

# **Realizing My Unique Potential:**

A Curriculum Guide for  
Confirmation Students

Brett Weisman  
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This curriculum guide focuses on the essential question of all essential questions: What Is My Unique Potential? Through the course of studying the Book of Genesis, learners will become impassioned with the idea of discovering one's life purpose by acknowledging, embracing and developing tools to navigate the road to adulthood. The various characters of Genesis, their stories and complexities are the primary driving force for this curriculum guide. Using various pertinent texts this curriculum guide encourages learners to look inward, reflect on their strengths, and engage in thinking that could orient them toward the pursuit of their Unique Potential.

Confirmation is a crucial part of the Jewish lifecycle. While Jewish adulthood begins at the B'nai Mitzvah, engaging in the true depth and breadth that make up the moral complexities of adulthood often requires time, maturity and life experience. Engagement in these moral complexities requires an active participant who is willing to grow both as a person and as a Jew. It is the intention of this curriculum to develop a tool box for individuals to forge their own path in this regard toward determining who they are meant to be. The idea of confirming one's Judaism is a beautiful and empowering act and the consequences of such a decision have the potential to be life changing. Throughout the course, learners will be asked to analyze the choices that confront the various characters and stories of the Book of Genesis and assess the outcomes of said decisions. In doing so, learners will have the opportunity to determine their values and shape the way they understand themselves. Learners will have the opportunity to navigate complex moral questions with the expressed goal of discovering their own unique passions and capabilities.

#### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- Confronting the world's moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one's personal values illumines a path toward one's Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one's Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

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To The Teacher:

Life is a series of choices and the decisions one makes determine the course of one's life. While there are certainly aspects of life that are entirely out of our control, our focus in this course is on how to navigate the choices we do have, in order to make decisions that favor long term success and minimal regret. The story of the Garden of Eden is a perfect example of this idea. While this story is often perceived as the story of Eve, the apple, and humanity's fall from paradise or even the source of "original sin" in Christian theology, Martin Herbst reframes the entire narrative in his book "God's Womb—The Garden of Eden: Innocence and Beyond". In Herbst's book, the expulsion from Eden is read, not as a punishment, but as an opportunity for growth and the introduction of humanity's ability to actively choose right from wrong, to choose to come closer to God, to choose behavior that is godly.

Where eating from the Tree of Good and Evil was once seen as a rebellion against God, author Martin Herbst describes leaving Eden as an awakening of sorts. Our persistent need to "go back to the garden" or back to a state of innocence began, as Herbst purports, was a misreading of the Garden of Eden story. Wanting to return to the Garden is contrary to what it means to become and, in fact, the act of looking back yearningly to "simpler times" with nostalgia only hampers our personal growth. When Adam and Eve left the Garden, the Garden story seems to acknowledge the need for humanity to confront decisions of morality not from an instinctual, animalistic mind set (as a lion hunts), but from an elevated sense of right and wrong. The Garden story, according to Herbst, is both a metaphor for the awakening of a moral rightness from an animalistic instinct as well as a parable for each and every human thrust into life from the comfort of the womb forced to confront reality and, subsequently, the need for a guide to navigate said reality. The Garden of Eden, and thus the book of Genesis as a series of moral dilemmas, provides a framework for humanity to emerge from the innocence of childhood into the awareness and responsibility of adulthood. It is the intent of this Curriculum Guide to retrace the steps of our ancestors' moral journey from infantile behavior to morally awake.

It is the intention of this curriculum to encourage students toward a life course of self-discovery. By encouraging students to discover what makes them unique, it is the opinion of this educator that this will give students a push in the direction toward fulfilling their potential; their Unique Potential. The Unique Potential, which constitutes the foundation of this course, is a life-long pursuit that begins at this crossroads.

## Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?

### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Confronting the world's moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one's personal values illumines a path toward one's Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one's Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

### UNIT ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

- One determines one's Unique Potential through our goals, values, and experiences.

### UNIT GOALS

- To encourage students to delve into their personal stories, their family's stories.
- To help students define their personal goals.
- To help students determine their personal values
- To encourage students to develop a personal sense of integrity.
- To encourage students to navigate life in terms of developing the wisdom to be able to differentiate the difference between what is in our control and what is beyond our control.
- To encourage students to define their Unique Potential as the guiding path for their life's journey.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Determine the difference between purpose and potential
- Express what they uniquely provide the world.
- Formulate and elucidate an opinion as to whether life is about the Journey, the Destination, or both.

### To the Instructor:

This introductory unit is the foundation upon which the rest of the curriculum rests. The goal of this unit is to develop a strong sense of investment in one's self, who one ought to become through the parsing of hopes, dreams and goals, while developing trust, community and appreciation for the other participants' hopes, dreams and goals, while simultaneously developing one's own hopes, dreams and goals. It is the recommendation of the designer of this curriculum guide that each session of this curriculum is preceded by a family style meal between participants with guided questions and conversations facilitating a sense of community.

## Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?

### Lesson 1: Creating Community and Defining Unique Potential

#### Lesson Essential Questions:

- What makes a community?
- What is potential?
- What is a Unique Potential?

#### Lesson Goals:

- To set up classroom expectations and norms while defining the community.
- To define physical potential.
- To define Unique Potential.

#### Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Express the norms of the classroom community.
- To translate the “things” of Eilu Dvarim in “Classroom Language”
- To define Unique Potential

#### Materials:

- A small ball (like a baseball or tennis ball)
- Appendix 1.1.1-10 (Pages 11-20)

#### To The Teacher:

Judaism is a wonderful roadmap of how to live a fulfilling and meaningful life. Eilu D'varim makes the claim that these ten things, bound together by the study of Torah, can help us to create a caring and supportive community. The classroom is the place in which an idealized Jewish community can exist, thrive and produce Jews interested in creating a caring and supportive community—a safe space to grow, struggle and be oneself.

By looking at these ten things, our goal is to understand and define the classroom as a Jewish community. The introduction to Eilu D'varim states that engaging in these 10 actions will not only give immense benefit in the immediate, but will also bring forth fruit in the world to come. By engaging in these ten things, we will see the benefit in our classroom and, if we make these things habit, we will also see the improvements in our world outside of our classroom.

#### Classroom Set-up:

- In the classroom the ten “things” (appendix 1.1.1-10) are taped to one wall spread about 3 feet apart.

#### Set Induction:

- Ask: Who remembers “Eilu D’varim”, the list of things whose worth cannot be measured?
- Say: The introduction to Eilu D’varim states that engaging in these 10 actions will not only give immense benefit in the immediate, but will also bring forth fruit in the world to come. By engaging in these ten things, we will see the benefit in our classroom and, if we make these things habit, we will also see the improvements in our world outside of our classroom.
- Say: “These are the 10 things” and encourage the students to read together as a class, pointing to each “thing” as it is read.

#### Activity 1: Reading into the English Text

##### Ask:

- What do all of the things on this list have in common?
- What do the things on this list do for us as a people?
- Why would the rabbis prioritize these ten things as method for creating a community?

#### Activity 2: Translating Text Into Classroom Language

- Say: Now that we are familiar with this brilliant and beautiful text, and we have determined this to be the guidelines of creating a caring and supportive community, we can use the framework of this text to set up community guidelines for our classroom by translating these ideas into language pertinent for the classroom.

#### Instruction for the teacher:

One student should serve as scribe (be sure to collect the scribes notes for distribution to the class). The format for this section of discussion will include reading one “thing” at a time, discussing and deliberating over the language appropriate and pertinent for creating a caring and supportive community in our classroom. Examples of expected answers are included below:

- Honoring Legal Guardian(s): honoring your teachers and honoring your family name and reputation.
- Performing Acts of Love and Kindness: Going above and beyond to be kind, supportive and helpful
- Arriving Early for School: Important to be early, not just on time. It is also important to be prepared, engaged and respectful of other’s time.
- Showing Hospitality to Guests: This class may have guests from time to time and, in a sense, we are guests in each other’s classroom and we should be hospitable to each other.



- Visiting the Sick: There may be days when some of us are absent, we can send supportive text messages, cards, and well wishes to those who are not feeling well. We are responsible for each other's well-being.
- Providing for a Couple About to Marry: While it is highly unlikely anyone will be getting married in this class, we have an opportunity to celebrate each-other's simcha in other ways like birthdays or half birthdays.
- Seeing to the Needs of the Deceased: We must always be prepared to support those in their troubled times of need. If we are to be a community in the truest sense of the word, we must be there for each other for good times and in bad times.
- Praying with Devotion: If there is Tefilah included in the program this is straightforward. If not, prayer is understood as meditation of the heart, the axis of that which we desire, that which humbles us and that which inspires us. The discovery of one's life purpose, which is the core of this curriculum, is entirely aligned with the idea of prayer in this sense.
- Being a Peacemaker: There may well be times when conversations or opinions get heated, and yet it is important to remember that we are all learning together and from each other; respect for each other in the name of peace is crucial.
- Studying Torah Leads to all the Others: While this curriculum is steeped in the book of Genesis, Torah is more than just the Five Books of Moses! Torah is the conversation that our people have been having for thousands of years in the pursuit of wisdom and understanding more about ethics, ourselves and our world.

