

Tani Talks Life (TTL), Brought to you by The Tani Talks Podcasts-This is the Shiur Where We Talk A Topic Per Session With Some Practical Lessons

Tonight's Topic: "Donate This, Donate That!"

All of my Podcasts of the TTP, TTPA, TTD, TTOT, and this life show, are on different podcast forums including iTunes Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and MOST RECENTLY, YIDPOD! (The Jewish podcast app service—download it on the app store!)

Shout out to Jake W/Eli N as well as Chaim C. for their amazing hard work!

For the refuah and yeshuah of anyone who wants or needs

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As people who live in western society, we just have way too much stuff. Ever notice how much stuff we accumulate over the years? When we were moving from our Brooklyn apartment to our Long Island home, we got an 18 foot truck, 18 feet! And it just wasn't big enough—and at that time we were only married 3.5 years and had one small baby. We had to go back twice to the apartment in a van to get the rest of our stuff.

I think of our house and how much stuff is in the attic, the basement, and in the garage. For those who have much bigger houses, much more stuff is accumulated over the years...and it just sits there. What can we do with all this stuff? The answer any m opinion is to DONATE THIS, DONATE THAT. IF you have books you longer read or use, donate! IF you have clothing you no longer wear or use, DONATE! Same goes for toys, equipment, and the like...DONATE THIS, DONATE THAT! Don't wait until you magically get clean up fever or nesting instincts to go through and donate your stuff.

Even Shabbos leftovers can be given to someone else who can use them if you're not going to eat all of them. Give it to a family member! Give it to a friend, a coworker, someone who can use it ! Don't let it go to waste.

There are many organizations that need donations. One of the major ones I think of is the car donation company, Karsforkids.

As explained by Wikipedia, Kars4Kids is a nonprofit car donation organization based in Lakewood, New Jersey. Kars4Kids is a United States-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that states that its mission is "to fund educational, developmental and recreational programs for low-income youth"<sup>[4]</sup> through programs largely facilitated by its sister charity Oorah, which focuses on Jewish children and families.<sup>[5]</sup> It was founded in 1994 and is currently headed by Eliyohu Mintz.<sup>[6]</sup>

Kars4Kids is a nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) status, operating in the United States and Canada. Kars4Kids takes donations of cars, boats, yachts and real estate, accepting over 40,000 cars annually.<sup>[7]</sup>

In 2018, Kars4Kids reported revenue of \$65.6 million and expenses of \$59.8 million.<sup>[3]</sup> Donations to Kars4Kids benefit Oorah, a national nonprofit organization whose stated mission is "to give Jewish children and their families opportunities to become active and productive members of their communities".<sup>[8]</sup>

Kars4Kids offers financial assistance to students to help pay for private school tuition and GED testing.<sup>[9]</sup> The organization also sponsors a youth program known as Chillzone, an after-school program teaching Jewish culture and moral values.<sup>[10]</sup> Additionally, they sponsor the summer camp TheZone,<sup>[11]</sup> which operates Jewish sleepaway camps in the upper Catskills region of New York State.<sup>[12]</sup> They also offer small grants to other nonprofit organizations,<sup>[13]</sup> and in 2016 Kars4Kids awarded \$5,000 to Girls on the Run International.<sup>[14]</sup>

The organization hosts regular coat and clothing giveaways for the needy nationwide, including in Harlem, New York, Washington, D.C., and in Newark, New Jersey, where they held a give-away together with then-Newark Mayor (and current U.S. Senator) Cory Booker.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

In terms of clothing, I think of the Bad Leah clothing drive which comes to our town annually in October. Wikipedia explains:

Yad Leah is a volunteer-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization<sup>[1]</sup> which sends clothing to poor families in Israel. It was founded in 2004<sup>[2]</sup> by Passaic resident Jessica Katz and Beitar Illit resident Karen Milch Thaler.<sup>[3]</sup> It distributes tens of thousands of articles of clothing to over 25 communities annually, selling them for a nominal fee.<sup>[2]</sup> <sup>[4]</sup> Yad Leah has a volunteer center located in Passaic, NJ where volunteers can pack and sort donated clothing.<sup>[4]</sup>

You can be involved in donating toys as well. According to chai lifeline, the Honey engel toy drive is explained as

Toys and games are a prescription for recovery!

Play is crucial for helping children cope with medical procedures, doctor visits, and hospital stays.

Be part of Chai Lifeline's toy drives and help keep a child occupied and happy during a turbulent time in his or her life.

Select a gift in any price range for a sick boy or girl, ages infant through teens.

- New, unwrapped toys and games only.

- Check packaging and labeling for toy safety guidelines and manufacturers' age recommendation.
- Please, no toys that are breakable, have sharp edges, brittle plastic or glass, or contain detachable small parts.
- No guns or toys that encourage violence, including violent electronic or video games.
- Gifts for teens are especially appreciated.

Toys are carefully selected for Chai Lifeline patients and siblings by age and interest, and given to children during holiday parties across the country.

Double the Mitzvah!

Purchase gifts at one of our Toy Drive Partner stores and a portion of the purchase price will be donated to Chai Lifeline. [Click here](#) for a list of Toy Drive Partners.

For more information, including a list of participating schools and drop-off locations, call 877 CHAI LIFE, ext 656 or email [toys@chailifeline.org](mailto:toys@chailifeline.org). Pick-ups of large donations can be arranged.

In terms of Jewish books or novels, in our town we have one such initiative, the free lending library, where Jewish books and novels can be donated as part of the FLL for others to take and read. In your town you can probably donate books to libraries or other places that will be glad to take the books off of your hands.

There are gemachs for different purposes and needs such as Purim costumes, wedding dresses, furniture, baby items, and much more.

