



Key Vocabulary and Concepts for Lesson

- a) Active Listening
- b) Passive Listening
- c) Shema Yisrael
- d) Shema Koleinu
- e) Backfire Effect
- f) Non-judgmental Questions
- g) Judgmental Questions
- h) Speak With Humility





Passive Listening

- *no eye contact*
- *no acknowledgment of what the other person has said*
- *asks question unrelated to what the other person has said*

Active Listening

1. **Non-verbal**
 - *eye contact*
 - *hand gestures*
 - *voice modulation*
2. **Verbal**
 - *uses “door opener” phrases that show interest and keep the other person talking*
 - *asks follow-up questions*



***Rabbi Lord
Jonathan Sacks***
1948–2020



Text 3.1

"The Art of Listening"

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Judaism is a religion of listening, not seeing. That is not to say there are no visual elements in Judaism. There are, but they are not primary. Listening is the sacred task. The most famous command in Judaism is Shema Yisrael, "Listen, Israel." What made Abraham, Moses and the prophets different from their contemporaries was that they heard the voice that to others was inaudible. In one of the great dramatic scenes of the Bible, God teaches Elijah that He is not in the whirlwind, the earthquake or the fire, but in the "still, small voice."

It takes training, focus and the ability to create silence in the soul to learn how to listen, whether to God or to a fellow human being. Seeing shows us the beauty of the created world, but listening connects us to the soul of another, and sometimes to the soul of the Other, God as He speaks to us, calls to us, summoning us to our task in the world.

If I were asked how to find God, I would say, Learn to listen. Listen to the song of the universe in the call of birds, the rustle of trees, the crash and heave of the waves. Listen to the poetry of prayer, the music of the Psalms. **Listen deeply to those you love and who love you.** Listen to the words of God in the Torah and hear them speak to you. Listen to the debates of the sages through the centuries as they tried to hear the texts' intimations and inflections.

Don't worry about how you or others look. The world of appearances is a false world of masks, disguises and concealments. Listening is not easy. I confess I find it formidably hard. **But listening alone bridges the abyss between soul and soul, self and other, I and the Divine.**

Jewish spirituality is the art of listening.



Text 3.2

Deuteronomy 6:4

Listen, Israel: the LORD is our God, the LORD is One.

יְבָרִיךְ וְד'

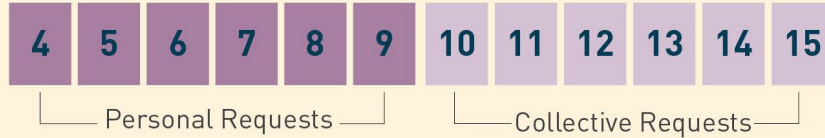
שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה' אֶחָד:

The Three-Part Structure of Shmoneh Esreh

a. PRAISE
(blessings #1–3)



b. REQUESTS
(blessings #4–16)



16
Shema Koleinu

c. THANKS
(blessings #17–19)



Text 3.3

Shema Koleinu Prayer

Listen to our voice, LORD our God.

*Spare us and have compassion on us,
and in compassion and favor accept our prayer,
for You, God, **listen** to prayers and please.*

*Do not turn us away, O our King,
empty-handed from Your presence,
for You **listen** with compassion
to the prayer of Your people Israel.
Blessed are You, LORD, who **listens** to prayer.*

תפילת שמע קולנו

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ
חוֹס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ
כִּי אֵל **שׁוֹמֵעַ** תְּפִלּוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה
וּמִלִּפְנֵיךְ מֶלְכֵנוּ רִיקָם אֶל־תִּשְׁיָבֵנוּ

כִּי אַתָּה **שׁוֹמֵעַ** תְּפִלַּת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּרַחֲמִים.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' **שׁוֹמֵעַ** תְּפִלָּה:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ | Listen, **Israel:** the LORD is our God

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ | Listen to **our voice**, LORD our God.



Click [here](#) for Celeste and Aaron interview

- **Active Listening** involves attentively seeking to understand a speaker's message, rather than passively hearing the words that a speaker says.
- **Active Listeners** provide verbal and nonverbal feedback to show their investment in what the speaker is sharing
- **Active Listening** can help to build trust within a conversation, thereby allowing the speaker to communicate more easily, openly, and honestly.

