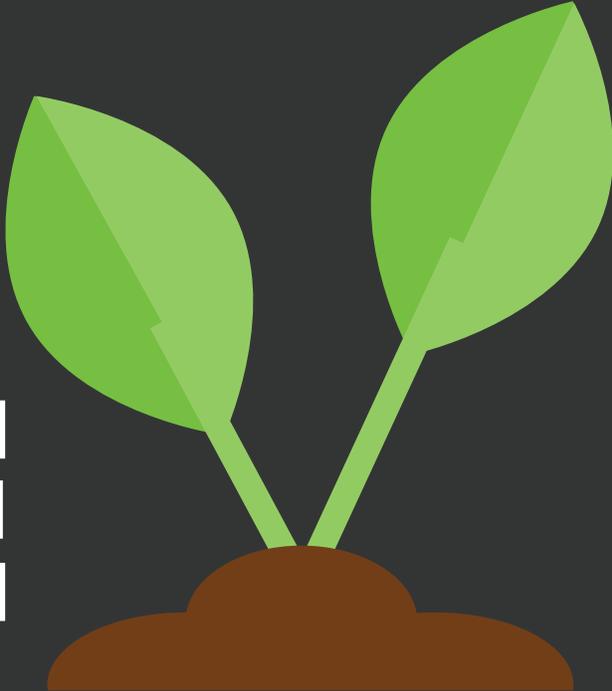


**MODULE 3:**  
Contextualizing and  
Understanding Service



# WE PLANT SEEDS

*A How-to Guide for Effective Jewish  
Service-learning Programs*

Brought to you by Repair the World, in partnership  
with AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps



## MODULE 3

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

## INTRODUCTION

Many times we volunteer without reflecting on the larger context of the work. More deeply exploring the purpose of service and understanding how it relates to other types of work for social justice and some of the challenges inherent in it can help us to more fully and effectively engage in it. In addition, understanding what Jewish tradition has to say about service can help us link our service work with our Jewish identity in more meaningful ways. This module will delve into each of the following areas and provide interactive activities that can help to engage volunteers in this exploration:

- I. Understanding Service
- II. Understanding Service on a Spectrum
- III. The Complexity of Service
- IV. Judaism and Service

## I. UNDERSTANDING SERVICE

The following are a series of activities that you can use to help participants think more deeply about service, its impacts, why we do it and how it relates to other ways of making change.

### A. INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to help participants begin to think in more depth about the service they do, what impact it has and what the overall value of service can be.

**Overview:**

This activity is facilitated in three parts - first participants describe prior service experiences, then they identify the impact of those service experiences, and finally they consider different types of service and impact.

**Materials Needed:**

- lined paper
- pens/pencils
- chart paper
- markers for chart paper

**Length of Activity:**

45 Minutes

**Procedure:**

**1. Personal Experiences (20 minutes)**

Ask participants to think of a time when they volunteered, focusing on an experience of which they are proud. Ask them to write down their brief responses to some (or all!) of the following questions and be prepared to share with the group:

- With whom did you partner?
- What did you do?

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- How long did you serve?
- Why was this service necessary?
- What was the broader social justice issue with which your service was connected?
- What about the experience made you feel like it was impactful and/or meaningful?
- What motivated you?
- If community members were around while you did the service, what was their reaction?

Ask them to share their examples and the details with the group. Discuss as a group the following questions:

- What kinds of service are happening in these examples?
- What do we learn from these examples about what service is?
- Would you call all of these examples service? Are any not service? Why not?

#### **2. The Impact (15 minutes)**

*For this section, take notes on chart paper.*

Spark the group's discussion about the impact of the service on their personal experiences by asking the following questions:

- What happened...
- For the individual(s) or organizations with which you partnered to do this service?
- For the broader community?
- For society at large?
- For the volunteer?
- For each of these stakeholders, what were the immediate, visible effects of the volunteering? What might be the longer-term and/or less tangible impact? How can we measure this impact?

#### **3. Themes and Closing (10 minutes)**

*For this section, continue to take notes on chart paper.*

Based on what has just been discussed, ask the group:

- What themes emerged in our conversation?
- How are these acts of volunteering connected, even if the service itself is different?
- Is there a similar impact across different kinds of service?
- Ask one or two people to synthesize what we can learn from this about how volunteering affects people, communities, and volunteers.

### **B. VOLUNTEERING AS A CATALYST**

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to explore with participants the power of volunteering and service.

#### **Overview:**

This activity is facilitated in two parts - first, participants discuss a text in pairs or *chevruta*, then the full group discusses together.

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### Materials Needed:

- copies of “Volunteering as a Catalyst” text (Appendix A)
- chart paper, white board, or handouts with Part 1 questions written in advance

#### Length of Activity:

20-25 minutes

#### Procedure:

##### 1. Chevruta/Paired Discussion (10 minutes)

Have the group split into pairs and have each of the *chevruta* pairs read the text (see Appendix A) and discuss the following questions which you should also provide on a flip chart, white board or individual handout:

- How would you summarize what this text says about the power of service?
- Why is service important, according to this text?
- What can service accomplish, according to this text?
- What resonates about this text’s approach to service? What’s missing?

##### 2. Debrief (10-15 minutes)

Ask pairs to share back any insights they came to in their conversation, interesting ideas or questions.