#### Activity 3: Personal Prioritization:

Once the "things" have been translated into language pertinent to a classroom community, the facilitator will proceed to ask the participants to stand next to the "thing" that:

- Is most relatable
- Is important for participants as a student of Judaism
- Is most important for participants as a student of life
- Would like to improve on for themselves
- What the participants think our synagogue/camp/milieu does well at
- They think is the most important for our classroom
- Is most important for themselves

After each statement or question, the instructor should provide the opportunity for a few students to express why they selected what they selected.

Teacher should ask students to return to their seats for a closing discussion.

#### Closure:

The decision to be a member of this community, to be a member of this class, to be a confirmation student, is a major statement: being a Jew is important to me. Eilu Dvarim provides the blueprint for our community, it provides the potential for our community and it is up to us to realize this community's potential. This year, in this classroom, is a

year on what it means to become yourself. (Instructor should hold out the small ball in an outstretched hand and over the floor.)

Ask: What would happen if I dropped this ball?

Say: As I hold out this ball, it has potential energy. It has the potential to interact with gravity, and yet its potential is not fulfilled. Only by letting go of the ball, is the ball able to fulfill its potential.

Each and every one of us has a potential that is uniquely our own: a unique set of abilities, skills, interests and passions; the realization of the best version of yourself you can be, the realization of your destiny! It is the intention of this course to help you and guide you toward the discovery and actualization of your potential! (Drop ball for dramatic effect.)

Take five minutes to write a letter to yourself at the end of this course regarding:

- What do you think of when you hear the phrase “Unique Potential”?
- What do you believe is your destiny?

# honoring legal guardians

Appendix 1.1.1

# performing acts of love and kindness

Appendix 1.1.2

# arriving early for school

Appendix 1.1.3

# showing hospitality to guests

Appendix 1.1.4

# visiting the sick

Appendix 1.1.5

providing  
for a couple  
about to  
marry



# seeing to the needs of the deceased

Appendix 1.1.7

# praying with devotion

Appendix 1.1.8

# being a peacemaker

Appendix 1.1.9

Studying  
Torah leads  
to all the  
others.

Appendix 1.1.10

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 2: Why Do I Exist?

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to have a purpose?
- What is purpose? Potential?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to explore family and personal histories, struggles, and triumphs.
- To guide students through an exploration of what gifts, talents, potentials makes them unique.
- To explore the difference between purpose and potential.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Identify the formative moments in their family and personal histories
- Explain why these moments are formative for them
- Explain why these moments will shape their future stories.

Materials:

- Paper
- Pencils/pens

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 2: Why Do I Exist?

Set Induction: Triumph Together (10 Minutes)

- Instructor will first share a moment of triumph and proceed to ask each student to share a personal moment of triumph with the group. Be sure to give ample time (3-5 minutes) for students to gather their thoughts and select a story they are truly proud of.

Activity 1: Family Chapter Book (15 Minutes)

Instructor should ask: "if you were writing the book of your and your family's history, what would the chapter titles be? What would the 1-3 sentence synopsis of those chapters be?" Students should write their individual responses in a notebook or on loose paper.

Activity 2: Small Group Discussion (20 Minutes)

The instructor will divide the class into small groups of 2-4 students. The instructor will ask the students to go through the chapters and synopses they have written in Activity 1 and pick 2-4 "chapters" to discuss in depth with their group mates. The instructor should advise the students to select "chapters" based on these criteria:

- Ones that inspire
- Frustrate
- Require further investigation
- Involve stories of triumph or struggle
- Have a defined beginning, middle and end

Closure: Large Group Discussion (15 Minutes)

The teacher will reconvene the group and ask:

- "Why is this activity, of writing one's table of contents, an important activity in the course of discovering one's Unique Potential?"
- "How do the stories we tell about ourselves shape the way we see ourselves?"
- "How do these stories develop a sense of purpose?"
- "How do these stories inspire a sense of potential?"

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 3: “What is it that You Desire?”

Lesson Essential Questions:

- “What is it that you desire?” (Genesis 37:15-21)
- How do we navigate personal desire/aspiration/goal, while simultaneously considering the implications of our choices?
- How do decisions/desires have long term impact?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage student’s personal exploration of life goals
- To explore the value of free will
- To encourage students to choose what is in their best interest
- To encourage godly behavior in the decision-making process.
- To determine the difference between Choices, Decisions, and Consequences: What are they and what are their implications?

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Express what they want for themselves in the immediate, in 5 years, in 10 years
- Explain how these goals are in their best interest
- Describe how these goals will shape their world and the world around them.

Materials:

- A/V equipment with access to YouTube
- YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/vh47A5oqFS8>
- Lyric Sheet (Appendix 1.3.1) (Page 26)
- Appendix 1.3.2 (Page 27)
- Appendix 1.3.3 (Page 28)

To The Teacher:

The Saga of Joseph is, aside from the Israelite’s journey through the wilderness, the longest story in the Torah. Joseph is a dreamer and Jacob’s youngest, most favorite child. Joseph is a complicated, complex character, just like us. He has hopes, he has dreams, he has skills, he has struggle and trauma, but he also has the drive to persevere. Joseph’s journey is the journey of discovery; an epic saga in which Joseph discovers what he is capable of, the discovery of his own Unique Potential. The true beginning of Joseph’s journey is not the fact that he has dreams that his family will one day bow down to him. No! Joseph’s story begins with a seemingly insignificant conversation on his way to find his brothers. Joseph, wandering, lost and unsure of where his brothers have gone to, comes upon a man in the field. The man asks Joseph, “What do you desire?” This question is the question that will drive today’s lesson.

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 3: “What is it that You Desire?”

Set Induction: “Dreamer Like You” (5 Minutes)

Each student should respond the question, “What is the greatest dream you have ever had?” Likely, students will respond by speaking of the dreams they may have at night. Respond by redirecting these dreams toward dreams of tomorrow. If you are especially fortunate to have a student who expresses their dreams of tomorrow, embrace their response along with the others and express that dreaming is a part of our tradition in a very big way. After each student has had their chance, Play the prologue from “Joseph and the Amazing Techni-Colored Dream Coat” (Appendix 1.3.1)

Activity 1: Joseph: A Play in One Act (10 Minutes)

Instructor should pass out copies of the play (Appendix 1.3.2).

After having read the script, say to the students:

- “What do you desire?” Is a very broad question and can change over time and it can change from moment to moment. The goal is to set your sights on your potential asking yourself, “what do I desire for myself and from myself?”

Ask:

- Is what I desire for myself different from what I desire for the world?
- What if what I desire conflicts with what others desire?
- What if I am ashamed of what I desire?
- What if I believe that what I desire is not possible or not attainable?

Activity 2: When Desire Meets Its Match (15 Minutes)

Note For Teacher:

This text study can be done in a group setting or as a Hevruta/small group style conversation. (Appendix 1.3.3)

Text Study:

וַיִּמָּצְאֵהוּ אִישׁ וְהָיָה תַּעֲהָ בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּשְׁאַלְהוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר מַה-תִּבְקֹשׁ:

A man came upon him wandering in the fields. The man asked him, “What is it that you desire?”

וַאֲמָרָה תִּבְקֹשׁ-לָךְ גְּדִלּוֹת אֶל-תִּבְקֹשׁ כִּי הִנְנִי מְבִיא רָעָה עַל-כָּל-בָּשָׂר  
וְאִם-יְהִיָּה וְנִתְּתִי לָךְ אֶת-נַפְשְׁךָ לְשָׁלָל עַל כָּל-הַמְקֻמּוֹת אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ-שָׁם:

And you desire great things for yourself? Do not desire them, for I am here to bring disaster upon all flesh—declares Adonai—but I will at least grant you your life in all the places where you may go.”

—Jer. 45:5



### Guiding Questions:

- What are synonyms for “desire” that might help us to understand these two (Genesis 37:15 and Jeremiah 45:5) texts better?
- What is the relationship, according to Jeremiah, between desiring and Adonai’s intent on bringing disaster upon all flesh?
- In the words of Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato, “the foundation of saintliness and the source of all true and perfect service of God is that it should be clarified and validated to man what his obligation in his world are and toward what he must place his focus and goal in all his toils during his entire life.”<sup>1</sup> What does this statement say in your own words? What qualities should our desires have?
- What connections can be made between Rabbi Luzzato’s statement, Jeremiah’s commentary on desire and Joseph’s encounter with the man in the field?
- Who must we consider when we make a decision? Should we rank these people?
- What can we ask ourselves to try and make the best choice for ourselves? For the people whom we mentioned?