“Listening...involves a certain surrender, a willingness to sit with what one does not already know...Listening requires us to stretch a little beyond what we know, expect or want.”

DIANA SENECHAL

(author and former New York City public school teacher)





*This listening exercise ...
help[ed] me to realize that interrupting is not only
cutting in and talking when someone else is speaking.
... Interrupting someone can go so far as to not let
someone fully explore and express the depths
of their thoughts, even when it seems they have
finished speaking.*



We're told
that we are
wrong



Feel
threatened

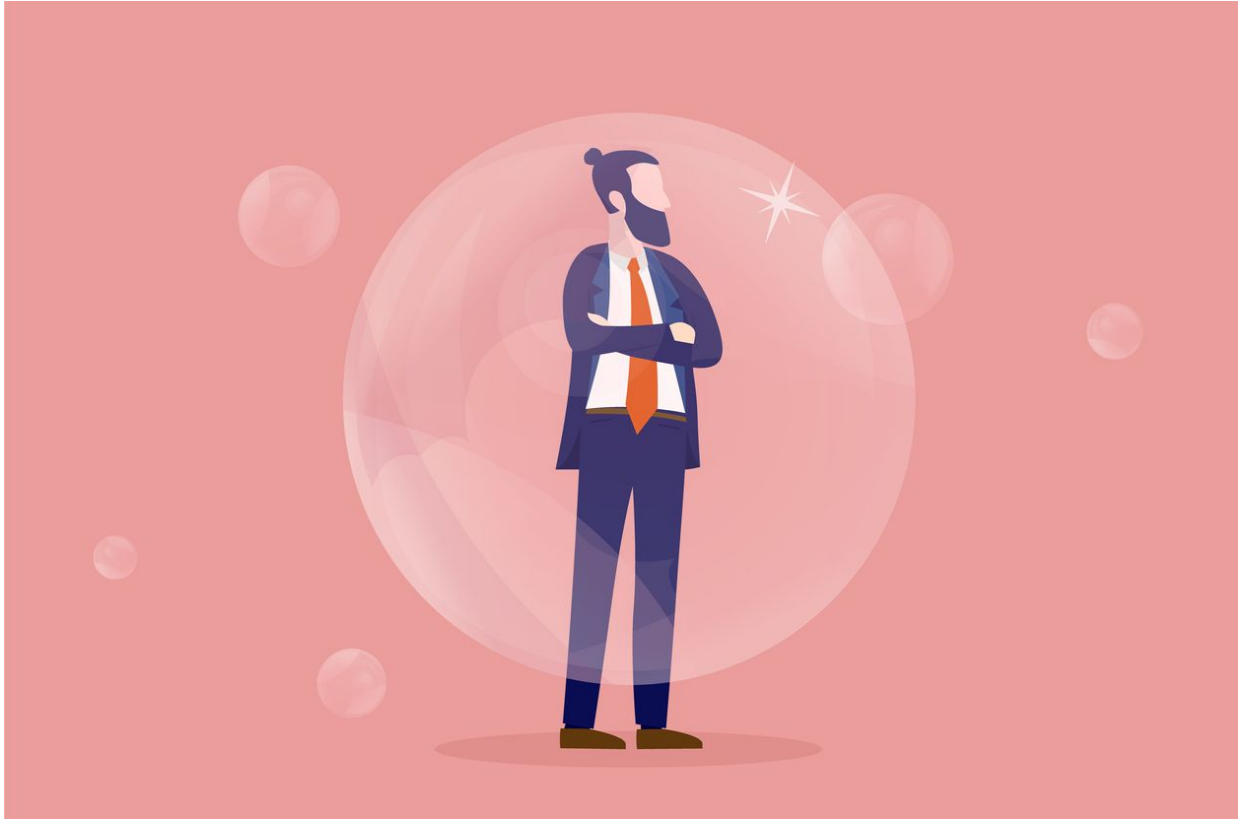


Become
defensive



REJECT
FACTS thrown
our way

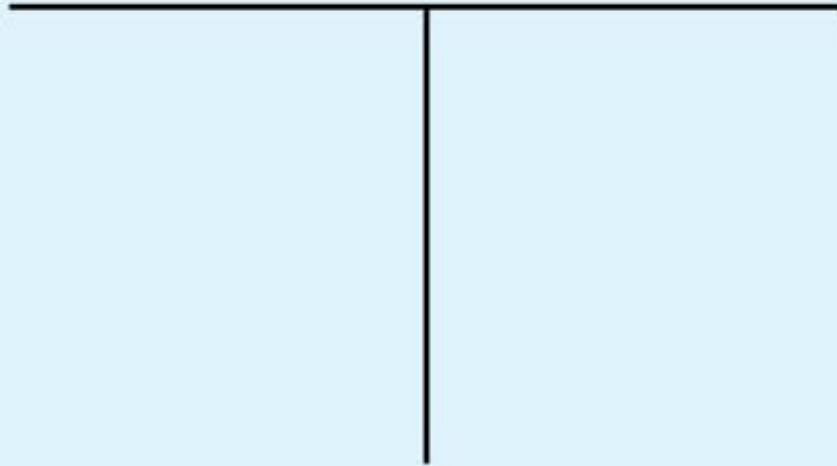




T-CHART

Non-judgmental
Questions

Judgmental
Questions



Non-judgmental Questions

- What does that mean for you?
- What's your take on...?
- What's the best thing about...?

Judgmental Questions

- How could you think it means that?
- That's your take?
- How could you think that is a good thing?

"I THINK..."
"MY IMPRESSION IS..."
"FROM MY PERSPECTIVE..."



FOR THE SAKE
OF OUR RELATIONSHIP,
LET'S COME BACK TO
THIS AT ANOTHER
TIME.



I THINK WE'RE SEEING
THINGS VERY DIFFERENTLY.
I DON'T KNOW IF WE'LL
COME TO AN AGREEMENT
ABOUT THIS.

I'M NOT SURE WE'RE
GOING TO REACH A
SOLUTION IN ONE
CONVERSATION.



Key Vocabulary and Concepts for Lesson :

- a) Sanhedrin
- b) 4 Sanhedrin Guidelines to Promote
Constructive Disagreement
- c) Groupthink



Eliezer Schnall, Michael J. Greenberg, “Groupthink and the Sanhedrin: An analysis of the ancient court of Israel through the lens of modern social psychology” in *Journal of Management History*, vol. 18, issue 3, 2012, 285.

The Hebrew word “Sanhedrin” is likely derived from “synedrion,” the ancient Greek term for “general assembly” or “judicial body.” In Jewish sources, it refers primarily to the supreme religious court (of 71 members) that met on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, later relocating around the time of the destruction of the Holy Temple in the year 70 CE. However, there were also smaller local bodies in ancient Israel that were given the same appellation (but had 23 members) and often functioned in similar ways

