAR IN ISRAEL









For more information contact Day School Coordinator Dana Gerbie-Klein Tel: 617-438-8775 Email: <u>dklein@amhsi.org</u> Website: <u>www.amhsi.org</u>

Alexander Muss High School in Israel (AMHSI) is dedicated to engaging teens and helping them discover, explore and embrace their connection to the heritage, culture and land of Israel. AMHSI works together with Day Schools and community groups to customize their Israel experience bringing Israel's living history into the hearts, minds and souls of all that attend.

Inspirational Leadership and Sustainable Values

■ by **Dov Seidman**

This article is adapted from a commencement address at Hebrew Union College in

y parents were both Zionists and I spent ten years in Israel as a child. My bar mitzvah was at the Wailing Wall. This tradition has nourished me. It is who I am. It inspires me.

I often think of the great teachers who blessed my life and ignited in me a

passion for learning. But if any of my high school teachers could see me now, they would surely be surprised. I graduated high school with two As: one in Phys Ed, the other in Auto Shop. I got a 970 on the SAT. I took it again and my score increased dramatically to 980.

It turned out that I had dyslexia. Somehow I talked my way into UCLA. I was accepted very late and because all the other classes were full, I found myself taking remedial English and philosophy. I fell in love with philosophy. With my professors' encouragement, philosophy helped me overcome dyslexia. Unable to read hundreds of pages, philosophy rewarded me for the careful consideration of one idea and my disability transformed into a strength.

Philosophy is also at the heart of my company, LRN. Since long BE—Before Enron—we have been applying philosophy to the rough-and-tumble world of business. We teach millions of employees how to "do the right thing" and leaders to inspire principled performance in business. So my business is an extension of philosophy. I like to think of myself as a philosopher in a suit. Come to think of it, a Jewish philosopher in a suit.

In Judaism there is a deeper meaning to my son's name, Lev Tov. You may know the story from Pirkei Avot in which Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai asked his disciples, "What is the good path to which a person should cleave?" One student answered, "A good eye," the second said, "A good friend," the third said, "A good neighbor," and the fourth replied, "The outcome of a deed." Finally, his student Rabbi Elazar says, "Lev tov-a good heart," to which Rabban Yochanan responded: "I prefer the words of Elazar, for his words include all of your words." If you have lev tov, a good heart, the rest is commentary. Judaism is about shem toy, having a good name. But it is not enough to have a good name. He has to earn his good name.

As the CEO of an ethics company that operates in a world of unprecedented transparency, I know my son faces a difficult challenge. My son has to earn a good name in a world where everything he says and does on Facebook or Twitter will be easily and forever accessible by others. Wherever he goes, his name will arrive before he gets there. In this world, earning a good name is not so much about what we do, but rather about How we do it. How we behave. How we lead. How a rabbi or cantor or an educator engage their congregation, their students, or persons in

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This idea of How is a Jewish idea. The Talmud testifies to that. For three years, it is said, there was a dispute between Beit Hillel, the followers of Rabbi Hillel, and Beit Shammai, the followers of Rabbi Shammai. Both argued that their ideas were in agreement with Halachah, Jewish law. Then came a bat kol, or heavenly voice, which said, "Eilu v'eilu divrei Elokim Chayim." "These and these"-meaning both of their words-"were the words of the living G-d." However, the Talmud ruled that the law is in agreement with the house of Hillel.

Yet, if both got their words right, what entitled Beit Hillel to have the law fixed according to its rulings? The reason, the Talmud states, was that its rabbis were kindly and modest; they studied the rulings of Shammai as well as their own. They were even so humble that they mentioned Shammai's teachings first.

It was not what Hillel said that inspired the Jewish tradition to view him as an exemplar of human conduct. Rather it is How he behaved and How he treated others. He was an inspirational leader. Now more than ever, people need inspirational leadership from you. What do I mean by inspirational leadership?

Take a leader who has changed the way I think about leadership. His name is Krazy George Henderson. Back in 1981, in the stands of the sold-out Oakland Coliseum, Krazy George had a vision. He was a professional cheerleader, a manic Robin Williams character with an Albert Einstein hairdo, banging on a drum. On an October afternoon, his beloved As were in the playoffs against the New York Yankees, and he imagined the crowd rising in a giant wave of connected human energy. By making this happen, Krazy George invented the Human wave. The Human wave is an extraordinary act. Masses of people from different walks of life, from soccer moms with their kids to rowdy bleacher bums came together with a common goal: to help the home team win.