### Activity 3: Journal/Conversation (15 Minutes)

Students should be prompted to journal individually to discuss their immediate desires, their desires for the next five-years, and for the next ten-years. Once they have had about 15 minutes of journaling time, students should be instructed to form small groups to discuss their desires.

### Group Sharing (15 Minutes)

In groups of 2 or 3, students should share their desires following the Protocol For Group Sharing:

#### Protocol for Group Sharing:

- Each student has 3 minutes to explain their journal entry
- Followed by a 2 minute round of clarifying questions from the other participants.
- Followed by a single comment of noticing, appreciation or wondering about the journal entry.

### Closure (5 Minutes)

Questions for closing discussion:

- What was it like discovering/revisiting/deciding upon your desires for yourself?
- How did you feel listening to your classmates’ goals?

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<sup>1</sup> (Torah Treasury, 94)

### Appendix 1.3.1—For Set Induction

<https://youtu.be/vh47A5oqFS8>

Some folks dream of the wonders they'll do  
Before their time on this planet is through  
Some just don't have anything planned  
They hide their hopes and their heads in the sand  
Now I don't say who is wrong, who is right  
But if by chance you are here for the night  
Then all I need is an hour or two  
To tell the tale of a dreamer like you  
We all dream a lot - some are lucky, some are not  
But if you think it, want it, dream it, then it's real  
You are what you feel

But all that I say can be told another way  
In the story of a boy whose dream came true

## Joseph's Story Script

Narrator: This is a story about Joseph.

Joe: Hi! I'm Joseph!

Narrator: Not yet.

Joe: Oh, yeah, sorry...

Narrator: \*Clears Throat\* Ahem...A long, long time ago in a land far away lived a man named Jacob. (Out comes player 1 in beard.)

Joseph: Hey what gives, I thought this was supposed to be my story?

Narrator: It is – just wait!

Joseph: \*slouching and forlorn\* Ok...

Narrator: Jacob had 12 sons, and one of them was named Joseph by the name of Joseph...

Joseph: \*looks up from forlorn shrug and Smiles\* Hey! That's me!

Narrator: \*rolls eyes\*...Joseph, by the way, was Jacob's favorite son.

Joseph: That's me, I'm the favorite! That's me, I'm the favorite!

Narrator: Joseph's...status and behavior didn't sit well with his brothers... Especially when Jacob gave Joseph a very special coat.

Brothers: \*murmuring in a disgruntled, angry way\*

Joseph: 0000000000... Look at this coat! Look at the colors! Look at this coat of many colors!

Brother: Isn't that special, so happy for you Josesph... \*scoffs\*

Narrator: On top of all that, it didn't help matters that Joseph was a dreamer of dreams.

Joseph: I love dreams! I am pretty good at dreaming!

Narrator: In fact, Joseph had two dreams that his already jealous brothers didn't appreciate.

Brother: Like I'll ever bow to him!?

Brother: Yeah, what is Joseph thinking? Keep dreaming, bro!

Narrator: One cool morning, Jacob sent Joseph into the field to check on his brothers who were out watching the sheep.

Joseph: \*Said with a sing-song tone\* Off to find my brothers, out in the field! Gonna' tell dad if they are working or lazy!

Narrator: As Joseph came upon the place he thought his brothers would be, he saw that they were already gone from there.

Joseph: Brothers? O Brothers? Where art thou?

Narrator: As Joseph wandered to and fro, searching for his brothers, he came upon a man in the field.

Joseph: Look! A man in the field!

Narrator: The man approached Joseph and said:

Man: What do you desire?

Joseph: Well... I am looking for my brothers... Do you know where they went?

Man: They went on to pasture in Dothan...

Narrator: At this moment, the moment Joseph set his heart upon what he desired most, is the moment when Joseph's story truly began. From here, Joseph would find his brothers at Dothan, they threw him into a pit, Joseph was sold him into slavery, worked for a high ranking official in Egypt, thrown into jail on false charges, interpreted Pharaoh's dreams of an impending famine, and fulfilled his potential by saving the entire region from starvation. Today, our lesson will focus on the very question that started Joseph's journey: "What is it that you desire?"

### Appendix 1.3.3

#### Text Study:

וַיִּמָּצְאוּ אִישׁ וְהִנֵּה תֵעָה בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּשְׁאַלְהוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר מַה-תִּבְקֹשׁ:

A man came upon him wandering in the fields. The man asked him, “What is it that you desire?”

וְאַתָּה תִּבְקֹשׁ-לָךְ גְּדִלוֹת אֶל-תִּבְקֹשׁ כִּי הִנְנִי מְבִיא רָעָה עַל-כָּל-בָּשָׂר  
נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְנָתַתִּי לָךְ אֶת-נַפְשְׁךָ לְשָׁלָל עַל כָּל-הַמְּקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ-שָׁם:

And you desire great things for yourself? Do not desire them, for I am here to bring disaster upon all flesh—declares Adonai—but I will at least grant you your life in all the places where you may go.”

—Jer. 45:5

#### Guiding Questions:

- What are synonyms for “desire” that might help us to understand these two (Genesis 37:15 and Jeremiah 45:5) texts better?
- What is the relationship, according to Jeremiah, between desiring and Adonai’s intent on bringing disaster upon all flesh?
- In the words of Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato, “the foundation of saintliness and the source of all true and perfect service of God is that it should be clarified and validated to man what his obligation in his world are and toward what he must place his focus and goal in all his toils during his entire life.”<sup>2</sup> What does this statement say in your own words? What qualities should our desires have?
- What connections can be made between Rabbi Luzzato’s statement, Jeremiah’s commentary on desire and Joseph’s encounter with the man in the field?
- Who must we consider when we make a decision? Should we rank these people?
- What can we ask ourselves to try and make the best choice for ourselves? For the people whom we mentioned?

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<sup>2</sup> (Torah Treasury, 94)

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 4: Determining My Values

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is the definition of Courage? Integrity? Curiosity? Leadership? Concern?
- What values speak to my core?
- What values do I admire in a leader?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to discover a value set of their own.
- To encourage students to equate their value set with the idea of their Unique Potential.
- To emphasize the importance of courage, integrity, curiosity, leadership and concern.
- To encourage students to define the values and their opposites, as this will be a helpful tool when looking at texts.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Create a list of values that they feel will help shape/guide/develop their Unique Potential.
- Articulate what each value means to them and express what about their value set will help shape/guide/develop their Unique Potential.

Materials:

- Periodic table of Jewish Values <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/>
- Appendix 1.4.1

To The Teacher:

For set up, the instructor should hang signs with many different values from the Periodic table of Jewish Values <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/> and a piece of text with each value.

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 4: Determining My Values

Set Induction: So Many Roads

(10 Minutes)

*There was once a hiker about to embark on a journey up to the top of a very tall mountain. He was prepared with his backpack and his hiking shoes and all of his other equipment. All he needed to do was find the way up to the top.*

*When he opened up his map, he was surprised to find that it didn't just lead one way.*

*Instead, the map showed many, many different paths. The hiker wondered aloud, "how am I supposed to know which path to take? There are so many different options!"*

*A passing ranger saw the confused expression on the hiker's face. He reassured the hiker, "These are all good paths, and they will all take you to the top of the mountain. All you need to do is to pick the path that carries you in the way that is right for you." A little confused, but determined, the hiker went along his way, and eventually found his path to the top of the mountain.*

*Throughout his hike, the strangest thing occurred:*

*Sometimes he would be hiking alongside another person, but eventually their chosen paths would fork. At other times, he would see another hiker on a different path a few feet away. He and the other hikers would sometimes chat, compare and contrast their journeys, and then eventually trudge on alone.*

**The instructor should give pause and a moment for students to absorb the story.**

When a moment has passed, the instructor should ask:

- "If the endless combinations of paths in the story serve as a metaphor for life, how do we determine which forks to take?"

After taking a few answers, say:

- Perhaps we choose a path because it looks like it is well maintained or perhaps the path looks like it will be a rewarding challenge.
- Sometimes there are sweeping panoramic views and sometimes we may need a map or a compass to guide our way through.
- This is much like our experience when striving to find our Unique Potential.
- Trying to learn to read a map or use a compass to guide one's path is the equivalent of using values to illumine those paths that inspire us to grow to be the best version of ourselves possible.
- There are so many different ways, and so many different experiences that can bring us to a place that we can understand ourselves, what we are capable of and what we are going to contribute to humanity.

Ask:

- What are examples of values?
- What makes an idea a value?

Say:

- “Courage, Integrity, Curiosity, Leadership, and Concern” are five foundational values that each of us are capable of embodying.