Listen to this about Gemachs from [chabad.org](http://chabad.org) with writer Linda Hirschel:

the problem is. She takes the affected arm and maneuvers it in a certain way with no screech from the child. Then she holds out a sweet towards the child. If the child reaches up for the sweet, Chava knows that the elbow is properly reset. The parent thanks her, and Chava shuts the door.

This little scene could play out at any time of night or day. Chava will happily open the door, reset the arm and go back to whatever she was doing, whether it be sleeping or eating a Shabbat meal. Chava has what is called a gemach, or more specifically, a “Limb Reset Gemach.”

What Is a Gemach?

*Gemach* is short for *Gemilut Chasadim*. I looked it up on Google and could not find an appropriate translation. It offered words like “charity,” “benefaction,” “philanthropy,” “favor” and “benevolence.” But these words just don’t capture the idea of a *gemach* or the depth and breadth of *gemachs* that exist.

A classic *gemach* is a free loan society. People borrow either small amounts or large chunks of money without having to pay interest. In addition to complying with the Biblical prohibition on charging (or paying) interest from (or to) fellow Jews, these *gemachs* are a lifeline for people in need.

My husband and I contributed monthly to a *gemach* when our children were very young; that was considered charity, or in our case, *maaser*, or “tithes,” on our income. Years later, we borrowed from that same *gemach* to help pay for our children’s weddings. Now we are paying it back, and, of course, it is interest-free.

#### The Broader Definition

But then there are the non-monetary *gemachs*, those that share all kinds of items or services. These *gemachs* either don’t take money or else take a deposit or a token amount of money, so I suppose that would make them a sort of charity as well. And, of course, the giving is certainly benevolent, especially when it could mean answering the door at all hours of night or day. There are a few that entail an investment of money, so that might be called philanthropy. Perhaps the best translation for *gemach* is “acts of lovingkindness.” I opened the phone book in my hometown of Beit Shemesh and counted 151 categories of *gemachs*! And under each category there could be an average of five or more addresses where you call or just show up to borrow or receive, free of charge, whatever service you might need.

Here’s another example of a *gemach*. Suppose t’s the last day before a school break and you don’t have any small change, but you need to give your daughter \$5 that morning to help pay for the teacher’s present. Or maybe you need to get to the urgent-care clinic quickly and don’t have money for a taxi. My neighbor, Emma, started a small-change *gemach*. Anyone in our building can borrow up to 50 shekels (about \$15). She started it as a merit for the recovery of her nephew who had cancer.

#### Saved by a Gemach

Then there was the time my son was visiting for Shabbat with his children, and come 11 p.m., we couldn’t find my grandchild’s pacifier. It was destined to be a miserable night for baby, parents and grandparents alike. Because it was Shabbat, we could not call; however, we knocked on Brodstein’s door and were provided with a choice of brand new pacifiers in a variety of colors, shapes and sizes. There are several baby food *gemachs*; these are for babies who must have food and whose mothers are unable to provide it. I know mothers who donate to this particular *gemach*. True lovingkindness.

Or suppose you give birth to a baby boy on a Friday, and you don’t have time to make chickpeas for the traditional Shalom Zachor, the gathering many communities have on Friday night to welcome the new soul to his new world. So what do you do? You can call the chickpea *gemach*. They have a stock of food traditionally served at Shalom Zachors (including chickpeas and beer), even if it is literally minutes before Shabbat.

As you can see, *Gemilut Chasadim* is something that anyone can do. You don’t need a lot of resources; all it takes is someone with a big heart who really wants to help others, and some ingenuity as to how you can be of assistance.

#### Some Examples

Here are just a few *gemachs* that I have come across, started by people who had original ideas in how to be of service to others:

*Aveilut* (They will bring low chairs and sometimes a Sefer Torah for mourners who are sitting *shiva*).

Battery recycling

Car-bike rack

*Chuppah* (to borrow a marriage canopy).

Copy documents

Computers

Elevator rescue (to help people stuck in elevators)

Freezer space (to offer extra food storage; this is especially useful near the holidays when people bake ahead of time but don't have room in their freezer)

Measuring spoons for baby formula (you really don't know how much formula to put in a baby's bottle if you lose that spoon)

Mouse traps

Pin for gas burners (the holes in gas stove burners often become stuck with gunk; calling an appliance repairman may be costly. The pin does the job!)

Snake catching

One of the words our sages use to describe the Jewish people is *Gomlei Chassadim*, those who do acts of lovingkindness. We are a nation who puts into practice good deeds and kindness. From small to big, in pregnancy and in death—and everything in between—there is someone who is ready to help you out in your time of need.

Which makes me wonder, what act of *gemilat chassadim* can I consider doing?

The sisterhood of our soul has a clothing rematch: Sisterhood currently operates a clothing exchange to help us empty and then re-fill our closets. Shabbos outfits, school clothes, comforters, shower curtains, dishes and much more!

In addition in our town, for example,

They also have a gemach for simcha gown dresses and a maternity clothing gemach as well as a skirt gemach.

There's also a shtick gemach as well for weddings.

One of the shuls in our town also have a medical gemach where one of the families loans out wheelchairs, walkers, and other medical devices to all who need—as explained on the soul website, Their garage wasn't going to be used for a car anyway.

Other places also money gemachs and loaning money /interest free loan gemachs, have car seat gemachs (if less than five years old due to regulations), as well as different places have gemachs for wedding centerpieces also formula, cell phones, chairs, tables moving items, gardening, food, household items, shoes, sheitels, jewelry, seforim, jewish novel lending libraries, hachnassat orchim, folding beds, cooking items, travel items, kid items like highchairs or pack n plays, and so much more.