## II. UNDERSTANDING SERVICE ON A SPECTRUM

Engaging in service and volunteering are important ways of addressing the many challenges that our society faces. They exist on a spectrum of several other methods of social change - each of which have different roles, benefits and disadvantages.

### A. SOCIAL CHANGE SPECTRUM

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to explore different ways of pursuing social change to better understand what they involve and what their goal is.

#### Overview:

This activity is facilitated in three parts: first, the group reviews definitions of the various methods of social change, then they explore where those methods fall on the spectrum of social change and finally they consider how each of the methods might be applied to a particular social issue.

#### Materials Needed:

- copies of “Methods of Social Change: Definitions” (Appendix B)
- copies of “Types of Social Change Worksheet” (Appendix B)
- chart paper with spectrum drawn on it
- markers for chart paper

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### Length of Activity:

50 minutes

#### Procedure:

##### 1. Review Methods of Social Change Definitions (15 minutes)

Pass out “Methods of Social Change: Definitions” (see Appendix B) Explain to participants that these are not the only definitions, but they are commonly understood definitions of these terms in the social justice world and provide a helpful framework and language for understanding the different ways people address injustice.

Ask for volunteers to read each definition out loud. After each definition, ask a participant to name a local organization that employs that method.

##### 2. The Social Change Spectrum (15 minutes)

Introduce the group to the spectrum of social change.<sup>1</sup> Have a piece of chart paper prepared with “Works within existing societal system” at the left of the page and “Attempts to change the existing societal system” at the right.

Using the methods discussed so far (direct service, philanthropy, community development, advocacy, community organizing, social entrepreneurship, education) and any that the group wants to add, discuss where each method falls on that spectrum.

Works within  
existing societal  
system

Attempts to  
change the  
existing societal  
system

**Note: From left to right, the generally agreed upon order is: direct service, philanthropy, education, community development, social entrepreneurship, advocacy, community organizing - however, legitimate cases can be made for other configurations. Allow the group to create their own order.**

Discuss further:

- Does the approach to the spectrum make sense?
- Does it help you to clarify how the methods are related?
- Are there any limitations to this model?
- Which of these methods have you employed? Which of these would you be interested in exploring, either for the first time or more deeply?
- If the group feels inclined, you may want to give them a chance to propose an alternative model and/or modes of evaluating methods of service.

##### 3. Applying Methods to Issues (20 minutes)

Using the “Types of Social Change Worksheet”, ask participants to work in groups to choose a social issue they’re passionate about and then look at ways that each method could be used to address that issue.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: Bobo, Kim, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max. *Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy Manual for Activists*. Santa Ana: The Forum Press, 2010. Print.

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

**Note: If you're short on time, this final activity could be left out.**

## III. THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

Service is inherently complex. Most often, we are doing service in and with communities that are not our own and with which we have limited, if any, familiarity. Often times, these are also communities which are experiencing various kinds of oppression - whether that's racism, poverty, etc. In addition, we are often engaging in service as a way to feel good and to give back to our community. All of these factors lead to complex dynamics that the following activities explore.

### A. MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to explore different perspectives on the complexity of service and some of the challenges inherent in it.

#### **Overview:**

This activity is facilitated in three parts: first, participants discuss a text in *chevruta* pairs, then each pair reports back to the group and finally there is a wrap-up and synthesis.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- copies of four texts "Multiple Perspectives on the Complexity of Service" (Appendix C)
- chart paper
- markers for chart paper
- chart paper, whiteboard, or handouts with Part 1 questions written in advance

#### **Length of Activity:**

40 minutes

#### **Procedure:**

##### **1. Chevruta/Paired Discussion (15 minutes)**

Split into *chevruta* and distribute a different text to each group. Let them know that when everyone comes back together, each pair will share a bit about their text and the ideas that came up in it.

The texts which can be found in Appendix C are excerpts from:

- Klau, Max, and Dana Talmi. "Dual Benefits, Dual Challenges: The Theory and Practice of Integrating Community Impact and Participant Development in Jewish Service-Learning Experiences."
- Spodek, Rabbi Brent, and Adam Gaynor. "It's a Pleasure to Serve You."
- Kivel, Paul. "Social Service or Social Change?"
- Dubofsky, Chanel. "On Service."

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

Have the pairs read the texts and discuss the following questions:

- How would you summarize what this text says about the complexity of service?
- What dangers or negative consequences of service does this text raise?
- What resonates about this text? With what do you disagree?
- Prepare a brief summary about key concepts and ideas to share back with the group, as well as any questions that the text raised for you.

#### 2. Presentations (15 minutes)

When you come back together, have each group share out the key concepts, ideas and questions that came out of their text. Each pair has 2 minutes to present. Take notes on a flip chart to keep a visible record of what comes up.

#### 3. Wrap-up (10 minutes)

Ask participants about connections they see between the key concepts or questions raised by each of the texts. Are there any themes that we can take away?

**Note:** At the end of the session, you may want to distribute copies of all the texts to participants, so they each get a full set.

## B. IMPACTS OF SERVICE

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is delve into the possible intended and unintended consequences of service.

#### Overview:

This activity is facilitated in three parts - first, a discussion frames the idea of risks and downsides related to service, then the group explores a framework to better understand those and finally the group discusses implications of the model.