Ask:

- What do these five words mean to you as a Jewish person?
- What role have they/do they/will they play in my life?
- Which of these five values:
- Do you feel the strongest connection with?
- Do you feel you wish you had more of?
- Do you admire the most in others?
- These are five foundational values, however there are many, many more values.
- (Around the room you will see giant post-it notes with many different values (Periodic table of Jewish Values <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/>) and a piece of text with each value OR Each of you has a periodic table of Jewish values)

Activity 1: Value Shopping

(15 Minutes)

Using the Periodic table of Jewish Values <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/> each student should choose a value from each category and from one category a second value that speaks to them.

OR

Take time to look at the values around the room. At each value, write a comment or two regarding your personal connection to this value and what makes the value specifically Jewish? Each student should select one value from each category and a second value from one category that speaks to them.

Each person (participant and instructor) will answer this question on a loose piece of paper for each chosen value: “This value is important to me because...” Give a few minutes for the students to finish their responses. When they are done, have them fold their answers and pass them to the instructor to be placed in a hat or bucket. Once everyone is finished, the papers will be redistributed and each person will read one or two aloud, including the instructor.

Activity 2:

(30 Minutes)

Say:

- Let’s explore some Jewish Values. Each one of these words can be found in some form throughout Jewish Texts and each value reflects aspects of character essential to developing Upstanding Jews.

Split class up into 3 or 6 groups. Each group should engage with 1 or 2 of the Value Sets and pertinent questions. (See Appendix 1.4.1) They should work as a group to define each value and determine what the set of values have in common.



When they have completed step one, each group should present their findings, teaching the larger class.

After all groups have finished, ask:

- What surprised you about the values from the other groups?
- What value sets stood out to you?
- Were there values that seemed as though they were not compatible with each other/in competition with other values?

Closure: (5 Minutes)

After all groups have finished, ask:

- What surprised you about the values from the other groups?
- What value sets stood out to you?
- How might developing a strong set of values guide you to discover and foster your Unique Potential?

#### Appendix 1.4.1

##### Value Sets:

Courage, Zeal, Confidence, Discipline, Conviction, Perseverance, and Integrity

- What is the meaning of these words?

- What do these words have in common?

- What is the antonym of these values?

Wisdom, Curiosity, Creativity, Appreciation of Opposition, and Foresight

- What is the meaning of these words?

- What do these words have in common?

- What is the antonym of these values?

Decency, Compassion, Kindness, Loyalty, Pursuit of Peace, and Leadership

- What is the meaning of these words?
- What do these words have in common?
- What is the antonym of these values?

Justice, Social Responsibility, Compassionate Criticism, and Righteousness

- What is the meaning of these words?
- What do these words have in common?
- What is the antonym of these values?

Calm, Forgiveness, Amenability, Humility, Modesty

- What is the meaning of these words?
- What do these words have in common?
- What is the antonym of these values?

Wonder, Reverence, Love, Gratitude, Joy

- What is the meaning of these words?
- What do these words have in common?
- What is the antonym of these values?

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 5: “God Alone Will Be A Witness”

Lesson Essential Questions:

- How can we work to align our thought, speech and action in a way that feels genuine?
- What is a reputation worth?
- What does it mean to establish oneself? How does one become established? How does one’s reputation relate to the establishment of one’s self?

Lesson Goals:

- To demonstrate integrity through examples of those who lack integrity.
- To encourage students to develop a moral compass of their own.
- To encourage students to be mindful of the fragility of one's reputation.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Distinguish between integrity and a lack of integrity
- Define thought, speech and action in terms of integrity.
- Define integrity in their own words
- Express what integrity isn’t.

Materials:

- Instructor should acquire a large enough space where the students can spread out into the circle.
- Tanakhim (one per student)
- Appendix 1.5.1 (Page 40-41)

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Integrity—ALIGNING SPEECH, THOUGHT AND ACTION

First, the instructor will instruct the members of the group form a circle. Someone from the circle should volunteer to be sent away from the group where they cannot hear the ensuing discussion.

When the person is out of earshot and is closing their eyes, those remaining in the circle select a “secret leader.”

It is the leader’s responsibility to create new rhythmic hand and body motions that the rest of the circle will imitate while the person sent away at the beginning of the explanation tries to guess the identity of the leader.

The leader actively tries to hide his ever-changing rhythmic hand and body motions while the outsider actively tries to guess the secret leader.

When the secret leader has been revealed, the process is repeated three times. Roles should be filled by completely new people each time.

After a few times of playing the game, the instructor should ask the group to come in for a discussion about the game. Once settled, ask:

- What was it like to play the game?
- For those that were secret leaders, what was that like?
- For those that were guessing, what was that like?
- How was the person guessing able to deduce the identity of the secret leader? What methods were used?
- In the game, there wasn't much talking, but how were the people in the game communicating? How did everyone know what action to perform? In the game, how might speech or communication be defined?
- Of the three—Thought (guessing who the secret leader is), Speech (communicating the action through the secret leader), and Action (the rest of the circle copying the action of the secret leader)—which pieces were communicated well? Which were not working well together? Who had a more difficult time? The thinking guesser? The communicative secret leader? Or the Active participants?
- In what ways were these three behaving in harmony? In what ways was there dissonance?
- What made the activity easy? What made the activity difficult?
- What happens when our thoughts do not match what we say or what we do?
- What is important about speech? Thought? Action?
- Why might it be important for what we think, say and do to be united?
- What are the implications of a lack of cooperation between our thoughts, our words and our actions?

Activity 2: “God Alone Will be a Witness” Genesis 29:1-31:28 (35 Minutes)

Instructor should split the group in two and distribute Tanakhim. Group 1 will read Genesis 29:1-29:31 & Genesis 30:1- while Group 2 will read Genesis 30:27-31:28.

Guiding Questions For Group 1 & 2:

- What instances throughout the story teach lessons about integrity?
- What does this narrative teach us about integrity?
- Was Laban wrong to make Jacob work all of those years? Why or why not?
- Can we understand Laban’s decisions, even if we don’t agree with them?
- Why does Jacob proclaim, “God Alone Will be a Witness”? (Genesis 31:50) Is this statement directed at God? At himself? At Laban?
- Knowing that we are complex people, how can we work to align our thought, speech and action in a way that feels genuine?

Activity 3: (10 Minutes)

Read the one act play “Upright or In Pieces: Jacob & Uncle Laban” as a “table read” where no student has a specific part and the reading moves from student to student after each line of the play. (Appendix 1.5.1)

Closure: (5 Minutes)

After reading the play, ask:

- What steps did Jacob take to establish himself? To make himself a person of integrity?
- What reputation does Jacob have after these stories with his uncle?
- What reputation does Laban have?
- What is the connection between integrity and one’s reputation?
- Why are integrity and reputation integral to developing one’s Unique Potential?

### Appendix 1.5.1

#### Upright or In Pieces: Jacob & Uncle Laban

Jacob: Twenty. Years. Twenty years Uncle Laban... I worked for FOURTEEN YEARS to earn your daughter's hand in marriage!!

Laban: \*Under his breath\* Don't forget about the switcheroo...

Jacob: Oh! How could I forget!? THE SWITCHEROO! Leah for Rachel? And the sheep! How could I possibly have known that they would all come out speckled? I mean, truth be told, you could have chosen the speckled one's at the beginning. What are the odds??

Laban: \*scoffs\* yeah... what are the odds?

Jacob: Yes! What are the odds?! God only knows! And if it weren't for the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, who knows how I would have fared? Empty handed? Unpaid wages? Unfulfilled promises? And yet, my hard work and integrity did not go unnoticed! By God anyway, you only cared for yourself!

Laban: Now, now wait just a minute Jakey the snakey...Those daughters? They are MY daughters! Those children? They are MY children! The flocks are my flocks and everything you see is MINE! What is a man to do? Can't you put yourself in my shoes?

\*A LONG PAUSE\*

Laban: Look, let's just let bygones be bygones, OK? Let's you and me make a pact, a solemn oath, an agreement that there shall be a witness between us, just between you and me. Jacob and old Uncle Laban...

Narrator: So, Jacob agreed and thereupon set up a pillar of stone as a monument and he said to his brethren

Jacob: Brethren! Gather up stones, make a mound and let's have a bite to eat!

Laban: \*confidently and boastfully\* so it is settled then! We will call this place Y'gar Sahaduta!

Jacob: Actually, dear Uncle, I think Gal Eid would be a more appropriate name for this...

Laban: \*Interrupting Jacob\* Silly Jacob, that's what I said! Of course! It should be called...what did you say again? Oh yeah Gal Eid, just as I had said! Why Gal Eid, you might ask? Because this place is a mound and it shall serve as witness! Gal is mound and Eid is witness, you got all that Jacob?

Jacob: \*Rolls his eyes\*



Narrator: Hey! Don't forget the third name of this place!