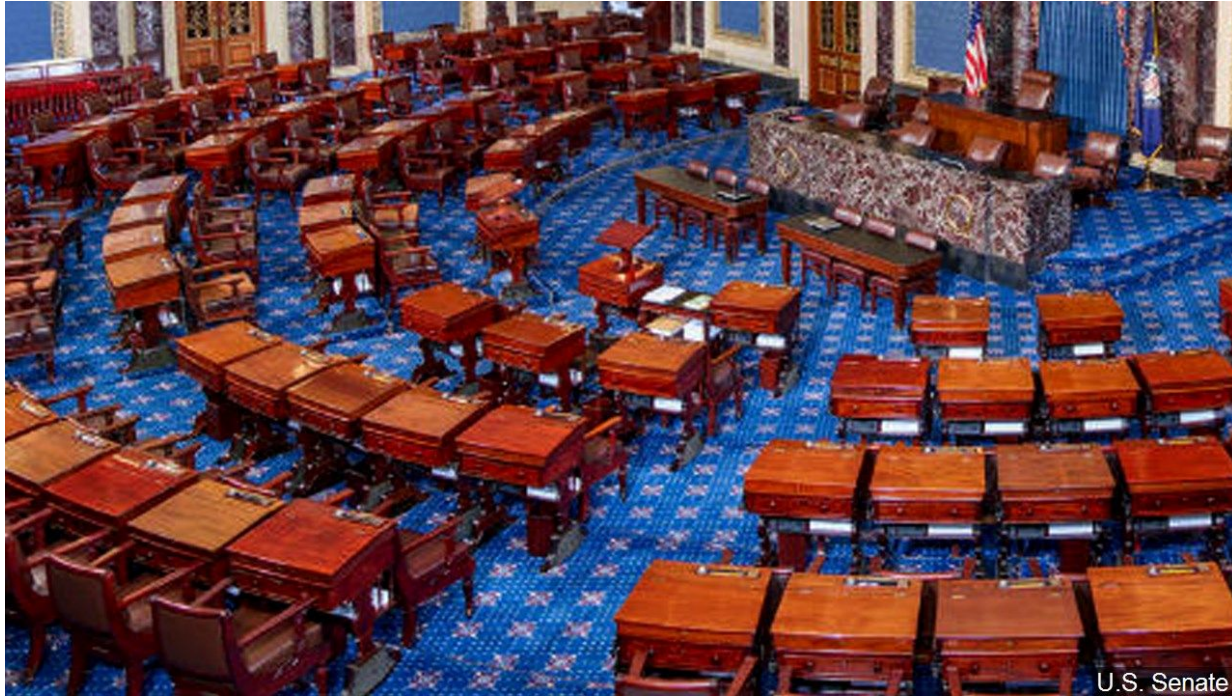
Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:3

The Sanhedrin was (organized) like half a round granary, so that each (judge) could see each (judge).

משנה סנהדרין ד:ג

סנהדרין היתה כחצי גרן עגולה, כדי
ליהיו רואין זה את זה.





U.S. Senate



Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:2

Capital cases begin from [the judges on] the side.

משנה סנהדרין ד:ב

דיני נפשות מתחילין מן הצד.

Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 17a

Rav Kahana said: If the Sanhedrin unanimously finds [the accused] guilty, he is acquitted.

בבלי סנהדרין יז ע"א

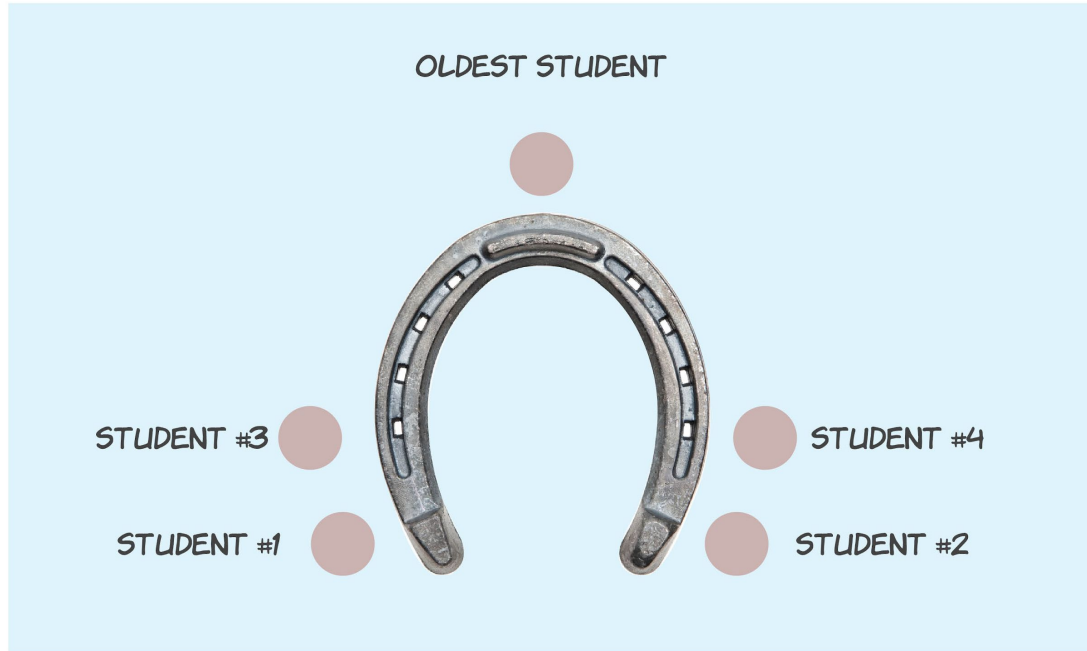
אמר רב כהנא: סנהדרין ישראל
אין לחובה - פוטרין אותו.

Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 17a

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: None is to be given a seat on the Sanhedrin unless he is able to prove the cleanness of a reptile from biblical texts.

בבלי סנהדרין יז ע"א

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: אין
מזשיבין בסנהדרין אלא מי שיוֹדע
לטהר את השרץ מן התורה.



Key Vocabulary and Concepts for Lesson 3

- a) *Tochacha* (constructive feedback)
- b) *Tips for Tochacha*
- c) Calling Out vs. Calling In



Leviticus 19:17

*You shall not hate your fellow in your heart
you shall surely reprove your friend
and you shall not miss the mark because of him.*

יקרא יט:יז

לֹא־תִשְׁנָא אֶת־אֲחִיךָ בְּלִבְבְּךָ
הֹכִיחַ תֹּכִיחַ אֶת־עַמִּיתְךָ
לֹא־תִשָּׂא עָלָיו חֲטָא:

Babylonian Talmud, Arachin 16b

*It is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Tarfon says: I would be surprised if there is anyone in this generation who can **receive rebuke**. [Why?]*

[Because] if the one rebuking says to them: Remove the splinter from between your eyes (i.e., rid yourself of a minor infraction)

The other says to them: "Remove the beam from between your eyes" (i.e., you have committed far more severe sins).

*Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria says: I would be surprised if there is anyone in this generation who knows **how to rebuke** correctly [without embarrassing the person they are rebuking].*

תלמוד בבלי, ערכין ט"ז ב

תניא א"ר טרפון: (תמיהני) אני אם יש בדור הזה **שמקבל תוכחה**.

אם אמר לו: טול קיסם מבין עיניך.

אמר לו: טול קורה מבין עיניך.

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה תמיהני אם יש בדור הזה **שיודע להוכיח**.

Rabbi Yehudah Leib, the “Rebuke of Polonia,” Hasidic commentary on Leviticus 19:17

One who wishes to rebuke must first of all check whether s/he has some hidden complaint, anger or compulsion regarding the one whom s/he is about to rebuke.

Only after it is clear to you that you do not hate your fellow in your heart are you permitted to rebuke.

ר' יהודה ליב, המוכיח מפולנא

המוכיח צריך קודם כל לבדוק את עצמו
אם אין לו טינא שבלב, רוגז, או הקפדה
כלפי האיש שהוא עומד להוכיחו.

רק אם ברי לך שאינך שונא את אחיך
בלבבך, רשאי אתה להוכיחו.

Orchot Tzadikim 12:10

Just as the angry person does not accept rebuke from others, so is s/he not able to administer rebuke to others...

If you rebuke your companion right from the beginning with an angry voice and with wrath, and you shame them, then you are sinning, for your companion will not receive correction from you.

For this is human nature: if someone comes to their companion with force, then their companion will be stubborn and unyielding to them, and will not listen to them. Concerning this, it says in Kohelet, "The words of the wise are heard gently" (Eccl. 9:17), that is to say, the wise person speaks gently.

אורחות צדיקים יב:י

כמו שאין הכעסן מקבל תוכחה מאחרים, כך אינו יכול להוכיח את אחרים...

אבל אם תוכיח את חברך מתחילה בקול רעש ובזעם ותבייש אותו, אז תקבל עליו חטא. ואותו חבר לא יקבל תוכחה ממך.

כי כן דרך בני אדם: כשאדם בא על חברו בחוזקה, אז חברו מתקשה כנגדו ולא ייכנע תחתיו. ועל זה אמר החכם (קהלת ט יז): "דברי חכמים בנחת נשמעים."