#### Materials Needed:

- chart paper with service impacts model written up (see below)
- markers for chart paper

#### Length of Activity:

40 minutes

#### Procedure:

##### 1. Framing (10 minutes)

Ask participants to think about and share whether there are risks or potential downsides to service. Can service be harmful? When and how?

##### 2. Service Impacts Framework (15 minutes)

After hearing some initial responses, offer the following framework, drawn on chart paper, and ask participants to brainstorm positive intended impacts and negative unintended impacts.

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## CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

### SERVICE IMPACTS

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Intended Impacts	<p>Who was impacted by this service?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>What are potential positive impacts?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><i>Let's hope that there are none here!</i></p>
Unintended Impacts	<p><i>You may wish to cover this category briefly with groups that have a lot of service experience. Ask them to recall an example from a service experience that they've had.</i></p>	<p>Who was impacted by this service?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>What are potential negative impacts?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

### 3. Discussion (15 minutes)

Once you have filled out the chart, ask participants to discuss the following questions:

- What gets in the way of doing service that results in more positive impacts? Why do we engage in service that produces negative impacts?
- If participants do not give these answers, mention:
  - » We often are not willing to do what is needed: It asks us to change our schedules or do something tedious or not immediately compelling.
  - » We often want it to be about us, about what's easy or doable for us.

Some additional elements of the positive and negative impacts of service that you can discuss with the group include:

- Service must be done in coordination and conjunction with community members and leaders, based on what they need. If we do not work in partnership, we risk parachuting in and pretending to solve another community's problems, disrespecting and possibly doing harm to relationships.
- What we want to do is not always what is most needed by a community.
- Sometimes our well-intentioned service can create additional work for organizations that they must put time and money towards rather than focusing on their primary task(s).
- Sometimes, we provide things that simply maintain the status quo – or worse, disempower local residents; we do not offer systemic solutions and we even get in the way.

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### C. COMPLEXITY OF WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to explore some of the complexities that arise when we do service with communities that are not our own and with whose day to day experiences we are not familiar.

**Overview:**

This activity is a two part activity - first the group watches a video clip, then they discuss it.

**Materials Needed:**

- an internet-capable device to play [The Volunteers](#).<sup>2</sup>

**Length of Activity:**

20 minutes

**Procedure:****1. Video Clip (5 minutes)**

Play minutes 1:49-4:40 from the 1985 film [The Volunteers](#).

**2. Discussion (15 minutes)**

While the situation depicted in this clip takes place abroad and in some ways may seem like an extreme caricature, similar themes or realities may manifest in domestic and local service. Discuss with the group the following questions:

- In what ways can you see a situation like this playing out domestically/locally?
- What dangers or negative consequences of service does this video raise?
- What insights can this video provide into how we approach our service work?

#### IV. JUDAISM AND SERVICE

Jewish textual and historical tradition has much to say about service - who we should serve, when and how. Better understanding what our tradition has to say can help us more deeply connect to the service work we do and can motivate us to engage in that work more often and more deeply.

##### A. POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to explore how Jewish wisdom can inform our understanding of and doing of service.

**Overview:**

This activity is a two part activity - first pairs discuss one or a variety of texts, then the pairs come back together as a larger group to debrief their study.

<sup>2</sup> The Volunteers. Dir. Nicholas Meyer. Perfs. Tom Hanks, John Candy, Rita Wilson. 1985. Youtube, 2012.

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### Materials Needed:

- copies of texts that will be discussed (five possible texts are provided in Appendix D, or choose your own)

#### Length of Activity:

15-30 minutes

#### Procedure:

##### 1. Paired Discussion (10 minutes)

In Appendix D are a series of ancient, medieval and modern Jewish texts that can inform our understanding of service. These texts can be used individually - with all members of a group reading the same text and discussing in pairs or used together - with different pairs reading different texts.

##### 2. Debrief (5-20 minutes)

If groups read the same text or texts, bring them back together to share insights or highlights from their group. If groups read different texts, bring them back together to share key points from each text and insights from their conversations.

## B. MAIMONIDES LADDER

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to explore how Jewish wisdom can inform our understanding of and doing of service.

#### Overview:

This activity is a three-part activity - first the facilitator frames the activity, then the groups engage in a hands-on card-based activity, and finally the group comes back together to discuss.

#### Materials Needed:

- copies of the Maimonides Ladder Cards, printed and cut (Appendix E)
- chart paper with eight levels written out

#### Length of Activity:

35-40 minutes

#### Procedure:

##### 1. Frame (5 minutes)

Share with the group that Maimonides, a medieval Jewish philosopher, articulated eight ascending levels of “charity,” each greater than the one before, that bring us closer and closer to the Divine. In this activity, we’ll be learning more about those levels and how they apply to service work.

##### 2. Exploring the Ladder (20 minutes)

Hand out the cards with examples of each step of the ladder on them (do not share Maimonides’ eight steps yet). Split the group into pairs or small groups and ask them

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### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

to order the cards according to what they think are the lowest to highest forms of service. Ask for volunteers to share the order that they decided on and to explain why they placed each example in that order.