The wave is a metaphor for what a diverse group of people can accomplish when they share a vision and values. As Jewish leaders, we want to make waves from the bimah, in the classroom, in a counseling situation, in a hospital, and in Sunday school. Think of how a rabbi can inspire a congregation to engage in tikkun olam by repairing a house in an impoverished neighborhood, making waves in the Jewish community and beyond. Think of how a teacher can lead a class discussion about the meaning of tzedakah that spills out into the hallway, and then into the homes of the students and out into the broader world. Think of how a cantor can begin with a single note and inspire a congregation not just to sing along, but to connect with one another, to form a community.

What can we learn from how Krazy George was able to create a wave so powerful that even those who came to root for the Yankees stood up with the As? He focused on How he connected with those around him. He shared his vision with passion and

conviction so that others could believe in it and make it their

What Krazy George understood is

that human waves are not about

generating power through people.

exercising power over people. They are about



Inspired people are guided by their own beliefs, in pursuit of a vision they believe is worthy of their dedication and in fidelity to values they deem to be fundamental.

own. What Krazy George understood is that human waves are not about exercising power over people. They are about generating power through people.

There is a hasidic saying that "one should observe How a master ties his shoes"—the lesson being that no behavior is insignificant. As leaders in a tradition that proclaims that every single person is created

betzelem Elokim—in the image of G-d—and therefore possessed of infinite dignity, you, more than anyone, must remind people that every act and deed possesses the power to profoundly impact others.

What do inspirational leaders understand? They understand that the source of their power to influence others is shifting. Throughout most of human history, the sources of power were finite. No longer! In today's knowledge economy, the sources of power—information and ideas—are infinite. Google gives them away for free. Since we can't hoard information, old leadership habits are becoming less effective. Leadership habits are

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 65]





Cohort Four Dives into the Sea of SuLaM

ate June, and for most school com-Imunities this is the temporary ending of the learning while they prepare for the next "goround." But for twenty-

five day school educators, this June marked the beginning of their two-year participation in RAVSAK's Project SuLaM. The goal of this program is to empower administrators of Jewish day schools to be active Jewish leaders in their schools.

SuLaM incorporates group and individual learning, personal mentoring, networking, and action research to facilitate each participant's growth. It seeks to provide these talented educators with new tools and skills, which will



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assist them to be more comfortable and capable with the execution of the Judaic mission of their schools.

Each day for close to two weeks, participants studied the daily liturgy, Bible, and customs and rituals of the Jewish people as well as ate and prayed together. We also shared two absolutely lovely Shabbatot with each other—praying, celebrating, and studying. In that short span of time we banded together to become a community ourselves (SuLaM Cohort IV), and now we look forward

to growing together personally and professionally over the next two school years as a group.

With the guidance of a mentor, each participant

will now develop a course of study for the upcoming school year and an Individual Action Plan which will help them incorporate the learning into multiple areas of their individual schools. We will all meet together again at the North American Jewish Day School Conference this winter in Atlanta for a shabbaton and more exciting learning.

Rabbi Shawn Simon-Hazani.

Director of Jewish Studies, Robert Saligman Middle School, Melrose Park, Pennsylvania







After 12 intensive days I know that SuLaM is going to give me everything I will need to become the "Jewish Day School Leader" that I want to be. I already feel the effects of SuLaM. I have begun to look at occurrences, situations and issues through a Jewish lens... although there before, the lens has become more present.

I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to embark upon a journey of learning that will deepen my knowledge of text and put me in constant contact with a peer network and learning community in which I am sure I will rely on for years to come. Project SuLaM could not have come at a better time in my life.

Debra Abolafia, Head of School, N. E. Miles Jewish Day School, Birmingham, Alabama

The experience of participating in SuLaM has both cultivated and refined my understanding of leadership in Jewish day schools. Instead of depending on drab lectures and "networking time," SuLaM brings together a diverse cohort of leaders and somehow manages to get them to encounter, or reencounter, the scripture, literature, and language of Judaism. SuLaM takes the approach that leaders are learners first, and that Jewish values can and should inform the critical decisions that schools make every day. The experience of being around such wise, empathic, and experienced educators was invaluable, and I'm excited to bring my SuLaM experience back to Shalhevet.