Laban: Oh yeah! Thanks! Yeah, you had better watch your back, Jacob! This place will serve as a reminder that God is always watching you like a guard on a watchtower! That is why I am calling this place Mitzpah, too. If you EVER mistreat my daughters or take other wives, just remember: God will be a witness between us.

Hey, enough with the heavy stuff! Just remember: This here is a mound that placed here and a pillar that I set up. Let the mound be a witness and the pillar be a witness that I am not to cross past this mound and you will not cross this mound with hostile intent, you know the kind of intent you have ungratefully shown me the last 20 years, OK?

Jacob: You said it Uncle Laban: Let the Judge of Abraham and the god of Nahor judge us.

Narrator: And there, Jacob swore an oath upon the Fear of his Father Isaac, offered a sacrifice, ate a meal and went to sleep upon the mountain.

In the morning, Laban kissed his family goodbye and went home. Jacob, as he was packing up the camp encountered two angels. When Jacob saw them, he proclaimed,

Jacob: This is also God's camp!

Narrator: So he named the place two camps: Mahanaim.

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 6: Is Life About the Journey or the Destination?

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is the balance/relationship between life experience and leaving a legacy?
- Does what we do define us? How do we define ourselves? How does the world define us?
- What is the balance between our desires and our reputations?
- What metrics should we use to determine success in discovering our Unique Potential?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to seek their own path; their own Unique Potential
- To guide students to see beyond the surface reading of poetry
- To encourage students to take a stand on whether the Journey or the Destination is more important.
- To encourage healthy debate, conversation and personal growth through listening to each other with respect and attentiveness.

Lesson Objectives: By the end of this lesson students will be able to...

- Take a stand as to whether they believe life is about the Journey, the Destination or both citing personal reflection, anecdotes and experience.

Materials:

- A/V Equipment with access to internet
- “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost (One Per Student) (Appendix 1.6.1) (Page 46)

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 6: Is Life About the Journey or the Destination?

Set Induction: (5 Minutes)

Instructor will play this presentation from Tedx  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7UxnObThuo>

Upon conclusion of the video, instructor will ask:

- What surprised you about this presentation? Do you agree with the premise? Why or why not?

Activity I: "The Road Not Taken" (25 Minutes)

Instructor will read Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken"

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

Guiding Questions:

- What emotions are palpable in the narrator's voice in the opening stanza?
- Why is the decision regarding which path to take so difficult for the traveler?
- The line: "Yet knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back." In your own words, what is the poet saying here? (ideally students will come up with something like, "life is always moving forward through a series of paths and turns, and sometimes "we can't return we can only look behind from where we came and go round and round and round in the circle game."<sup>3</sup>) How does this line make you feel? Is the poet being nostalgic or hopefully looking forward?
- According to stanza two, how could one differentiate between the two possible paths?
- If the paths were "worn really about the same," what did Frost mean when he said, "I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference"?

The instructor should recite the poem again then ask:

- The final stanza is a nostalgic requiem (memory) for days gone by, and yet I wonder: is he still talking about the paths in the woods or is he looking back at life as a series of paths?
- To what does Frost credit the choice to take one road all those years ago for his subsequent experiences? His dreams?
- Looking back, was Frost more interested in the Journey or the Destination? What about in the moment he was choosing which path to take?
- Through the lens of this poem, what metrics does Frost use to determine the fulfillment of his own potential?
- Why is the poem called "The Road Not Taken"? What are the implications of defining his experience by the experience he didn't have?

Activity 2: The Great Debate

(25 Minutes)

Instructor will prompt the students by asking if they have developed an opinion thus far as to whether the destination is more important than the journey or if the journey is more important than the destination.

Allow for students to raise their hands or engage in conversation. Ask students to defend their positions, ask students to use examples from life, movies, television, literature, poetry to support their positions, but also encourage them to listen closely to what their classmates are saying, especially those who are in disagreement with their own stance. This debate is not about winning, but about listening to another perspective. There are no teams in this debate and this is intentional. This debate is fully intended to allow perspectives to grow.

Closure:

(5 Minutes)

Instructor will ask students:

- If the debate has changed their perspectives and how?

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<sup>3</sup> "Circle Game" Joni Mitchell

- How has the debate impacted your thinking?
- To take some time to reflect in a free write.

## Appendix 1.6.1

### “The Road Not Taken”

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

Unit 1: What is a Unique Potential?  
Lesson 7: What is a Unique Potential?

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is the definition of a Unique Potential?
- Where have I been? Where am I going? How will I get there?
- What do I stand for?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to stand up for themselves and own what they are capable of.
- To encourage students to define their Unique Potential.
- To push students to see the importance of dreaming big.
- To encourage students to see that the first step of discovering one's Unique Potential is to "rise" to the occasion.

Lesson Objectives: By the end of this lesson students will be able to...

- To uncover the way in which Genesis exhibits "Unique Potential".
- To create a "Vision Board".

Materials:

- Paper and Pen
- A/V with access to internet
- One small poster board per student
- Assorted Magazines
- Internet access for students to download and print pictures
- Paint (brushes), crayons, markers, pastels, pencils, etc.
- Glue, string, pipe cleaner, construction paper, etc.
- Appendix 1.7.1 (Page 50-51)

To The Teacher:

The use of Vayakom is closely connected to moments where biblical characters are about to fulfill an aspect of their Unique Potential. Vayakom is like a flashing neon sign that says, "this person is about to fulfill a meaningful moment in their lives." While these Biblical characters had the added benefit of being in direct contact with the Divine to determine their Unique Potential, we are stuck trying to figure that out through desires, relationships, and the choices we make. Appendix 1.6.1 contains every textual example of the word "Vayakom" in Genesis, but there are plenty of poignant examples throughout the Tanakh. This resource can be used to create a supplementary activity to Activity One whereby students can use the stories from Activity 1 to compare to other "vayakom" type stories asking questions like: What are the critical elements of a story that has the word Vayakom?

Set Induction: (5 Minutes)

Teacher will ask students what would incentivize them to go out and achieve their dreams? What would cause them to go after their Unique Potential?

Activity 1: Jigsaw (20 Minutes)

In this session we are going to look at four instances where Vayakom (“and so-and-so stood up”) points directly to a moment when a character literally stands up to go forth and become who they were destined to become, for better or for worse. We will look at the Cain and Abel story, The Akedah, Jacob Wrestling with the “Man” and Jacob’s Final Blessing. We will break up into four groups, each group will study an assigned piece of text surrounding their iteration of Vayakom and determine:

- The characters of the story
- The characteristics of the characters of that story
- The reason the main character “stood up”
- The role “Vayakom” plays in the story
- And further comments or reflections on the story that might give us a better idea of how the word Vayakom works as a narrative device.

Each group will have about 15 minutes to complete step one, at which point the groups will create new groups comprised of members from the other groups.

When the new groups have been assembled, each member will teach the new members about the various realizations their previous group had about their stories. (15 Minutes) At this point, the new group will need to determine:

- What do these four stories have in common?
- What role does the word Vayakom play? What does Vayakom indicate? How is the word Vayakom used throughout these stories?
- What might you look for in a story to determine whether or not Vayakom would be used as a linguistic tool?

Activity 2: Vision Board Assessment (35 Minutes)

Say: As our first unit comes to a close, we have to ask ourselves, what have we learned so far? We have learned about ourselves; we have learned where we come from; we have learned where we would like to go and what we want most from life. The question is: How do we get there? While it sounds cliché, the journey of a thousand miles truly does start with rising to the occasion: the first step.

We are going to take the next 20 minutes to design what is called a vision board. Let this vision board be the beginning of you defining your own Unique Potential.

As a class, watch this instructional video on how to make a vision board.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZb2NOHPA2A>



A vision board is, in some sense a living representation of your vision for yourself. Let this board be the beginning of your vision for yourself, your future and for your Unique Potential. Invite students to engage with the supplies and materials to create their board.

Let this board represent what you are capable of, what your values are, who you are, where you come from and where you are going. Be sure to utilize the lessons and the themes you have encountered over the last few sessions to bolster your sense of vision for your future and for your potential!

In an accessible location, the students should be provided a table of magazines, art supplies, glue, string anything that will help them to create a visual representation of where they see themselves in the future.

Envision yourself, envision your potential. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't

## Appendix 1.7.1

Gen. 4:8

וַיְהִיגֵהוּ: אָחִיו אֶל־הָהֵבֶל קִין וַיִּקֶּם בַּשָּׂדֶה בַּהֲיוֹתָם וַיְהִי אָחִיו אֶל־הָהֵבֶל קִין וַיֹּאמֶר

Cain said to his brother Abel ... and when they were in the field, Cain **set upon** his brother Abel and killed him.