Once the groups have completed the activity, review the following steps of the ladder that have been written up on chart paper:

1. The person who gives reluctantly and with regret.
2. The person who gives graciously, but less than one should.
3. The person who gives what one should, but only after being asked.
4. The person who gives before being asked.
5. The person who gives without making his or her identity known, although the donor knows who the recipient is.
6. The person who gives without knowing to whom he or she gives, although the recipient knows the identity of the donor.
7. The person who gives without knowing to whom he or she gives. The recipient does not know from whom he or she receives.
8. The person who helps another to become self-supporting by a gift or a loan or by finding employment for the recipient.

#### **3. Discussion (10-15 minutes)**

Once you've reviewed the order, engage participants in a discussion using the following questions:

1. What pattern or order do you see in the categories that Maimonides sets forth? What principles do you think lead him to organize his hierarchy of giving in this order?
2. In the ladder of giving, what role do shame and dignity play in his hierarchy?
3. How do this hierarchy and its organizing principles relate to service and volunteering?
4. These guidelines were written at a time when people generally knew everyone in their community. How does being an anonymous donor today, in a world of national and international philanthropy and complex non-profits, work differently than in this model?

## CLOSING

The texts and activities in this module build a strong foundation for understanding service generally, the challenges inherent in service work and what Judaism has to say about it. In the following modules, we'll more deeply explore several key social issues relevant to service.

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### APPENDIX A VOLUNTEER- ING AS A CATALYST

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

“CITY YEAR’S VALUES: SERVICE TO A CAUSE GREATER THAN SELF.” - CITY YEAR. CITY YEAR. WEB.

**Background:**

City Year is an education-focused nonprofit organization, based in Boston, Massachusetts, USA that partners with high need public schools to provide full-time targeted student interventions. In communities across the United States and through two international affiliates, City Year’s teams of 17 to 24 year old AmeriCorps members support students by focusing on attendance, behavior, and course performance through in-class support, 1-on-1 and small group tutoring, mentoring, and afterschool programs that keep kids in school and on track to success. The organization’s culture emphasizes the values of leadership, diversity and community service.

**Text:**

“City Year believes that service represents a personal decision to dedicate one’s time, energy, and effort to a cause greater than oneself and to attend powerfully to the needs of others. Service to a cause greater than self creates common ground by bringing together diverse individuals who share a similar commitment to work for the common good and empowering them to engage in unified action. Seemingly insurmountable problems throughout history have been addressed by individuals who have chosen to serve their fellow citizens, communities and nations in this way. This widespread commitment to serve a cause greater than self has united people across backgrounds, transformed pressing public problems, and developed the civic spirit and leadership potential of every individual who has heeded the call to serve. At City Year, we strive to always ask ourselves, “Is this about me, or is it about the cause?” Always make it about the cause. In this way, we unite in a collective effort to demonstrate the power of service as a strategy for generating transformational change.”

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### APPENDIX B METHODS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### WORKING DEFINITIONS

**DIRECT SERVICE:**

Directly meeting the material or spiritual needs of people by providing free or low-cost access to goods, services, or communal spaces.

**PHILANTHROPY:**

Giving money to support projects or organizations that address a need or issue.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

Broad term applied to the practices and academic disciplines of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of local communities. Some examples could include economic development or workforce development and other types of skills training.

**ADVOCACY:**

Using argument and persuasion to achieve a particular action or change. Often advocacy is directed specifically toward lawmakers or policymakers, to persuade them to pass or implement a particular policy. Businesses and corporations can be the target for advocacy as well.

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZING:**

Pursuing justice for the less powerful by developing a strong, democratic organization whose power comes from the numbers and mutual commitment of its members.

**SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP:**

Launching a venture for the common good. While this can include the creation of new non-profit organizations, most examples of social entrepreneurship are employing more traditionally for-profit models towards social missions, like B-corporations.

**EDUCATION:**

As its own method of social change (beyond its function as a form of direct service), education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual, and from there potentially an effect on society.

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## APPENDIX B METHODS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### TYPES OF SOCIAL CHANGE WORKSHEET

In your small group, pick one social issue on which to focus (i.e. hunger, homelessness, etc.). Then, under each category, give 3 examples of how you might address your issue.

##### SOCIAL ISSUE:

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##### DIRECT SERVICE

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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##### PHILANTHROPY

1. 

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2. 

---

---

3. 

---

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##### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. 

---

---

2. 

---

---

3. 

---

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# MODULE 3

## APPENDIX B METHODS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### ADVOCACY

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### EDUCATION

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX C TEXTS: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

KLAU, MAX, AND DANA TALMI. “DUAL BENEFITS, DUAL CHALLENGES: THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF INTEGRATING COMMUNITY IMPACT AND PARTICIPANT DEVELOPMENT IN JEWISH SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCES.” JOURNAL OF JEWISH COMMUNAL SERVICE. 87:1/2 (2012): 56-65. PRINT.

(Excerpt)

“...In his seminal book *I and Thou*, Martin Buber [Jewish philosopher, 1878-1965] distinguishes between two types of relationships. In “I-Thou” relationships, we see others as sacred, holy, and fully human individuals with feelings and needs every bit as real and important as our own. In “I-It” relationships, we see others as objects or obstacles to be manipulated to our own ends; others are somehow less fully human—and less deserving of respect and compassion—than ourselves.