These are all things and places we can do and what we can donate for. We personally have lent out multiple items from this list and it didn't cost a dime.

JTA.org points out

Need a wedding dress, and don't have the thousands of dollars it might cost? What about a Purim costume, or a bicycle, or a loan for a new car? A gemach can help.

The word gemach is actually an abbreviation (in Hebrew) for gemilut hasadim, or “acts of kindness.” The term originally referred to a fund that loaned money to anyone who needed it, based on the Torah’s requirement to lend money to Jews interest-free. The first organized gemach in America, the Hebrew Free Loan Society of New York, was established during the wave of Jewish immigration to America in the late 1800s.

Over time, the concept has evolved to include loans of all kinds. These days, it’s possible to find a gemach for virtually everything—interest-free loans, baby supplies, wedding clothes, and everyday clothes. One gemach loans out props for wedding celebrations, including “mazel tov” signs and Hawaiian leis. In Crown Heights, there’s even a gemach for bicycles, started by a father of nine who wanted to promote fitness among Hasidim.

A gemach can be difficult for the uninitiated to crack into—because of its nature (that is, lending out valuable things based on trust alone), it’s often limited to a local Jewish community. On the other hand, tracking down a gemach—either to make a donation or to borrow an item—is a great excuse to familiarize yourself with your local Jewish community. Or you can always start your own gemach, if there isn’t one in your community already.

Rabbi Packouz points out on aish.com

GOOD MORNING! What can you do to ensure that you have a portion in the World to Come? A wagon driver, a simple man, once asked the Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, this question. The Chofetz Chaim -- the greatest rabbi of his generation -- advised him, "Start a *gemach*, a free loan society." (The word "*gemach*" is an acronym for the Hebrew "*gemilut chasadim*" which translates as "doing deeds of kindness.") In *Pirke Avos*, Ethics of the Fathers 1:2, the *mishna* (teaching) states: "Shimon *HaTzadik* (the righteous) used to say that the world stands on 3 things: Torah, Prayer and Deeds of Loving Kindness."

The Talmud, Yevamos 79a, tells us that the Jewish people are known by 3 traits: merciful, morally sensitive and doers of kindness. How one expresses those qualities is only limited by his or her imagination, creativity and sensitivity to others' needs.

This fits right in with the highest level of Maimonides 8 Levels of Tzedakah (righteousness ... philanthropic assistance to others) -- to help a person before he becomes impoverished -- with a loan or by finding him a job or a business deal. Their motto: "To give people a chance to stand with dignity on their own two feet."

In Jerusalem (and many other Jewish communities), however, there are literally thousands of different types of Free Loan Societies. They even publish a directory! If one is having a *simcha* (a joyous celebration -- an engagement, a *bris*...) there are *gemachs* to borrow tables and chairs and even dishes and silverware! If it is Shabbat and the pharmacy is closed, one can go to a medicine *gemach*. Imagine the joy of being able to borrow the right power tool. The former mayor of Jerusalem, Uri Lopiansky, started his career helping people with a *gemach*, Yad Sarah, for medical equipment including beds, wheel chairs and oxygen machines. Yad Sarah grew to a multi-million dollar institution helping people throughout Israel ... and Uri Lopiansky was drafted to be on the Jerusalem City Council where he eventually became mayor!

Bridal gowns are very expensive. One can borrow a gown, pay for tailoring, wear it, have it cleaned and return it.

In *Pirke Avos*, Ethics of the Fathers 4:21-22, the *mishna* (teaching) states: Rabbi Ya'akov said: "This world is compared to a corridor before the World to Come; prepare yourself in the corridor in order that you may enter into the banquet-hall." He then continues and says, "Better one moment of repentance and good deeds in this world than all of the World to Come; and better one moment of spiritual pleasure in the World to Come than all of the life in this world." If one wants to talk about ultimate pleasure, it is in the next world. If one wants to talk about the opportunity to fulfill the Almighty's will, make the world a better place and perfect his own character, then this world is the place. In the next world there is no opportunity to do *mitzvot* (the Almighty's commandments) or to work on perfecting oneself or the world. What better way to have pleasure in this world and the next than to help others by starting a Free Loan Society? The Almighty, Himself, says about Abraham, "I have loved him because he commands his children and his household after him that they keep the ways of the Almighty to do righteousness and justice..." (Genesis 18:19). If you would like to know more about what the Torah teaches about kindness and how to help others, I highly recommend the classic and essential book *Ahavath Chesed* (Love of Kindness) by the Chafetz Chaim available at your local Jewish bookstore, or online.

Peshie Needleman points out on [atime.org](http://atime.org)

In order to be a well-rounded individual, one must make sure to properly mix her household duties, her job, her own self-care, and not neglect her communal responsibilities. This is not hard to do because there are so many ways one can help out in her community. As an IF'er who doesn't have extra time to spare, running a *gemach* is the perfect solution as it is practically self-run. Gemachs abound in all frum communities. You can even start up one yourself! *Blech* gemachs are old school. No one blinks an eye when they hear about *siddur* gemachs or *mechitza* gemachs or tablecloth gemachs. What's in nowadays are unique gemachs; nothing is too small or too, uhm, strange, to open a gemach for. The stranger the better. Find your niche. How about an oven mitt gemach? A lint roller gemach? A thimble gemach? It's simple, really. You just have to assess the needs of your particular community and address them. (If you happen to notice some women around with bloody fingers, then a thimble gemach would be just the thing for your neighborhood. Either that or a band aid gemach.) Now *that* would be handy for those nasty 22-gauge pinpricks. A *segulah* gemach would also be a wonderful addition, since you probably have a neat, typed alphabetized list of segulos framed already. Just make some copies and hand them out for free. For detailed instructions on how to create, administer or ingest the *segulah* of choice, just refer them to those concerned individuals who enlightened you about that particular *segulah* in the first place.