Danny and Julien are partners on a semester-long school project. Although they collaborated well for the first couple of months, Danny has started to notice that Julien has been lagging behind on deadlines, slow to answer emails about the project, and seems like he isn't prioritizing it as much as he was in the beginning. Last weekend, Julien told Danny that he wouldn't be able to meet to work on the project because he was too busy with other school work, but Danny heard from another friend that Julien was out quite late Saturday night at a movie. He is starting to feel resentful that Julien isn't doing his part, and would like to speak with him about it.



Guidelines for **GIVING** Constructive Feedback:

- Check your **INTENTION!** Are you sharing *tochacha* from a place of compassion and care for the other person's well-being, or wanting to shame them?
- Address **SPECIFIC** situations and actions; avoid generalizations.
- Focus on **BEHAVIORS**, not personality.
- Share the **IMPACT** of the person's behavior using an "I" statement.
- Deal with **ONE PIECE OF INFORMATION AT A TIME.**
- **DO NO HARM.**

Guidelines for **RECEIVING** Constructive Feedback:

- **Acknowledge what was said.**
For instance: *"Thank you. I appreciate you taking the time to share that with me."*
- **Accept the feedback.** You don't necessarily need to agree, but you can accept that this is how the other person has perceived the situation.
- **Ask any necessary clarifying questions:**
For instance: *"I want to make sure I understand what you're describing. Can you give me an example?"*
- **Share how you will address the situation or behavior that the person is describing.**
Be specific! It's ok if you need more time to reflect on it. For instance: *"I will think more about what happened, and consider what you said next time this situation arises."*





"I do get a sense sometimes now among certain young people ... that the way of me making change is to be as judgmental as possible about other people and that's enough. That's not activism. That's not bringing about change. If all you're doing is casting stones, you're probably not gonna get that far. That's easy to do."

BARACK OBAMA



Key Vocabulary and Concepts for Lesson 4

a) Connection before solution

b) Resilience

c) Compromise



Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a

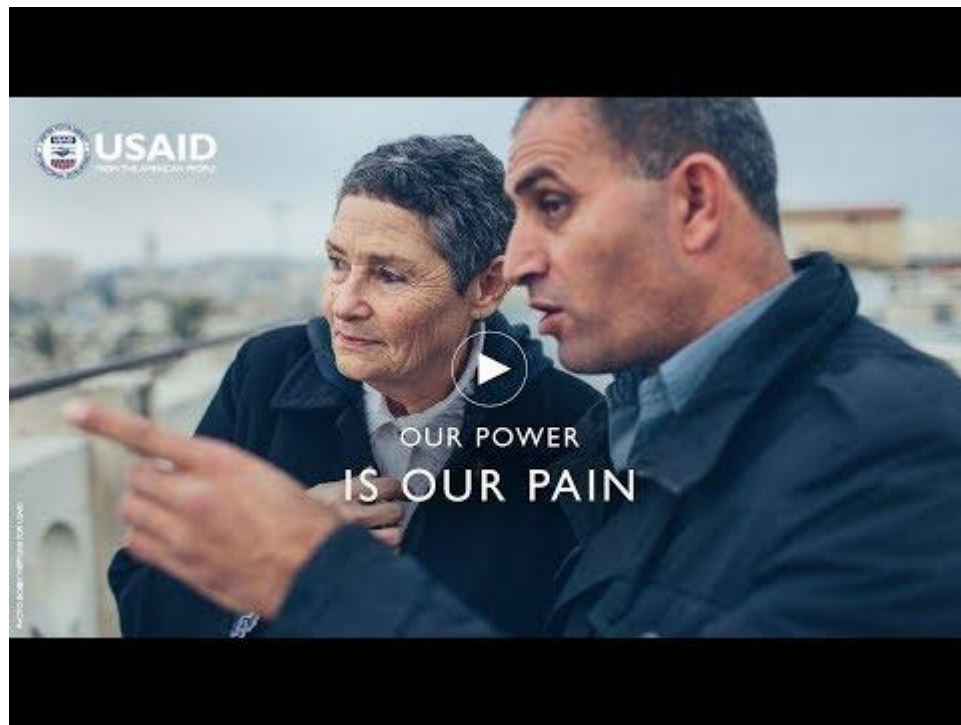
Another time a non-Jew came before Shammai. He said, "I will convert if you can teach me the entire Torah while I stand on one foot." He [Shammai] pushed the non-Jew aside with the ruler that was in his hand.