Roy Danovitch, General Studies Principal, Shalhevet Day School, Los Angeles, California

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shifting from command-and-control to connect-and-collaborate, from exerting power over people, to generating waves through them.

As the source of power is shifting, leaders are also coming to understand that How they guide behavior must shift with it. There are three ways to generate human connection and conduct: you can coerce, motivate or inspire. Coercion says: "Get me the memo by 5 o'clock. My way or the highway. Just get it done, I don't care How." Motivation says: "If you get it done, you'll get a bigger bonus." Coercive or motivational leaders use external objects, carrots and sticks, to efficiently get performance out of people and connection with them, and to otherwise get people to play by a set of rules.

In our now power-through world, we are discovering the limits of carrots and sticks and learning that we can't write enough rules to get the behaviors we want. If the only reason I work at a company is for a paycheck, then I'll leave when I'm offered a bigger one. If the only reason I buy from one company is their price, then I'll switch my loyalty if someone else sells it for less. Motivation is an expensive way to propel behavior, particularly in a recession when there are fewer carrots to go around.

That leads me to the third and, I believe, most powerful form of human influence: inspiration. The first two letters in "inspiration" are "in" signifying that the conduct is intrinsic. Whereas coercion and motivation happens to you, inspiration happens in you. Inspired people are guided by their own beliefs, in pursuit of a vision they believe is worthy of their dedication and in fidelity to values they deem to be fundamental.

Values are at the root of inspiration. Values are efficient and help us navigate infinite situations better than any rulebook. They are timeless, giving us strength to be consistent even though the pressures of life tell us to be situational. They are enduring, inspiring us to be principled however inconvenient, unpopular or dangerous that might be. Values elevate us to

act beyond what we can do, to embrace what we should do.

What so many are just coming to understand is something that our 3000-year tradition has always recognized—the infinite power of values: "Devarim sheyotzim min halev, nichnasim el halev"—"Words that come from the heart, enter the heart of another." Either by dint of necessity or foresight, Jewish leaders and institutions have sought a self-sustaining way to generate elevated and enlightened conduct, to enter the hearts of others and to inspire waves across generations.

Inspirational leaders are mindful of the paradox of hedonism, the philosophical idea that if you pursue happiness directly it eludes you. But if you passionately pursue a higher, more meaningful purpose, you can achieve happiness. I have learned from my work that there is a corollary to the paradox of hedonism. I call it the paradox of success—that you cannot achieve success by pursuing it directly. What inspirational leaders understand is that real and sustainable value can only be achieved when you pursue something greater than yourself, that makes a difference in the lives of others. The word I use for this is significance.

My hope is that each person reading this realizes you are uniquely qualified to make waves. It's not just the synagogues, schools or Jewish community that need you. Right now, the world needs your passion, your energy, your Jewish values and your inspirational leadership. The world needs all of you to inspire significance.

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Positive Responses to Misbehavior

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tention back on his classmates, without breaking the meeting rhythm.

Logical Consequences

Logical consequences are another strategy that teachers can use to stop misbehavior while helping children see and take responsibility for the effects of their actions. The three types of logical consequences are "you break it, you fix it," loss of privilege, and positive time-out. (See sidebar on page 59.)

Logical consequences differ from punishment in that, unlike punishment, logical consequences are relevant (directly related to the misbehavior), realistic (something the child can reasonably be expected to do and that the teacher can manage with a reasonable amount of effort), and respectful (communicated kindly and focused on the misbehavior, not the child's character or personality).

Suppose Robin scribbles on her desk. Having her clean the desk would be a relevant, realistic, and respectful logical consequence. Having her miss recess would be irrelevant. Having her clean every desk in the classroom after school would be an unrealistic amount of work, and the uncleanness of the other desks is irrelevant to Robin's behavior mistake. And saying "You're so rude-you just don't care about anyone but yourself!" would be a disrespectful attack on her character.