Gen. 19:1

לִקְרֹאתָם וַיִּקֶּם וַיֵּרָא־לוֹט בְּשַׁעַר־סֹדֶם יֹשֵׁב וְלוֹט בָּעָרָב סֹדֶמָה הַמְּלֶאכִים שְׁנֵי וַיָּבֹאוּ  
אֶרְצָה: אַפִּים וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ

The two angels arrived in Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, **he rose** to greet them and, bowing low with his face to the ground,

Gen 21:32

פָּלְשָׁתִים: אֶל־אֶרֶץ וַיָּשְׁבוּ שַׁר־צָבָאוֹ וּפִיכֹל אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וַיִּקֶּם שָׁבַע בְּבֶאֱר בְּרִית וַיִּכְרְתוּ

When they had concluded the pact at Beer-sheba, Abimelech and Phicol, chief of his troops, **departed** and returned to the land of the Philistines.

22:3

וַיִּבְקַע בָּנּוֹ יִצְחָק וְאֵת אֹתוֹ נָעַרְיוֹ אֶת־שְׁנֵי וַיִּקָּח אֶת־חֲמֹר וַיַּחְבֹּשׁ בַּבֶּקָר אַבְרָהָם וַיִּשְׁפֹּם  
הָאֱלֹהִים: אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר־לוֹ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקֶּם עָלָה עֲצִי

So early next morning, Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He split the wood for the burnt offering, and **he set out** for the place of which God had told him.

23:3 Has to stand four times to get his wife a burial place

לֵאמֹר: אֶל־בְּנֵי־חֵת וַיְדַבֵּר מֵתוֹ פָּנָי מַעַל אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקֶּם

Then Abraham **rose** from beside his dead, and spoke to the Hittites, saying,

23:7

לְבְנֵי־חֵת: לָעַם־הָאֶרֶץ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקֶּם

**Thereupon** Abraham bowed low to the people of the land, the Hittites,

23:17

וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ וְהַמַּעֲרָה הַשָּׂדֶה מִמָּרָא לִפְנֵי אֲשֶׁר בַּמִּכְפֶּלֶה אֲשֶׁר עָפְרוֹן שָׂדֶה | וַיִּקֶּם  
סָבִיב: בְּכָל־גִּבְלוֹ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר

So Ephron's land in Machpelah, near Mamre—the field with its cave and all the trees anywhere within the confines of that field—passed

23:20

(ס) בְּנֵי־חֵת: מָאֵת לְאַחֲזֵת־קֶבֶר לְאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ וְהַמְעָרָה הַשְּׂדֵה וְיִקָּם

**Thus** the field with its cave passed from the Hittites to Abraham, as a burial site.

24:10—retrieving Rebecca

אֶל־אָרָם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקָּם בִּידּוֹ אֲדָנָיו וְכָל־טוֹב וַיֵּלֶךְ אֲדָנָיו מִגְּמָלֵי גְמָלִים עֲשָׂרָה הָעֶבֶד וַיִּקָּח נָחוֹר: אֶל־עִיר נְהָרִים

Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and set out, taking with him all the bounty of his master; and **he made his way** to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor.

25:34

(ס) אֶת־הַבִּכּוּרָה: עָשָׂו וַיִּבְּזוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּשֶׁת׃ וַיֹּאכַל עֲדָשִׁים וּגְזִיד לֶחֶם לַעֲשׂוֹ נָתַן וַיַּעֲקֹב

Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, and **he rose** and went away. Thus did Esau spurn the birthright.

31:17

עַל־הַגְּמָלִים: וְאֶת־נָשָׁיו אֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֵּשֶׂא יַעֲקֹב וַיִּקָּם

**Thereupon** Jacob put his children and wives on camels;

32:23—preparing to wrestle with the Ish

וַיַּעֲבֹר יִלְדָּיו עֲשָׂר וְאֶת־אֶחָד שְׂפָחָתָיו וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי נָשָׁיו אֶת־שְׁתֵּי וַיִּקָּח הוּא בִלְלִילָה ׀ וַיִּקָּם יַבֹּק: מַעְבַּר אֵת

That same night **he arose**, and taking his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children, he crossed the ford of the Jabbok.

46:1-5—for the sake of his legacy and to see his son one last time.

וְאֶת־נְשֵׁיהֶם וְאֶת־טַפָּם אָבִיהֶם אֶת־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּשְׂאוּ שִׁבְעַ מִבָּאָר יַעֲקֹב וַיִּקָּם אֹתוֹ: לְשִׂאת פָּרְעָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח בְּעֶגְלוֹת

So Jacob **set out** from Beer-sheba. The sons of Israel put their father Jacob and their children and their wives in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to transport him;

## Unit 2: Hadeish Yameinu k'Kedem: Looking Back To Look Forward

### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Confronting the world's moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one's personal values illumines a path toward one's Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one's Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

### UNIT ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

- The difficult balance between nostalgia and trudging forward presents opportunities for growth while offering learning to appreciate the past.
- The opportunity and ability to choose right from wrong defines Genesis' understanding of godliness.

### UNIT GOALS

- To encourage students to see the past not as something to return to, but something to learn from and inspire their future.
- To encourage students to take advantage of the vast resource that is Judaism and, in particular, the book of Genesis.
- To encourage students to recognize that, while learning things "the hard way" by trial and error is certainly one way to learn, Genesis teaches us that many of life's enduring dilemmas might be best tackled in the theoretical.
- To encourage students to look at the "expulsion" from the garden, not as a punishment, but as an opportunity to distinguish right from wrong.
- To encourage students to take calculated risks in determining their life goals.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Explicate the pros and cons of nostalgia, looking ahead, and the necessary balance between the two.
- Express their goals for the next 5-15 years
- Interpret the garden story as a metaphor for maturation and the process of learning on life's terms.

Unit 2: Hadeish Yameinu k'Kedem  
Lesson 1: We've Got to Get Back to the Garden... Or Do We?

Lesson Essential Questions:

What is the relationship between the Tree of Life and our Unique Potential?

Lesson Goals:

- To make the connections between the Tree of Life, the Torah and a life path toward fulfilling one's Unique Potential.
- To encourage students to understand one's Unique potential in terms of happiness and fulfillment.

Lesson Objectives: Students Will Be Able To...

- Explain the meaning of Happiness as it pertains to M'ushar (מאשר)
- Express the ways in which they might align their lives with a Tree of Life

Materials:

- Appendix 2.1.1 (Page 55)
- Tanakhim
- Access to Sefaria
- Pencils
- Scissors

Set Induction: (5 Minutes)

Listen to or play Tree of Life <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j37W0v-meVk>

Ask the students:

- What does the song mean to you?
- What memories or lessons does this song conjure up for you?
- What is the Tree of Life?

Activity 1: (25 Minutes)

Using the Graphic Organizer (Appendix 2.1.1) for this lesson, ask students to:

- Search through the Tanakh, using the graphic organizer as a guide, to find the various references to the Tree of Life.
- Give a brief synopsis of each relevant verse in the graphic organizer
- List key words in relevant verse

Upon completing the graphic organizer students should return to the large group and the instructor should ask:

- What does the Tree of Life Mean to you now that you have seen it used in context?
- How has your understanding of the Tree of Life changed through this research?