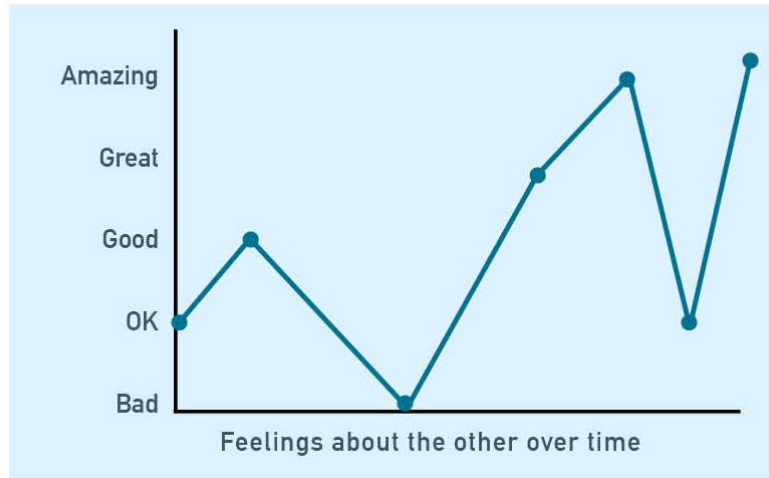
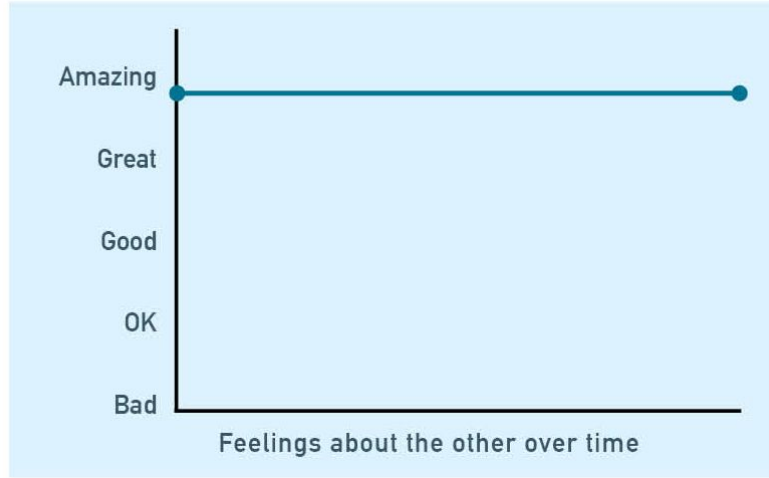
The non-Jew came before Hillel and Hillel converted him. He [Hillel] said, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the entire Torah, the rest is just commentary, now go and study."

תלמוד בבלי, שבת ל"א א

שוב מעשה בגוי אחד שבא לפני שמאי. אמר לו, "גיירני על מנת שתלמדני כל התורה כולה כשאני עומד על רגל אחת." דחפו באמת הבנין שבידו.

בא לפני הלל, גייריה. אמר לו, "דעלך סני לחברך, לא תעביד. זו היא כל התורה כולה ואידך פירושה הוא זיל גמור."