When we engage in JSL [for our purposes, volunteering] that prioritizes participant development while overlooking community impact, we have chosen to have an “I-Thou” relationship with participants [volunteers] and an “I-It” relationship with the community being served. In an important sense, we are treating members of the local community as objects to be manipulated for the purpose of creating powerful experiences for the participants, whose needs and feelings we take very seriously.

Conversely, when we engage in JSL that prioritizes community impact over participant development, we have chosen to have an “I-Thou” relationship with the community and an “I-It” relationship with participants. We see participants as objects to manipulate for the purpose of creating real change in a community full of individuals whose humanity is fully respected.

In both these cases, some set of individuals is being dehumanized and dismissed in ways that are deeply problematic. When we fail to fully honor the humanity of any stakeholder connected to a service experience, we risk doing damage to the world despite a wealth of good intentions. And we will surely not unleash the full promise and potential of JSL to simultaneously repair the outer world while transforming the inner world of those who provide the service...”

#### Discussion Questions:

- How would you summarize what this text says about the complexity of service?
- What dangers or negative consequences of service does this text raise?
- What resonates about this text? With what do you disagree?
- Prepare a brief summary of key concepts and ideas to share back with the group, as well as any questions that the text raised for you.

“Dual Benefits, Dual Challenges” was printed in the Winter/Spring 2012 edition of the *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, which contains a wealth of information and wisdom on Jewish service-learning. Articles from the journal can be found online at:

<http://jpro.org/past-issues-of-the-journal-of-jewish-communal-service-2000-present/>

Dr. Max Klau is the Vice President of Leadership Development at City Year, Inc., a national service program headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts. His efforts focus on

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### APPENDIX C TEXTS: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

leveraging a challenging year of full-time citizen service as a transformational leadership development experience. Max received his doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2005; his studies focused on civic leadership education. An alumnus of four Jewish service programs (Panim el Panim, Otzma, Livnot u'Lehibanot, and AJWS), he has completed two years of service in Israel and led service programs in Israel, Honduras, Ghana, and the Ukraine.

Dana Talmi has over 15 years of experience working in the fields of experiential education and service learning. In 2002, Dana led her first service-learning trip to Honduras and the Ukraine with American Jewish World Service (AJWS). For the next few years, she continued leading volunteer trips for college students. In 2005, she joined the AJWS staff and was responsible for hiring, training and managing group leaders for service-learning trips to Africa, Asia and Latin America. Dana holds a B.A. in Israel studies from Bar-Ilan University and an M.S.W. with a focus on community organizing and group work from the University of North Carolina. Inspired by the work of AJWS and recognizing the need for high quality immersive service learning programs in Israel, Dana founded Yahel – Israel Service learning in 2009.

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### APPENDIX C TEXTS: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

SPODEK, RABBI BRENT, AND ADAM GAYNOR. "IT'S A PLEASURE TO SERVE YOU." THE BLOG. EJEWISHPHILANTHROPY. 22 MAY 2011. WEB. 04 FEBRUARY 2016.

(Excerpt)

"Some time ago, Carly Simon sang of an oh-so-vain partner, buoyed by privilege and wealth, who traveled through the world thinking it was all there for his enjoyment and self-aggrandizement.

Sadly, when we Jews go into the world to serve others (or "do service" as we are wont to call it) we are often that partner obsessed with our own needs. This focus on ourselves is expressed in myriad ways – when we establish sites at which young Jews can serve, we tend to be preoccupied with our needs – for comfort, for amusement, for the right blend of familiar and exotic, for opportunities to take good pictures. We know who we are and what we are looking for, but we are often less clear about who our partners are and what they are looking for.

When it comes down to it, most of us find it really hard to be focused on anything other than ourselves, but ultimately, that's what serving is about. On the one hand, it is about recognizing that we are not the alpha and omega of existence; that there is something legitimate and compelling outside of ourselves. Not for nothing does the prophet Micha say that all the Divine asks of us is to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. The humility is of the essence, as serving those in need in our cities and in our world is not about being an egomaniac masquerading as a master of mercy, nor is it about being the paternalistic great white hope that can swoop in and save the needy ones. It's about humbly seeking to help those who suffer carry their burdens..."

#### Discussion Questions:

- How would you summarize what this text says about the complexity of service?
- What dangers or negative consequences of service does this text raise?
- What resonates about this text? With what do you disagree?
- Prepare a brief summary of key concepts and ideas to share back with the group, as well as any questions that the text raised for you.

This article is based on "It's a pleasure to serve you today" by Rabbi Brent Spodek on EJewishPhilanthropy. Rabbi Spodek is Founder and Director of the Emek Project, home to deep Jewish learning in the Hudson Valley. Adam Gaynor is Executive Director of The Curriculum Initiative and a doctoral student in Education and Jewish Studies at NYU. The full article can be found at:

<http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/its-a-pleasure-to-serve-you-2/#sthash.tLNbQqFD.dpuf>

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX C TEXTS: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

KIVEL, PAUL. "SOCIAL SERVICE OR SOCIAL CHANGE?" (2006). CAMPUS COMPACT. WEB. 04 FEBRUARY 2016.

CAN WE PROVIDE SOCIAL SERVICE AND WORK FOR SOCIAL CHANGE, or do our efforts to provide human services maintain or even strengthen social inequality?