Introduce the Approach to Children

This approach to responding to misbehavior is most effective when children know in advance what to expect from their teachers. It's not necessary to name the strategies. What's important is that the teacher conveys her belief that children can and will learn to choose positive behaviors and that her responses to their mistakes will help them do so. The teacher's choice of words, along with a friendly, matter-of-fact tone and a few specific examples, will help get this message across. For example, when introducing logical consequences, a teacher might

"We're all working on following our classroom rules because we know that we learn better and feel safer in our classroom when we do that. But we all

make mistakes sometimes—we forget a rule or choose not to follow one. In our class, when you don't follow a rule, it's my job to help you get back on track, fix any problems you caused, and learn to follow the rule next time. For example, if you're running in the classroom and knock down someone's block tower, I might tell you to help them rebuild ... [give more examples showing use of other strategies]."

It's also important for the teacher to let children know that at one point or another, everyone makes behavior mistakes and needs support to get back on track, and that's OK—just as it's OK to make mistakes when learning academic skills.

Try, Try Again

Responding to misbehavior is one of the most challenging aspects of teaching. Even the most experienced teachers make mistakes. But just as we allow students to make mistakes, we must allow ourselves to make them, too. And then, just as we do with students, we must allow ourselves to try again without judgment, but with the spirit of learning to do it better next time.

Ch/eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40]

tween the rich and poor, Jewish ethics promote tzedakah to help achieve a dynamic balance of shared resources. When educational competition yields a chasm between the educated and the unlettered, Jewish ethics should intervene to promote a healthy intra-personal competition, in which each learner competes only against his or her learning potential. We should not have to wait until the cheating becomes known to effect teshuvah.

Why do we do things that we know are

wrong? Because we are frustratingly, fascinatingly human, perpetually caught on the horns of ethical dilemmas. We keep eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and we keep cheating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Our morality and our mortality have been inextricably intertwined from the first bite.

Perhaps we are not condemned to this ineluctable fate. Perhaps we can lower the cheating incentive, at least in our schools, by changing the game from measuring

success against one another to measuring success against one's past performance and future potential. On that day each learner would be a ben Adam or a bat Sarah, a unique individual created in the image of the divine, still struggling with love and truth, righteousness and peace, and yet able to hear truth rising up from the ground of his or her being. As Zechariah taught (14:9), "On that [same] day G-d will be One and G-d's name will be One." Until that day, we will keep ch/ eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.



PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE IN JEWISH EDUCATION

Thought leadership, resources, and tools to help Jewish day schools achieve financial sustainability.



Response by Alan Brodovsky

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A seasoned solicitor should have been assigned to work with the Zimmermans: one who had done sufficient research and preparation before meeting with them. The solicitor should have received proper training about what authority they have in working with such high level donors, including offering board membership and officership.

Although I strongly believe in long-term planning and taking responsibility, I also understand the board is faced with a challenge right now and needs advice on how to proceed. I do not have a problem with Wendy coming on the board, but she should not receive veto power. In my community, we often find a dearth of people willing and able to serve on our Jewish organizational boards. As long as someone is competent and willing to make a donation, they should be able to serve the community. However veto power is not about serving the community, but is instead about power. If Mrs. Zimmerman does not like a family in the school, does veto power allow her to kick out their children? If she has an issue with another large donor who wants to donate \$1 million in a naming gift, does her veto power allow her to refuse the gift? I do not believe that a community organization, especially a school, can act responsibly and allow any person to have veto power.

My advice to the school is to have someone with authority sit down with the Zimmermans and find out what they are truly looking for in a relationship with Goldman Jewish Day School. The school's job is to create a win-win situation: secure a large donation from the Zimmermans, dig to the root of their needs and wants, and find a way to meet in the middle. In my experience, large donors do not want to control every aspect of the school; I think the Zimmermans' request for veto power was a misplaced way of letting the school know they have needs that they want met. The school should do all they can, within carefully laid boundaries, to meet the expectations of the Zimmermans.

Alan Brodovsky is past president of Shalom School in Sacramento, CA. He can be reached at abrodovsky@gmail.com.



Re/Pre Digital - Phase II of Re/Presenting the Jewish Past

e/Presenting the Jewish Past, a program dedicated to elevating the level of Jewish history education in high schools jointly run by RAVSAK and the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development, convened nine participants from the previous three cohorts and one new Jewish history educator to help the program evolve into its second phase: Re/Pre Digital.