Deuteronomy 6:17-18

17) *Be sure to keep the commandments, decrees, and laws that the Lord your God has enjoined upon you.*

18) *Do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may go well with you and that you may be able to possess the good land that the Lord your God promised on oath to your fathers.*

דברים ו:יז-יח

יז) שְׁמֹר תִּשְׁמְרוּן אֶת־מִצְוֹת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְעֲדֹתָיו וְחֻקָּיו אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ:

יח) וַעֲשִׂיתָ הַיָּשָׁר וְהַטֹּב בְּעֵינֵי ה' לְמַעַן יִיטֵב לָךְ וּבֵאתָ וִירַשְׁתָּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּע ה' לְאַבְרָהָם:

Nachmanides Deuteronomy 6:18

Our Rabbis have a beautiful Midrash on this verse. They have said, **[That which is right and good] refers to a compromise and going beyond the requirement of the letter of the law.** The intent of this is as follows: At first he [Moses] states that you are to keep His statutes and His testimonies which He commanded you (Deuteronomy 6:17), and now he is stating that even where He has not commanded you, give thought, as well, to do what is good and right in His eyes, for He loves the good and the right.

Now this is a great principle, for it is impossible to mention in the Torah all the aspects of man's conduct with his neighbors and friends, and all his various transactions, and the ordinances of all societies and countries.

But since He mentioned many of them... he reverted to state in a general way that, in all matters, one should do what is good and right, including even compromise and going above and beyond the requirements of the law...

רמב"ן דברים ו:יח

...ולרבותינו בזה מדרש יפה.
אמרו, **זו פשרה ולפנים משורת הדין.** והכוונה בזה כי מתחלה אמר שתשמור חקותיו ועדותיו אשר צוך (דברים ו:י"ז), ועתה יאמר גם באשר לא צוך תן דעתך לעשות הטוב והישר בעיניו, כי הוא אוהב הטוב והישר.

זזה ענין גדול לפי שאי אפשר להזכיר בתורה כל הנהגות האדם עם שכניו ורעיו, וכל משאו ומתנו ותקוני הישוב והמדינות כלם.

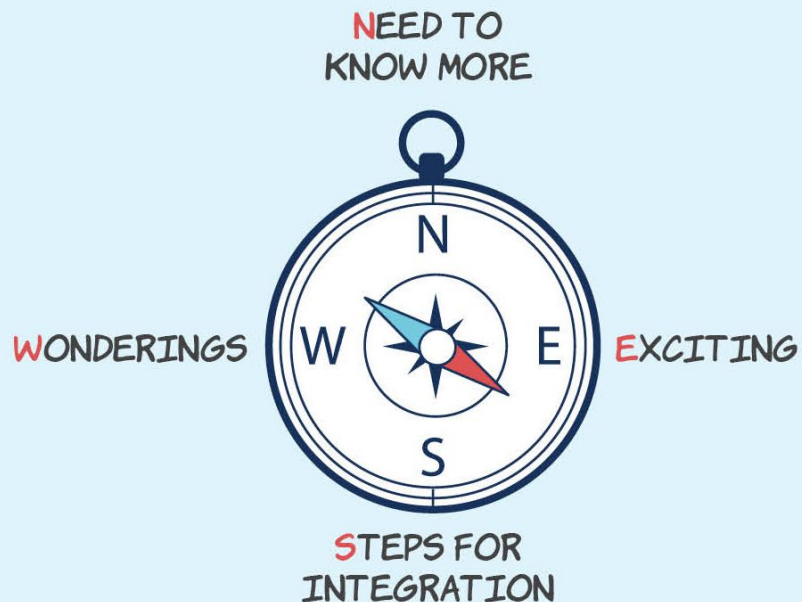
אבל אחרי שהזכיר מהם הרבה... חזר לומר בדרך כלל שיעשה הטוב והישר בכל דבר, עד שיכנס בזה הפשרה ולפנים משורת הדין...

"Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer."

RAINER MARIA RILKE, IN "LETTERS TO A YOUNG POET"



HOW CAN I INTEGRATE MAHLOKET MATTERS INTO MY OWN LIFE?



N = NEED TO KNOW MORE

What Mahloket Matters concept, skill, etc. do you need to know more about in order to integrate it into your life?

E = EXCITING

What particular Mahloket Matters concept, skill, etc. are you excited to integrate into your life and why?

S = STEPS FOR INTEGRATION INTO MY LIFE

What steps will you take to integrate a Mahloket Matters concept, skill, etc. into your life?

W = WONDERINGS

What are you wondering about concerning integrating Mahloket Matters into your life?