I first began thinking about this issue when the Oakland Men's Project was established in 1979. At that time, we were responding to women in the domestic violence, sexual assault prevention, and child sexual assault prevention movements. When asked what we could do as men they said that they had their hands full dealing with the survivors of male violence and trying to get institutions to respond to these issues. But we were told that since it was men who were the perpetrators of most of the violence, men were needed to address other men.

Many men in the country who heard that initial call started batterers' intervention programs, working with men individually and in small groups to help them stop their violent behaviors. At the Oakland Men's Project we were involved in these efforts, yet we felt that in order to end male violence we needed more than groups for individual men who were violent. We committed to build an organization which, through community prevention and education, could contribute to ending violence, not just "reforming" individual perpetrators.

Nearly 30 years later, I look around and see many shelters and services for survivors of domestic violence, but no large-scale movement to end male violence. I see many batterers' intervention programs, but few men involved in challenging sexism. The loss of vision that narrowed the focus of men's work reflects a change that occurred in other parts of the movement to end violence, as activists who set out to change the institutions perpetrating violence settled into service jobs helping people cope. Why does this narrowing of focus continue to happen in so much of our community work?

Social service work addresses the needs of individuals reeling from the personal and devastating impacts of institutional systems of exploitation and violence. Social change work challenges the root causes of the exploitation and violence. In my travels throughout the United States, I talk with many service providers, more and more of whom are saying to me, "We could continue doing what we are doing for another hundred years and the levels of violence would not change." I meet more and more people who are running batterers' programs who say, "We are only dealing with a minute number of the men who are violent and are having little impact on the systems which perpetuate male violence..."

#### Discussion Questions:

- How would you summarize what this text says about the complexity of service?
- What dangers or negative consequences of service does this text raise?
- What resonates about this text? With what do you disagree?
- Prepare a brief summary about key concepts and ideas to share back with the group, as well as any questions that the text raised for you.

Paul Kivel, social justice educator, activist, and writer, has been an innovative leader in violence prevention for more than 35 years. He is an accomplished trainer and speaker on men's issues, racism and diversity, challenges of youth, teen dating and family

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX C TEXTS: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

violence, raising boys to manhood, and the impact of class and power on daily life. Paul has developed highly effective participatory and interactive methodologies for training youth and adults in a variety of settings. His work gives people the understanding to become involved in social justice work and the tools to become more effective allies in community struggles to end oppression and injustice and to transform organizations and institutions. His full article can be found at:

<http://www.compact.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Kivelsocialchange-1-1.pdf>

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX C TEXTS: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPLEXITY OF SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

DUBOFSKY, CHANEL. "ON SERVICE." DIVERGE. 12 FEBRUARY 2010. WEB. 04 FEBRUARY 2016.

There's a lot to unpack in this notion that physical labor is the highest form of service, and the only legitimate one. Service is not just something we do with our hands. In fact, if it is only something that we do only with our hands, and not our brains and mouths, then it's essentially worthless. There must be a context set initially, and revisited throughout the [service experience] and after, as to why the work needs to be done, what the circumstances are that necessitate relying on the labor of strangers, and why we as volunteers feel we are entitled to dictate what work is valid and important. We have to be willing to spend our time listening, playing, [and] singing in order to understand any of these things, in order to open ourselves up to the possibility of a genuine encounter.

#### Discussion Questions:

- How would you summarize what this text says about the complexity of service?
- What dangers or negative consequences of service does this text raise?
- What resonates about this text? With what do you disagree?
- Prepare a brief summary about key concepts and ideas to share back with the group, as well as any questions that the text raised for you.

Chanel Dubovsky is a former Hillel professional, now a writer and blogger based in NYC. The full article can be found at:

<https://idiverge.wordpress.com/2010/02/12/on-service/>

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX D POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES ON JUDAISM AND SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### MAIMONIDES OATH

**Background:**

Moses Maimonides was a preeminent medieval Jewish philosopher and one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages.

**Text:***Oath of Maimonides*

The eternal providence has appointed me to watch over the life and health of Thy creatures. May the love for my art actuate me at all time; may neither avarice nor miserliness, nor thirst for glory or for a great reputation engage my mind; for the enemies of truth and philanthropy could easily deceive me and make me forgetful of my lofty aim of doing good to Thy children.

May I never see in the patient anything but a fellow creature in pain.

Grant me the strength, time and opportunity always to correct what I have acquired, always to extend its domain; for knowledge is immense and the spirit of man can extend indefinitely to enrich itself daily with new requirements.

Today he can discover his errors of yesterday and tomorrow he can obtain a new light on what he thinks himself sure of today. Oh, God, You have appointed me to watch over the life and death of Your creatures; here am I ready for my vocation and now I turn unto my calling.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What key ideas are in Maimonides' oath?
- What questions do you have for Maimonides?
- How do you think this oath informed the service which he did during his lifetime?
- What would it look like to do our service while keeping this line in mind, "Today he can discover his errors of yesterday and tomorrow he can obtain a new light on what he thinks himself sure of today?"

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX D POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES ON JUDAISM AND SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

**Background:**

The Talmud is an important collection of Jewish legal discussion, biblical commentary, and stories redacted around 500 CE

**Text:**

ת' ר: מפרנסים עניי נכרים עם עניי ישראל, ומבקרין חולי נכרים עם חולי ישראל, וקוברין מתי נכרים עם מתי ישראל, מפני דרכי שלום.