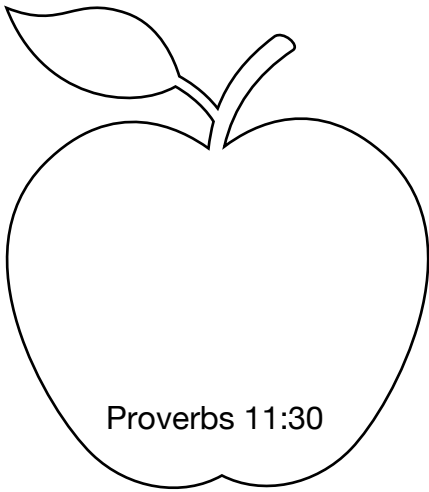
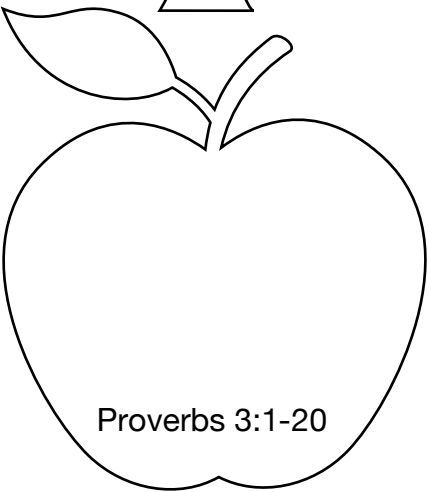
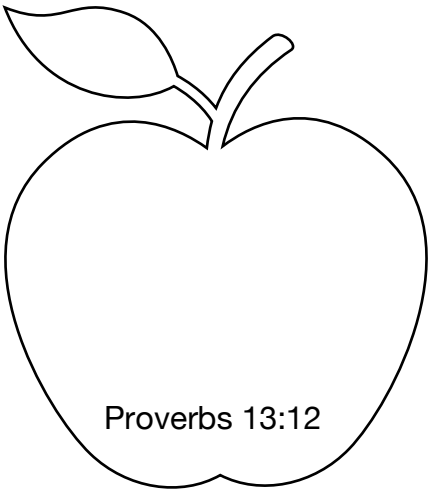
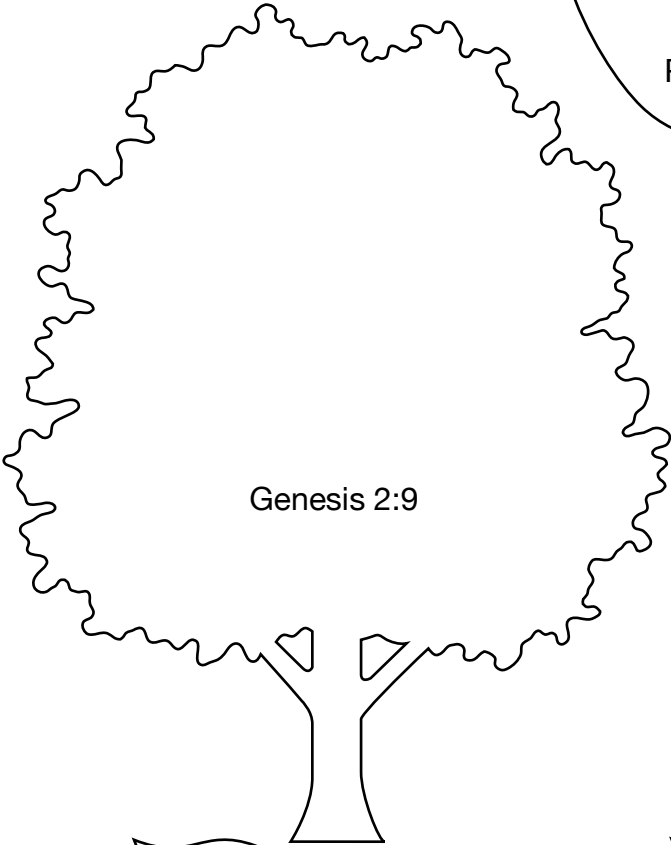
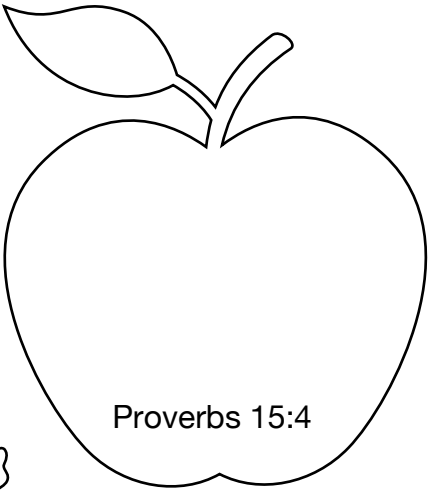
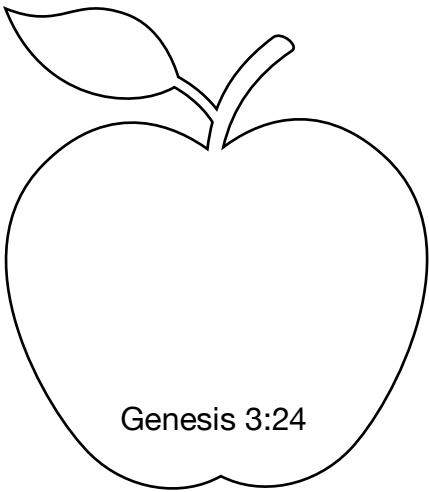
Activity 2: (25 Minutes)

Cut out each apple on the graphic organizer and write one word or sentence that connects your Unique Potential with each verse. Tape or paste each apple onto Appendix 2.1.1 for students to see what their classmates wrote.

Closure: (5 Minutes)

Discussion Questions:

- Throughout time and place, Jewish students have learned that the Tree of Life is in reference to the Torah. How does the story of the Garden of Eden change if the Tree of Life in the garden is actually in reference to the Torah?
- Why might the Tree of Life be placed directly beside the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden?
- What does the word Torah mean? (See Proverbs 3:1)
- What do the verses from Proverbs teach us regarding how we should live life in a way that honors the Tree of Life?
- M'ushar, usually translated as happy or happiness, is related to the word Yashar which means directionally forward. How might the references to The Tree of Life point to a path of progress toward one's Unique Potential?



## Unit 2: Hadeish Yameinu k'Kedem

### Lesson 2: Renewed like Before: Nostalgia as a Source of Inspiration

#### Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is Nostalgia?
- Why is Nostalgia a healthy sentiment?
- What can nostalgia contribute to one's Unique Potential?

#### Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to see nostalgia as a source of inspiration.
- To encourage students to see nostalgia as a source education by living vicariously through text and the experience of others.

#### Lesson Objectives: By the end of this lesson students will be able to...

- Define nostalgia in terms of their own lives
- Define nostalgia in terms of the formation of one's Unique Potential.

#### Materials:

- Appendix 2.2.1 (or Mishkan T'filah) (Page 59)
- A/V Equipment with access to internet

#### To The Teacher:

Torah scrolls were likely first written down during the Babylonian exile sometime around the year 586 BCE. That is nearly 2,500 years ago! We refer to our Torah as a living Torah and yet we thrive on tradition and history that is steeped in nostalgia. In fact, every time we put the Torah away, we express our yearning for yesteryear by saying: "Chadeish yameinu k'kedem" such that our days be renewed through times gone by.



## Unit 2: Hadeish Yameinu k'Kedem

### Lesson 2: Renewed like Before: Nostalgia as a Source of Inspiration

Set Induction: (5 Minutes)

Ask students:

- What does the word nostalgia mean to you?
- What is an example of a time, place, smell or experience that gives you a sense of nostalgia?

Activity 1: Times Gone By (15 Minutes)

Explain to the students that Auld Lang Syne, which means “Times Gone By,” is most often heard at the stroke of midnight on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

Play for the students a preferred version of Auld Lang Syne

Examples include:

- Phish 12/31/2015 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3\\_XrLs7WCkY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_XrLs7WCkY)
- James Taylor [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jr-htpPV\\_Z0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jr-htpPV_Z0)
- Beach Boys <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y06hxCtarEs>

Ask the students:

- What is the feeling that you get when you hear this song? What is the tone of the song?
- If the song is also sung at funerals, graduations and other moments of finality, why might we play this song on secular New Year’s Eve?

Say: As Jews, we have a similar relationship with the past. We mark sacred times by simultaneously looking back and forward.

Activity 2: “What is Nostalgia Good For?” (20 Minutes)

Read New York Times article: “What is Nostalgia Good For? Quite a Bit, Research Shows”

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/09/science/what-is-nostalgia-good-for-quite-a-bit-research-shows.html>

While reading, pause for clarifying questions. After finished reading, ask:

- What are the main points of the article?
- What benefits do we derive from feeling nostalgic?
- How does nostalgia push us to achieve our best? To achieve our Unique Potential?

### Activity 3: Eitz Chayim

(10 Minutes)

Say: In Judaism, our tradition is steeped in nostalgia and the balance between looking back yearningly and the internal drive for developing ourselves and our future.

The instructor should distribute the words of Eitz Chayim (Appendix 2.2.1) to each student. Read the English text. Point out the final line "Hashiveinu Adonai eilecha v'nashuvah, chadeish yameinu k'kedem."

Explain what each phrase or word means in context:

- Hashiveinu—Return us to you
- Eilecha v'nashuvah—and we will return to you
- Chadeish yameinu—Make new our days
- K'kedem—As Before/In the East

Ask:

- In what ways does this text represent a sense of nostalgia that might inspire us?
- How does the idea of “renew our days as before” express the yearning for yesteryear and a desire to march onward?
- How might this text shape our conversation in the development of one’s Unique Potential?

### Closure:

(5 Minutes)

Say: Nostalgia, as a source of inspiration, asks us to return time and time again to memories in the past as we continue to move forward, progressing toward our Unique Potential. Almost all Jewish symbols express this notion in the form of the spiral, as it returns to the same space, yet continues to move forward. A spiral is made up of two components: a straight line (moving forward) and a circle (returning again and again).

Ask for examples of spirals in Jewish symbolism. Examples include:

- The Torah Scroll
- The Shofar
- The Tefilin Shel Yad
- The Tzit Tzit
- Peot
- The Menorah

### To The Teacher:

While they will likely not come up with the menorah, have a piece of paper ready. Draw a spiral from the inside of the spiral toward the outside with 3 or four concentric circles, finishing the spiral with a straight line down the center of the spiral, without lifting the pen. Proceed to fold the spiral in half to reveal the menorah.