C'mon...Hop on the bandwagon and, ahem, open a bandwagon gemach! (Not sure what that is, though, but sounds like it could be useful.) Once you decide what your gemach will specialize in, you must then go out and buy numerous versions of the object in various colors. For your oven mitt gemach you would run to your local housewares store and buy a red pair of oven mitts for fleishig, a blue pair for milchig, a green pair for hot veggies, a yellow pair for banana bread, a checked pair for a county style kitchen. For a lint roller gemach you would buy tons of lint rollers from the local dollar store. For a bandwagon gemach you would buy a few different sized bandwagons. (Maybe go on EBay for that one, because you are going to want free shipping here!) Then just designate a room to store your items in, decide what hours you will be open, and pay for some ad space in your local circular to announce your gemach to the community. Here's a sample: Announcing for the first time in Monsey, Simcha V'Sasson Thimble Gemach. Don't needlessly prick your fingers any more. Come to my thimble Gemach. Open Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 8-9 pm. Special *Erev Shabbos* hours upon request. Miminum donation optional."

If opening a gemach is not your thing, there are so many other ways you can make a difference in your community. There are many worthy organizations that need your help. If you are the type of person who has been blessed with a sense of style you can volunteer to set up for a tea....

The aish Rabbi points out on [aish.com](http://aish.com)

The Code of Jewish Law (following Maimonides' Laws of Gifts to the Poor 10:7-14) describes eight different levels of charity:

1) The highest category is someone who strengthens a fellow Jew in need by a gift, loan, or offer of partnership or employment.

From here comes the Jewish concept of a free loan fund, called a Gemach. If you help someone start a business, he can feed himself and 10 other people besides. As the old saying goes: Rather than give him fish to eat, teach him to be a fisherman.

Actually there's even one higher level of tzedakah: being sensitive to someone before he's in trouble. As the Sages explain: It takes one person to support something before it falls, but after it falls, even five people may not be able to lift it. (see Rashi, Leviticus 25:35)

There's also the Keren Dovid Winiarz Free Items Gemach, a Facebook group, explained as Rabbi Dovid Winiarz touched an amazing amount of people, one of the many items he was involved with was a free items gemach. This group is meant to be a continuation of that gemach. Anyone is welcome to post items they are looking for/or want to give away. This is not a commercial group and thus all offers are to be FREE. It is ok to ask the recipient to arrange for the delivery/pickup of the goods even at their own cost. Please make sure to state location when posting. Including photos is a plus.

As a matter of policy any fundraising campaign posted here that does not have the required approval as described in the pinned post will be subject to deletion without notice. I would like to keep all other posts open and automatic as such I ask members who would like to have campaigns posted to follow the instructions there.

Furthermore, any comments or post deemed derogatory or inappropriate are also subject to immediate deletion without notice

Violators of the group policy risk being banned from this group.

Bless those items you no longer use to be used by a happy recipient. May we all have solace and continue Reb Dovids ztl great legacy. Happy decluttering!

Have you ever heard of the chicken lady? There's. A 93 year old lady in Jerusalem that has such a name, due to the kindness she does and what she donates.

[aish.com](http://aish.com) explains with author Mayaan Jaffe-Hoffman

If you had met Chaya Hammer on the bus or in the supermarket you probably would have smiled at her (hard to resist her shining eyes), but then passed her by. Little would you have known of the miracles that this 93-year-old great-great-grandmother is capable of performing.

If you had not met Chaya, you may have assumed that all people in their 90s are in nursing homes or dependent on their children out of necessity. Little would you have known how many lives this woman enhances (saves, really), or the kindness this survivor of the Russian pogroms bestows.

She is affectionately known as the "Chicken Lady," and many have fallen in love with her and her good deeds.

The Chicken Lady began her kindness campaign 22 years ago during a routine trip to Hacker's, a kosher butcher shop in Jerusalem.

"I was standing in line and I saw Mr. Hacker give a young girl a huge plastic bag," Chaya explains. "I saw from the distance that it was nothing but fat and skin. The girl said 'thank you' and left.

"I waited my turn. When I got to the front of the line, I said, 'Mr. Hacker, how many cats and dogs does that family have that it needs so many scraps?'"

Hacker explained that the family had no pets, but seven children. The father was on dialysis and the family had little income. He said he could not afford to give them more, for they already owed him much money. He explained that they used the fat and skin for "chicken soup" and for the cholent (Shabbat day stew).

The words went straight to Chaya's heart. She looked across the counter and said: "From now on, give the family chopped meat and a whole chicken -- and I will pay for it!"

Chaya started by helping that one family. And that soon became two families. Today, 136 Jerusalem-based families come to Hacker's for their Shabbat meat, running up a weekly bill of over \$1,000. Most of these families do not know their anonymous benefactor.

The kindness, however, does not stop with those close enough to get to Hacker's. Before Rosh Chodesh (the beginning of the Jewish month) Chaya's 17-year-old great-granddaughter comes over to prepare greeting cards, envelopes and checks amounting to about \$6,000 to send to 64 families throughout the country.

When the checks are written they are placed in envelopes with a cheery *chodesh tov* ("good month") greeting card and a decorated stamp, usually the newest Israeli creation. The envelopes are addressed with computer-printed labels and then sent with a smile and love.

Chaya says the idea of the greeting card is to ensure people feel good about the money they receive. "I don't like people to feel belittled because they need charity."

Where does Chaya find her "clients"?