Our Rabbis taught: We sustain the non-Jewish poor with the Jewish poor, visit the non-Jewish sick with the Jewish sick, and bury the non-Jewish dead with the Jewish dead, for the ways of peace. - Babylonian Talmud Gittin 61a

**Discussion Questions:**

- What key ideas are articulated in this passage?
- What do you think “the ways of peace” are?
- Why are each of these acts done “for the ways of peace”?
- How can this passage inform our ideas about service?
- How can this passage inform how we do our service?

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX D POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES ON JUDAISM AND SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### JEWISH TRADITION AS INSPIRATION

POLIER, JUSTINE WISE QTD IN. "THIS I BELIEVE - JUSTINE WISE POLIER." JEWISH WOMEN'S ARCHIVE. JEWISH WOMEN'S ARCHIVE. WEB. 04 FEBRUARY 2016.

##### **Background:**

"Justine Wise Polier, the daughter of Rabbi Stephen Wise, worked on behalf of the underprivileged and became the first female judge in New York City when she was appointed to the Children's Court. In the 1950s she helped focus attention on the issue of de facto segregation in New York City schools. As part of broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow's recurring "This I Believe" radio news segment, Justine Wise Polier discussed the beliefs that motivated her."

##### **Text:**

"Freedom means many things to many people. From my earliest childhood I saw it through the eyes of my parents as both opportunity and challenge to do battle for those in bondage, to achieve freedom of the spirit and mind for one's self and one's fellow men. Blessed by parents whose deepest joy was through service to their fellow men, who were deeply moral without ever being self-righteous, who were profoundly religious and therefore not sanctimonious, I learned that love of mankind became meaningful only as it reflected understanding of and love of human beings.

As an American Jew I have found that the great spiritual and moral traditional given to the world by the Hebrew Prophets have strengthened me in my quest for personal dignity and therefore in the struggle for the dignity of man and the freedom of mankind. The beauty and great traditions of my people, as of my home, have been sources of strength and inspiration in confronting the difficult problems faced by our generation in these troubled times."

##### **Discussion Questions:**

- What key ideas are articulated in this passage?
- How do the authors motivations for service compare to your own?
- The author identifies family, the Hebrew Prophets and Jewish ritual as sources of inspiration and strength? What aspects of your Jewish life inspire you to engage in this work?
- How can this passage inform our ideas about service?
- How can this passage inform how we do our service?

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX D POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES ON JUDAISM AND SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### FAMILIARITY WITH STRUGGLE

##### Background:

Exodus is the second of the 24 books of the Hebrew Bible.

##### Text:

קָעַצ סָא יכּ. וּתֵא הַנְּעִת הַנֶּע סָא וְנִנְעַת אֶל סוּתְיֵו תְּנַמְלָא לָךְ. סִירְצַמ צְרָאָב סִתְיֵיה סִירְג יכּ וְנִצְחָלַת אֱלֹו הָנוּת אֶל הָגוּ סִימֹתִי סִכְיֵנְבו תִנְמְלָא סִכְיֵשְׁנֵי וְיָהוּ בְרָחָב סִכְתָּא יִתְגַּרְהוּ יִפֵּא הָרְחוּ. וְתִקְעַצ עֲמֻשָּׂא עֲמֻשׁ יֵלֵא קִעְצִי.

You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not ill-treat any widow or orphan. If you do mistreat them, I will heed their outcry as soon as they cry out to Me, and My anger shall blaze forth and I will put you to the sword, and your own wives shall become widows and your children orphans. -Exodus 22:20-23

##### Discussion Questions:

- What key ideas are articulated in this passage?
- Does the line “for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” resonate with you as a motivation for acting well in the world? Why or why not?
- How can this passage about oppression and mistreatment inform how we think about service?
- How can this passage inform how we do our service?

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX D POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES ON JUDAISM AND SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

#### MAIMONIDES' LADDER

##### Background:

Moses Maimonides was a preeminent medieval Jewish philosopher and one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages.

##### Text:

ול ותונו דמש לארשי דיב קיזחמה הז הנממ הלעמל ניאש הלודג הלעמ, וזמ הלעמל וז הקדצב שי תולעמ הנמש לעו, לואשל תוירבל דרטצי אלש דע ודי תא קזחל ידכ הכאלמ ול איצממ וא תופתוש ומע השוע וא האולה וא הנתמ אלו סיינעל הקדצ ותונה הזמ תוחפ. דרטציו לופי אלש דע וב קזחה רמולכ דמע יחו בשותו רג וב תקזחהו רמאנ הז סיקידצה ויהש, שדקמב התיחש סיאשח תכשל נוגכ, המשל הוצמ וז ירהש, חקל יממ ינעה עדי אלו ותנ ימל עדי ותי אלו, הקדצ לש הפוק דותל ותונה הזל בורקו, יאשחב הנממ ויסנרפתמ סיבוט ינב סיינעהו יאשחב הב וינתונ תוחפ. ויודרת נב היננה ירכ הרושכ גיהנהל עדויו סכחו נמאנ הנוממהש עדוי נכ סא אלא הקדצ לש הפוק דותל סדא יחתפב תועמה ניכילשמו רתסב ניכלוה ויהש סימכחה ילודג נוגכ, חקל יממ ינעה עדי אלו ותי ימל ותונה עדיש הזמ לטנ יממ ינעה עדיש הזמ תוחפ. הרושכ ניגהונ הקדצב וינוממה ניא סא איה הבוט הלעמו תושעל יואר הזכו, סיינעה ידכ וילטונו סיינעה ניאבו והירוחאל וילישפמו נהינדסב תועמה סיררוצ ויהש סימכחה ילודג נוגכ, ותונה עדי אלו ול ותיש הזמ תוחפ. לאשיש רחא ול ותיש הזמ תוחפ. לאשיש סדוק ודיב ול ותיש הזמ תוחפ. השוב נהל היהי אלש בצעב ול ותיש הזמ תוחפ. תופי סינפ רבסב יוארה נמ תוחפ.