The ten participants gathered at NYU with leading scholars in the Jewish history field such as Robert Chazan, Re/Pre's codirector, Gur Alroey and Marion Kaplan to study topics relevant to the teaching of Jewish history. The main focus of the weeklong workshop was the building of an online resource combining primary, secondary and tertiary sources as well as curricula and artifacts covering a broad range of topics in Jewish history. The participants were charged with helping to identify key features for the resource and specific topics or themes in Jewish history education to focus on at the alpha level. The workshop culminated in each of the participants choosing a topic to begin making contributions to the site.

This online resource will eventually allow visitors to build a lesson plan by selecting components from various categories of documents. Future implementation will include features such as the ability to augment existing materials through user submissions, user ratings and reviews, as well as the ability for users to network and communicate via some form of forum or chat system.







Ethics in Technology A Challenge for Jewish Day Schools

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31]

ness, gemilut chasadim.

During a recent nationally broadcast professional baseball game between the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Milwaukee Brewers, an agile young boy watching from the stands became the proud owner of a ball that was thrown toward a small child who missed the catch. The older child walked away, holding the ball. The younger child was visibly upset and heartbroken. The older child walked over to the younger boy and handed him the prized possession. The compassionate act went viral. Website upon website spread the story, including video. The Arizona Diamondbacks' official Facebook page received hundreds of "likes" and comments, e.g.:

"He's what the youth of today should be looking up to, not the athletes themselves. His folks obviously taught him respect and responsibility. Great job to his parents..."

This is an example of a positive role model whose deeds were seen as a learning tool for others—virally. Every action has potential to be seen by and impact others throughout the global, digital world today.

But just as this positive story went viral, so have many less stellar acts. Therefore, it is the role and responsibility of educators at each and every level of teaching students to know and adhere to ethics policies in the broad spectrum of modern technology. It is imperative for ALL technology users to realize that the ways in which they conduct themselves can easily become the subject of viral communications, and to therefore act responsibly and exercise ethical judgment.

Many technology seminars today emphasize the fact that there really is no true "delete" button—information that is disseminated and deleted really is "never deleted." Information that is shared often cannot be "unshared." Once it is out there, it easily can become viral. What are the consequences? Who is responsible?

Who is charged with teaching students about such issues? What policies are in place to help facilitate these processes? Who is accountable? How often should policies be updated?

These are just a few of the ques-

goal could be education or simply sharing information. Freedom of choice to utilize communications and technology tools unimaginable just a few years ago is literally at everyone's fingertips today. In the school environment, it is hoped that students, parents, administrators, and educa-

It is the role and responsibility of educators at each and every level of teaching students to know and adhere to ethics policies in the broad spectrum of modern technology.

tions that perhaps need to be posed annually when planning for the upcoming school year. Technology is no longer an option. Therefore, it must be added to every planning agenda in some shape or form.

In closing, the following text should be considered when formulating an Ethics in Technology policy. It comes from Pirkei Avot 3:19, but can easily be adapted to modern-day governance:

All is foreseen, and freedom of choice is granted. The world is judged with goodness, but in accordance with the amount of man's positive deeds.—Rabbi Akiva

Each of us has a purpose and goals to assist us in our endeavor to communicate effectively, broadly, and positively. The

tors have good intentions in their quest to share anecdotes and information with others. The tools through which this can be accomplished make it easy to repeatedly engage in positive communication. Respect for others must always come into play. Countless opportunities abound for all to spread good will in a responsible manner

Ethics and technology require us to take a step back and consider damage that can be done whether intentionally or not. With technology at our fingertips, unless guidelines are adhered to and consequences recognized, great potential for indiscretion can flourish. It continues to pose a challenge for Jewish day school educators. When navigated effectively, technology can be a force for tremendous growth and learning.

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Bookcase

HIS column features books, articles and websites, recommended by our authors and people from the RAVSAK network, pertaining to the theme of the current issue of *HaYidion* for readers who want to investigate the topic in greater depth.

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www.biblical-art.com

Center for Spiritual and Ethical Education: www.csee.org

www.responsiveclassroom.org

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