Through the grapevine and by reading the newspaper. Many of Chaya's recipients have truly tragic stories. She sends money to the 15 children of "Shlomo," who was walking down the stairs from his third floor apartment to deliver *mishloach manot* (gifts of food) to a neighbor for Purim. He slipped, broke his neck and died. "I have them," she says.

In 2000, when Palestinian terrorists murdered a husband and wife, leaving eight young children, Chaya assumed responsibility for them.

Neighborly kindness is not something Chaya grew up with. Born in Vinograd, a small town in the Ukraine, Chaya says her classmates teased her for using a Hebrew name. She and her family survived three pogroms before running away to Romania. The Romanian border police refused her family entrance and they were jailed for five months. When release finally came, the family headed straight for Palestine.

"My father was very Zionistic... How I love this country! How I love it!" Chaya says.

However, Chaya's mother had tuberculosis, so the family was forced to relocate to America.

Two-and-a-half years later, Chaya's mother died a young woman of 34. The family remained in America, until 1969 when Chaya and her now deceased husband, Ephraim, made aliyah to Israel. Today, there are five generations of Hammers in Israel: Chaya, her three daughters, seven (out of nine) grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

With everything this devoted *bubbie* (Yiddish for grandmother) gives to her umpteen offspring, one would think Chaya should have little time for her "chicken business," but she is very organized and dedicated.

Chaya doesn't think she is doing something unusual. "It is just the Jewish way," she says.

A trip to Chaya's modest three-bedroom apartment reveals her intricate system. I sit on a chair cushion designed with images of little white chicken heads, facing a mantle of chicken stuffed animals, figurines and mugs (all gifts). However, most importantly, I sit in front of a desk -- strewn with envelopes, cheery stamps and cards -- and next to a chair piled high with 10 large, stacked filing boxes. When a donor sends money for the Chicken Lady's endeavors, the name, date and amount is recorded in an account book.

She flips through a book to show me; 54 pages have been filled since July 2002. Once the donation is recorded, she writes a personal thank you note to the benefactor. Then, the donor's name is placed on a card and filed alphabetically in one of the 10 boxes on the chair.

Chaya raises her chicken money by word of mouth. While most donations come from the United States, she has supporters in Europe and the Far East. "Thank God, I have a good name and people trust me," she says. "They know if they give me \$1,000, it goes directly into the charity fund."

Unbelievable. One 93-year-old woman (who could easily pass for 60) is feeding hundreds of needy people with no more than the knowledge that this is the Jewish way. "When I know that children are hungry," she says, "I want to give them all I have."

[aish.com](http://aish.com) points out from Dr. Miller in an article from May 2020

For the Jason family of Houston, giving is a way of life. "We're used to helping people," explained Matthew Jason, 15, in an Aish.com exclusive interview in which he described his family's unique project helping homeless and other underprivileged people during the Coronavirus pandemic.

For several years, ever since Matthew was eight, the Jasons have regularly volunteered with a local charity aiding Houston's homeless. Parents Mark and Veronica would take their three sons, Matthew and his older brothers Jeremy, 19, and Danny, 23, to a distribution point each week where the family would help hand out meals to homeless people. The family formed a bond with many of the homeless and also developed a keen sense of reaching out and aiding others.

The Jasons are active in their local synagogue and through the years they've turned to their Jewish community for help in their work with the homeless. Jeremy marked his bar mitzvah by creating a campaign to donate socks for homeless people. Through his family's synagogue, he eventually raised over 800 pairs to give away.

As part of Matthew's bar mitzvah celebration, he brought birthday cake and food to donate to homeless people to help them celebrate their birthdays, as well. Matthew has continued the project for years. "I bring birthday cakes once a month to help celebrate homeless people's special days."

As concerns about Coronavirus spread last month, the Jasons worried about how it would impact the homeless people they were used to working with and other underprivileged Houstonians. The CDC recommends that all Americans wear masks while out in public to help slow the Coronavirus' spread. This advice is difficult for homeless and other poor people who might not be able to afford necessities like food, let alone face masks and other protective items.

"We were sitting down for Shabbos dinner as a family," Matthew recalls, "wearing our kippahs and we realized that kippahs are sort of the shape of a mask already." As the Jasons enjoyed their Shabbat dinner, they discussed the possibility of turning kippahs into protective masks to give away.

Matthew and his brothers had many excess kippahs that they'd ordered for their own bar mitzvahs, as well as many kippahs from their friends' bar mitzvahs through the years. "Everyone in our community seems to have a drawer or two of kippahs they no longer use" Matthew explains. He and his brothers gathered together all the kippahs they could find in the house; they turned up 70-80. The family experimented with ways to turn them into face masks, and came up with several different methods. Their favorite was to sew two 6-inch loops of elastic onto the seam on each edge of the kippah's backing, forming loops that can go over wearers' ears. The entire family worked, perfecting the plan, and created scores of masks.

The Jasons brought the kippah masks along with them the next time they volunteered to distribute food and supplies to the homeless, and the response they received was overwhelming. "People were amazed that we were doing this," Matthew recalls. "They were really grateful – people realized that it took a long time to sew the masks, and they realized the masks could be very helpful."

The Jasons contacted their synagogue to ask if they could put a collection box near the building for community members to donate their extra kippahs as well. The Jewish community reacted enthusiastically: within weeks the Jasons received about 700 donations. Even though the Jasons are all very busy at the moment, either working or attending classes online, they've somehow found the time to sew hundreds of masks. Veronica, especially, has spent countless hours sewing, doing most of the work, fitting the time in between her work as a busy psychotherapist. They were originally worried that the project might be too big for them, but so far they have managed to make their project a reality.