There are eight degrees of tzedakah\*\*, each higher than the next. The highest degree, exceeded by none, is that of the person who assists a poor person by providing him with a gift or a loan or by accepting him into a business partnership or by helping him find employment – in a word, by putting him where he can dispense with other people's aid. With reference to such aid, it is said, "You shall strengthen him, be he a stranger or a settler, he shall live with you" (Vayikra [Leviticus] 25:35), which means strengthen him in such a manner that his falling into want is prevented. Below this is that of the person who gives tzedakah to poor people, but the giver doesn't know to whom he is giving nor does the recipient know from whom he is receiving. This constitutes giving for its own sake. This is similar to the Secret Office that was in the Temple. There the righteous ones gave secretly and the poor people would be sustained from it anonymously. This is similar to giving to a tzedakah collection. But one should only give to a tzedakah collection if he knows that the overseer is trustworthy and wise and conducts himself fairly, like Rabbi Channaniah ben Tradyon. Below this is a situation in which the giver knows to whom he is giving but the poor person does not know from whom he is receiving. This is like the great sages who used to walk in secret and put coins into the doors of poor people. It is worthy and truly good to do this if those who are responsible for collecting tzedakah are not trustworthy. Below this is a situation in which the poor person knows from whom he is receiving, but the giver does not know the recipient. This is like the great sages who used to bundle coins in their scarves and roll them up over their backs and poor people would come and collect without being embarrassed. Below this is one who gives before being asked. Below this is one who gives after being asked. Below this is one who gives less than what is appropriate but gives it happily. Below this is one who gives unhappily. - Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Gifts to the Poor 10:7 (cf. Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, 249: 6-13)

\*\*Tzedakah (צדקה) is a Hebrew word commonly translated as charity, though it is based on the Hebrew word (צדק, tzedek) meaning righteousness, fairness or justice.

##### Discussion Questions:

- For the sake of clarity, in your group, write out the 8 steps on Maimonides Ladder, with the highest form of tzedakah being the top rung.

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX D POSSIBLE TEXT STUDIES ON JUDAISM AND SERVICE

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

- What pattern or order do you see in the categories that Maimonides sets forth?
- What principles lead him to organize his hierarchy of giving in this order?
- In Maimonides' ladder of giving, what role do shame and dignity play?
- How does this hierarchy and its organizing principles relate to service and volunteering?
- These guidelines were written at a time when people generally knew everyone in their community. How does being an anonymous donor or volunteer today, in a world of national and international philanthropy and complex non-profits, work differently than in this model?

## MODULE 3

### APPENDIX E CARDS FOR MAIMONIDES LADDER ACTIVITY

### CONTEX- TUALIZING AND UNDER- STANDING SERVICE

<p>A PERSON WHO WALKS BY THE SAME PERSON ASKING FOR MONEY EVERY MORNING FOR A WEEK AND FINALLY ON FRIDAY GIVES THAT PERSON A DOLLAR, BUT THEN REGRETS HAVING DONE IT BECAUSE THEY THINK THE PERSON WILL JUST USE IT FOR CIGARETTES OR ALCOHOL.</p>	<p>A PERSON WHO IS ASKED TO DONATE \$100 TO A CAUSE BUT ONLY GIVES \$50</p>
<p>A PERSON WHO IS ASKED TO GIVE \$100 TO A CAUSE AND GIVES THAT \$100</p>	<p>A PERSON WHO PROACTIVELY MAKES A DONATION TO A CHARITY BEFORE BEING ASKED AS PART OF THEIR YEARLY TZEDAKAH/GIVING</p>
<p>A PERSON WHO ANONYMOUSLY GIVES MONEY FOR A KNOWN COMMUNITY MEMBER WHO IS STRUGGLING</p>	<p>A PERSON WHO GIVES MONEY FOR AN ANONYMOUS COMMUNITY MEMBER WHO IS STRUGGLING, KNOWING THAT THEIR NAME WILL BE LISTED AS ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO GAVE</p>
<p>A PERSON WHO DROPS OFF A DONATION OF NEW CLOTHES ON THE PORCH OF A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER FOR THE CLIENTS, WHOM THEY DO NOT KNOW, WHEN THE SHELTER IS CLOSED</p>	<p>A PERSON WHO HELPS SOMEONE WHO'S UNEMPLOYED AND STRUGGLING TO FIND A JOB CONNECT WITH A JOB</p>