To date, the Jasons have sewed about 340 masks, and have donated them to homeless people and also to local health clinics. Each week the family fields calls from people recommending local sites that are in need of masks. The Jason's are working hard to keep up with demand. They've named their project "Kippahs to the Rescue".

Matthew says he and his family are going to keep making face masks for as long as they can. "Realistically, we'd like to keep making them until this whole thing is over, until masks aren't needed any more."

Matthew, who is now 15, shares some wise advice. "People should just remember that anything can really help: any creative idea that you have that can help people will always be appreciated. In a time of need, at least try something," he urges. "Anything you can do is great."

Rabbi Zev Leff points out on [aish.com](http://aish.com)

Next page

The Talmud (Baba Basra 10a) relates that the wicked Turnus Rufus once asked Rabbi Akiva, "If your God loves the poor so much, why then doesn't He provide for them?" Rabbi Akiva responded that God could easily provide personally for the poor, but He chose to give us the merit of giving *tzedakah* (charity) to save us from *Gehinnom* (netherworld).

For this reason, says the Midrash (Ruth Rabba 5:9), the poor person does more for the rich person than the rich person does for the poor person. When Naomi asked Ruth who had provided Ruth with the food she brought home that day, Ruth answered, "*The man I did for today was named Boaz.*" Boaz provided her with what God could have provided Himself, but she provided him with a Mitzvah - a chance to be God-like by giving to another.

In this light, we can understand the words of Maimonides in his commentary to Avos (3:19), "All is judged according to the number of deeds." Maimonides explains that it is better to give one dollar of charity 100 times, than 100 dollars one time. The more times a person acts in a way that is meritorious and God-like, the more he conditions himself to the performance of Mitzvot and purifies his soul. *Tzedakah* is not performed for the poor person's sake, but rather to enable the giver to emulate God and merit *Olam Haba*.

So, too, with respect to the support of Torah institutions, as the Chafetz Chaim explains the verse in Proverbs (3:18), "*It is a tree of life for those who grasp it, and its supporters are praiseworthy.*" The word *lehachazik* means both to support and to cling or to grasp. God could provide for the Torah institutions without any human help, but He chooses to funnel His support through human agents. Those agents must realize that their "support" for Torah is in fact support for themselves. When they recognize that, they will cling to their support for Torah institutions as one clings to a log in a raging river. For them, then, their support is a tree of life. Those who think that they are in fact supporting the Torah will also be rewarded - as God does not deny reward for any good deed - but for them Torah is not a tree of life.

The Chafetz Chaim himself was once approached by a wealthy benefactor who offered to underwrite the entire operating expenses of his Yeshiva in Radin, Poland. He politely refused. "I cannot permit you to monopolize the merit for supporting my Yeshiva and thereby deprive others of an opportunity to do so," he told the man.

Whatever you feel pulled to, you should do to help to donate and contribute. Donate this, donate that! In our own town, out of our own house basement with its own separate entrance, We started the free lending library, FLL in our neighborhood, and we ensure a proper experience for all to borrow jewish novels out of our basement, with that special own entrance, time lots, masks, a check out list of books to leave contact info, and a intercom system used to let me know when the patron is done. We also often lend out different items from our house such as our cots. We also try to donate our time and food by cooking for people, often, sometimes even weekly, whether for a family with a new baby or for a LHavdil loss gd forbid.

There's also a really simple way to give and donate. Ever hear of [dailygiving.org](http://dailygiving.org)?

[aish.com](http://aish.com) points out from Dr. Miller when it was founded in 2019:

A new movement that has been rapidly gaining ground gfor a few years now gives people a chance to perform a mitzvah every day.

“Imagine if every single morning you wake up, and you’ve already done one mitzvah,” Dr. Jonathan Donath, the co-founder of DailyGiving.org, recently said in an Aish.com interview. No matter what else happens that day, you can be assured that at least one good deed was being performed because of you, and that you’d already fulfilled the crucial Jewish mitzvah of *tzedakah*, giving charity.

DailyGiving.org donors sign up to donate a dollar (or two or more if they choose to give for each person in their family) every day to charity. Due to the way credit card fees are structured, donors are billed either monthly or yearly, but each day, one dollar from their donations is distributed to a different Jewish organization in the United States or Israel.

“100% of all donations are given to the charities,” explains Dr. Donath. He and the board that runs DailyGiving.org are all volunteers and take no salaries. The groups they donate to are all non-profits who help people on a national level.

The idea started in 2019. “I’d just listened to a class about how much every seemingly little mitzvah matters,” recalled Dr. Donath, “when I went to put a dollar into our shul’s tzedakah box. As I looked at the dollar, I suddenly viewed it in a different way. It doesn’t matter how much I already give to tzedakah – I still get a mitzvah every time I give a dollar.” Dr. Donath wondered if there was a way he could “guarantee myself this mitzvah every single day for a buck.”

He searched for any organizations that help people pledge charity every day but found nothing. Dr. Donath was determined to act, realizing that gathering together many people’s \$1 donations could make a big difference.

Dr. Donath assembled a board and approached some of the most prominent rabbinical authorities in the United States for guidance. In January 2019, DailyGiving.org was registered as a 501c(3) charity in the United States and went live, helping people to donate a dollar a day to a diverse range of charities.

As of 2019, DailyGiving.org supports 36 organizations dedicated to alleviating poverty, to helping those with special needs, helping the elderly and children, and education. “There are so many tzedakahs out there,” Dr. Donath noted. His group only helps support organizations that are national in scope and that have low operating budgets.

A brief sample of recent donations includes Pantry Packers, an Israeli charity that donates crates of food to some of Israel’s poorest citizens each month; Sharsheret, a national US group that supports women diagnosed with breast cancer; Yachad, an international group dedicated to helping people with disabilities; and many others.

As of summer 2019 they had given out over \$60,000 and over \$160,000 has been pledged.

Donors appreciate the peace of mind that comes from knowing that each day they have donated charity and performed at least one mitzvah. One woman explained that she signed up in the merit of her sick child who is bedridden and unable to perform many of the functions that most of us take for granted. She felt great that her child could now participate in the central Jewish mitzvah of giving charity each and every day.

Other contributors have given funds in honor of other people or in memory of loved ones who’ve passed away.

Dr. Donath sends a welcome email to each new contributor, enabling him to make a personal connection. DailyGiving.org once received a particularly large daily pledge and Dr. Donath called to verify the donation and ensure that they could afford it. The donors in question knew what they were doing; they decided to make DailyGiving.org their primary vehicle for charitable giving.

DailyGiving.org is helping people realize that even relatively small amounts of money can make a big difference. "A dollar a day is doable for many people. It's less than what many pay for a cup of coffee," Dr. Donath said. "And giving each day trains you to work on yourself."

As more and more donors sign up with DailyGiving.org, this seemingly small amount of charity is primed to make a significant impact for thousands of Jews around the world.

For more information about DailyGiving.org or to sign up, visit [www.dailygiving.org](http://www.dailygiving.org).

Currently their website [dailygiving.org](http://dailygiving.org) explains:

\$8,824

Donating Per Day

\$3,428,247

Already Donated To Tzedaka Organizations

\$3,220,760

To Be Given Over The Next 365 Days

### Our mission

Our mission is to enable every Jew to easily perform the mitzvah of tzedaka every single day, and to disperse those funds to deserving Jewish non-profit organizations around the world on a daily basis.

### Daily Giving

Just as Jews pray every day and make blessings before eating, and say Shema before falling asleep at night, giving charity should also be performed regularly – each and every day. Daily Giving makes that goal – that mitzvah – easy and attainable. Many of us have been taught from a very young age to put something in the Tzedaka box for the poor every day. Jewish children across the world do this mitzvah each and every morning with zeal and excitement. Daily Giving is determined to bring back the joy that giving just a little can bring to one's soul. When you donate daily, your small donation will be combined with thousands of others and given each day to a deserving charity.

### What can a dollar do?

Sometimes, in the massive world of Jewish philanthropy, it can become challenging to feel that your charity is making a significant difference. Now it can! By giving only a dollar a day, an amount that most can afford, you will be contributing together alongside thousands of others. These combined efforts and dollars will reach further and impact more Jews than most of us can ever hope to reach on our own. Your one dollar a day will be multiplied exponentially by the power of unity. With approximately 14.5 million Jews in the world today, if only 1% gave a dollar a day, that would mean well over 50 million dollars in charitable funds will be distributed to our list of worthy causes every year!

### How it Works?

Choose a recurring donation amount (\$1/day, \$2/day, \$5/day, etc), and decide whether you want to be charged once a month or once a year. Due to the credit card transaction fees, it would not be prudent to charge your credit card daily. Daily Giving Inc. will be your messenger and distribute your dollar on a daily basis whether you are charged monthly or annually. You will receive a daily email informing you of which organization you helped support that day. Example: Today, your dollar was one of \$17,411 sent to help support Camp HASC.

They currently help around 57 Jewish charitable organizations

My wife and I are participants of this project, and our dollar goes a long way. I happen to love seeing the emails every day telling us where our dollar goes, and how many people gave.

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Let's look at a few other sources.

Rashi on Exodus 31:18:1

Israel] began to donate to the Mishkan, which was erected on the first of Nissan.

Ketubot 67b

... When he [Mar 'Ukva] was about to die, he said: ...He said, "Bring me my bank account records!" ... Written in his accounts, he found that he had 7,000 gold Sianki pieces. He said, "No amount will be enough to take with me to the next world." [lit. "The road is long, and the provisions few."] He then distributed half of his wealth as tzedaka. What - how could he do that!? Didn't Rabi Elai say, "In Usha [the city] it was established: when distributing money ... - a person may only donate one-fifth of their income." These words - only apply in a person's life, for perhaps a person might lose their property. But, in death - this rule doesn't apply.

Ketubot 50a:3

The double use of the verb that means to donate one-tenth indicates that Jacob, who issued this statement, was actually referring to two-tenths, i.e., one-fifth.

Kitzur Shulchan Arukh 34:4

But as a dying bequest, you are permitted to [donate] up to a third of your estate to charity.

**PTC. Really do a tenth/ten percent, but can do up to 20 percent or a fifth. But remember, nothing goes with us to the next world and at the end of life can give up to 30 percent away**

Two sources from sefaria

The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel [sela], when giving this terumah-offering to [before] Hashem to atone for your souls.

Take this atonement money from the B'nei Yisrael and donate it for the work of the Tent of Meeting. It will be a remembrance for the B'nei Yisrael before Hashem to atone for your souls.”

**PTC. Donations last more than anything else you can buy. That is the only real money that stay with us and stays for us .**

Bava Batra 9a:1

Rav Ashi said: I do not even need to make a stipulation, as whoever comes to donate to this charity fund comes relying on my discretion and understanding that I will give the funds to whomever I want.

Bava Batra 10b:2

Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov says: A person should not donate a peruta to the charity purse unless a great and trusted individual like Rabbi Hananya ben Teradyon is appointed as supervisor over it.

**PTC. Give whatever you can but Make sure your money and donations go to trustworthy people and places.**

Ketubot 49b:7

Like this case of Rava, who coerced Rav Natan bar Ami, who was a wealthy man, to donate to charity, and collected from him four hundred dinars for charity.

Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 9:2

So also [the community] must enlist collectors to take [donations] on a day-to-day basis, from each and every yard, a main dish, other types of food, fruit, or money for anyone who would donate something...

Mishnah Shekalim 4:1

Yossi says: If one wishes, he may donate his services as an unpaid watchman.

**PTC. Make sure to donate in whatever way you can, and with whatever objects or talents you may have to others who need or want it, every single day.**

Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 7:15

One who says, "Give 200 dinarin for the synagogue" or, "Donate a Torah scroll to the synagogue," they should give to the synagogue which he usually attends.]

Kitzur Shulchan Arukh 141:5

It is customary to donate a coin, equal to half of the standard monetary unit currently in use in the country before Purim, as a reminder of the half-shekel, the Jews used to give in Adar to buy the communal offerings. It is customary to give three half-shekels, because in Parashas Ki Sisa,

the word *terumah* [offering] is mentioned three times. These coins are given in the evening before the reading of the Megillah, and then distributed to the poor. A minor is exempt [from giving the half-shekel]; but if his father once contributed for him, it remains his obligation for life. According to some authorities, a thirteen year old boy must give [a half-shekel], while others hold that he is exempt until he reaches the age of twenty.

Tractate Derekh Eretz Zuta 9:14

Be happy when you donate gifts [of charity] quietly

***PTC. Give regularly and quietly first to people and needs within your own town and community before looking elsewhere***

Rosh Hashanah 7a:21

The Gemara asks: It is obvious that one may donate of his own property to the community, provided that he transfers it to the community in the proper manner.

Orchot Chaim L'HaRosh 4:16

Each week and month donate as much as you can to charity. Each day, before Prayers, give at least something, however small, to charity. When you can, tithe your assets and profits.

***PTC. Again, [dailygiving.org](http://dailygiving.org) When we train our spiritual muscles every single day, we are doing a great service to our giving muscles.***

BUT YOU MUST BE VERY CAREFUL WHAT YOU PLEDGE... Think about the story in Judges 11:30

And Jephthah made the following vow to the LORD: "If you deliver the Ammonites into my hands,

then whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me on my safe return from the Ammonites shall be the LORD's and shall be offered by me as a burnt offering."

Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites and attacked them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

He utterly routed them—from Aroer as far as Minnith, twenty towns—all the way to Abel-cheramim. So the Ammonites submitted to the Israelites.

When Jephthah arrived at his home in Mizpah, there was his daughter coming out to meet him, with timbrel and dance! She was an only child; he had no other son or daughter.

On seeing her, he rent his clothes and said, "Alas, daughter! You have brought me low; you have become my troubler! For I have buttered a vow to the LORD and I cannot retract." "Father," she said, "you have uttered a vow to the LORD; do to me as you have vowed, seeing that the LORD has vindicated you against your enemies, the Ammonites."

She further said to her father, "Let this be done for me: let me be for two months, and I will go with my companions and lament upon the hills and there bewail my maidenhood."

“Go,” he replied. He let her go for two months, and she and her companions went and bewailed her maidenhood upon the hills. After two months’ time, she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed. She had never married....

Malbim says: בזה עשה לה נדרה במה שלא ידעה איש ונשארה צרורה עגונה עד מותה, והיה זה מצוה לפי דעתו. ודעת חז"ל שהעלה עולה ממש

She never married, to fulfill the vow.

Kitzur Shulchan Arukh 34:9

Therefore, if you say, "I will donate money to charity" or "this coin is charity" you must immediately give it to the poor, and if you delay [giving it to them] you are in violation of the commandment...

**PTC. Watch what you say that you will give or donate and that makes a good rule for life—follow up and do what you say you will, go through with things.**

Gray Matter IV, Medical Issues, Live Organ Donations 22

David Bleich and Rav Mordechai Willig rule that one is obligated to donate blood and platelets if a dangerously ill individual currently is in need.

Peninei Halakhah, Days of Awe 7:13:5

When their children and family members are inspired to donate money and do good deeds in their memory, it shows that the departed souls continue to have a positive influence on the world.

Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Bo, Torah Ohr 29

Wealthy people are able to donate 20% of their wealth. What they are left with will still be ample. When one has limited means, however, giving away 20% of those means may represent a great hardship.

**PTC. Give what you can, within your means and do so keeping in mind those who are no longer with us as a Zechus for that person**

PTC.

**PTC. Really do a tenth/ten percent, but can do up to 20 percent or a fifth. But remember, nothing goes with us to the next world and at the end of life can give up to 30 percent away**

**PTC. Donations last more than anything else you can buy. That is the only real money that stay with us and stays for us.**

**PTC. Give whatever you can but Make sure your money and donations go to trustworthy people and places.**

**PTC. Make sure to doate in whatever way you can, and with whatever objects or talents you may have to others who need or want it, every single day.**

**PTC. Give regularly and quietly first to people and needs within your own town and community before looking elsewhere**

**PTC. Again, [dailygiving.org](http://dailygiving.org) When we train our spiritual muscles every single day, we are doing a great service to our giving muscles.**

**PTC. Watch what you say that you will give or donate and that makes a good rule for life—follow up and do what you say you will, go through with things.**

**PTC. Give what you can, within your means and do so keeping in mind those who are no longer with us as a Zechus for that person**

WRAP UP.

Give whatever you can and whenever you can—DONATE THIS, DONATE THAT! Have a donation mindset thinking what can we contribute to help those around us. Keep in mind what could most help people and allies with your passions and hobbies in life. Think about doing it as a zechus for those longer with us as well. Go out of your comfort zone to donate and help what you can with those around you. If we do so we can make the whole world so much more brighter.