Ask:

- What role will nostalgia play in the development of your Unique Potential?

Appendix 2.2.1

**KI LEKACH** tov natati lachem, Torati al taazovu.

כִּי לֶקַח טוֹב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם,  
תּוֹרָתִי אֶל תַּעֲזֹבוּ.

Eitz chayim hi lamachazikim bah, v'tom'cheha  
m'ushar.

עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ,  
וְתִמְכֶּיהָ מֵאֲשָׁר.  
דַּרְכֶּיהָ דִּרְכֵי נֹעַם,  
וְכָל נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שָׁלוֹם.

D'rachehah darchei no-am, v'chol n'tivoteha shalom.

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה,  
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.

Hashiveinu Adonai eilecha v'nashuvah, chadeish  
yameinu k'kedem.

**FOR I HAVE GIVEN YOU** good instruction; do not abandon My Torah.

**IT IS A TREE OF LIFE** for those who hold fast to it, and all its supporters  
are happy. Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace.  
Return us to You, Adonai, and we will return; renew our days as of old.

## Unit 2: Hadeish Yameinu k'Kedem

### Lesson 3: Renewed like Before: Nostalgia as an Impediment to Progress

#### Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is Nostalgia?
- Why is Nostalgia an unhealthy sentiment?
- How might Nostalgia detract from one's personal growth and the discovery of one's Unique Potential?

#### Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to understand that Nostalgia can be an impediment to growth.
- To discover the role that Nostalgia has played in fundamentalist ideologies.
- To embrace and acknowledge the balance inherent in "renewing our days like before."

#### Lesson Objectives: Students Will Be Able To...

- Elucidate upon the pitfalls of nostalgia
- Define fundamentalism

#### Materials:

- Appendix 2.3.1 (Page 63)
- Appendix 2.3.2 (on individual sheets of printed paper) (Pages 64-65)
- Appendix 2.3.4 (Page 66)

Set Induction: (10 Minutes)

Ask each student to first read the poem “Miniver Cheevy” silently to themselves (Appendix 2.3.1). As a class, read “Miniver Cheevy” aloud (reading the poem aloud at least twice is recommended for comprehension)

Ask:

- What are your initial reactions to this poem?
- Who was Miniver Cheevy?
- What was relatable about his story?
- What was difficult about his story?
- What is Nostalgia?
- Why do we experience it?
- Do we benefit from it?
- How do we experience it? What senses cause us to feel nostalgic?

Alternative Activity: (25 Minutes)

- **If watching *Midnight in Paris* is not possible** (see subsequent lesson), students should watch the film from time stamp 1:16:00-1:24:13 and the instructor should refer to the following questions
- Ask the students:
- What did you hear in this exchange between the main character, Gil, and his romantic fling Gabrielle?
- How does Gil come to understand Nostalgia?
- Through this clip, how might nostalgia be an impediment to progress?
- What can you tell me about the Garden of Eden story?
- Why do we feel like we have to “Get back to the Garden”? What is in the Garden that we need?

Activity 2: (15 Minutes)

- As a class, read Genesis 3. After reading the text, ask:
- What was life like for Adam and Eve before leaving the Garden?
- What was life like after leaving the Garden?
- Why might people want to return to the garden?
- How does the story of the Garden of Eden change if we think of the Garden like a womb; safe, protective, and yet simultaneously a place we must leave?

Activity 3: Text Study (25 Minutes)

Throughout the room, hang individual pieces of paper with the quotes from Appendix 2.3.2 on each (one quote per page). Provide students with ~20 minutes to wander through the texts and instruct them to write out their reactions to at least three pieces of text and their reactions to at least three of their classmate’s reactions.

Upon completion, collect the various pages on the walls for a debrief. Read each quote and ask if students want to share their responses (i.e. "Would any one like to share their response to this particular quote?") and provide an opportunity for those students who responded to their peers to respond as well (i.e. "Would anyone like to share their response to their peer's responses?").

Closure:

(10 Minutes)

As a class read the following text:

"Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden, separated from the Divine presence, just as the male and female were separated in the Creation story. They were relegated to survive in the world outside of paradise in order to bind together into an even more meaningful unity. True wholeness can only come through our personal struggle to overcome the disparate elements in us. And only then after coming in touch with our fragmentation, isolation and loneliness, can we reach the Garden of our maturity. Like Adam and Eve, we wonder how long it will take to return to our original wholeness. We wonder if we have the strength and the courage to confront our other side, struggle with it, and thereby find our true selves in the process?" (Self, Struggle & Change, 17)

After reading the text ask:

- In your own words, who would like to provide the class with a summary of what this text is saying?
- What does this author assert is the purpose of the Garden of Eden story? What lesson are we supposed to have learned from the Garden of Eden?
- How has this interpretation of the Garden Story changed your understanding of nostalgia?
- How are we to balance the yearning for a simpler, easier, safer time and the call to become a greater, more complete version of ourselves?

### Appendix 2.3.1

## Miniver Cheevy

By Edwin Arlington Robinson

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,  
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;  
He wept that he was ever born,  
And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old  
When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;  
The vision of a warrior bold  
Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,  
And dreamed, and rested from his labors;  
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,  
And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown  
That made so many a name so fragrant;  
He mourned Romance, now on the town,  
And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,  
Albeit he had never seen one;  
He would have sinned incessantly  
Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace  
And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;  
He missed the mediæval grace  
Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,  
But sore annoyed was he without it;  
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,  
And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,  
Scratched his head and kept on thinking;  
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,  
And kept on drinking.

### Appendix 2.3.2

- “The Western world agrees that there is only one place where mankind has existed in such a state of innocence—the Garden of Eden.” (Herbst, 12)
- “a perpetual state of innocence precludes growth, the realization of possibilities and—most of all—the wherewithal to draw closer to God as a freely made choice in fulfillment of the soul’s desire.” (Herbst, 13)
- “the Torah can be seen as a combination history and law book about the Jewish people that emphasizes their struggles and life experiences outside the Garden of Eden, the obligations incumbent upon them as a holy nation (a nation of priests), and their circuitous journey to possess the land that was promised to them.” (Herbst, 13)
- “We leave the garden not burdened with eternal loss, but equipped with the ability to make the choices for which we are held accountable, choices that will determine the quality of our lives and define us as human beings” (Herbst, 14)
- The expulsion from the Garden of Eden is the root of our nostalgic longing. Nostalgic longing is caused by the pressures of having to constantly be choosing between right and wrong.
- Being ejected from the garden is the metaphor for the moment that we began to look back on simpler times. A time when instinct drove our sense of self, where as we are now condemned to or bestowed with the opportunity to choose a higher spiritual plane. It is the inception of human awareness.
- “Although life would be infinitely less complex if we could live only in the dimension of the present, like Adam and Eve before they ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, such a state would preclude any striving towards God and striving towards God is the sole desire of the Neshama (Soul).”



- “In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve lived in a state of innocence. In Judaism, however, this is not the preferred state, but rather an interim stage prior to attaining the ability to make choices. For the Jew, it is the quality of these choices that will determine his closeness to God, and this becomes his life’s mission.” (Herbst, 22-23)
- “Judaism sees man apart from the garden with the understanding that a Jew must focus on developing his specifically human potential for living the kind of ethical life that will bring him closer to the God who created him in His image.” (Herbst, 23)

### Appendix 2.3.3

“Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden, separated from the Divine presence, just as the male and female were separated in the Creation story. They were relegated to survive in the world outside of paradise in order to bind together into an even more meaningful unity. True wholeness can only come through our personal struggle to overcome the disparate elements in us. And only then after coming in touch with our fragmentation, isolation and loneliness, can we reach the Garden of our maturity. Like Adam and Eve, we wonder how long it will take to return to our original wholeness. We wonder if we have the strength and the courage to confront our other side, struggle with it, and thereby find our true selves in the process?” (Self, Struggle & Change, 17)

#### Guiding Questions

- In your own words, who would like to provide the class with a summary of what this text is saying?
- What does this author assert is the purpose of the Garden of Eden story? What lesson are we supposed to have learned from the Garden of Eden?
- How has this interpretation of the Garden Story changed your understanding of nostalgia?
- How are we to balance the yearning for a simpler, easier, safer time and the call to become a greater, more complete version of ourselves?

Unit 2: Hadeish Yameinu k'Kedem  
Lesson 4: Midnight In Paris—Memorable Moment  
(Nostalgia as an Impediment to Progress Part II)

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is Nostalgia?
- Why is Nostalgia an unhealthy sentiment?
- How might Nostalgia detract from one's personal growth and the discovery of one's Unique Potential?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to understand that Nostalgia can be an impediment to growth.
- To discover the role that Nostalgia has played in fundamentalist ideologies.
- To embrace and acknowledge the balance inherent in “renewing our days like before.”

Lesson Objectives: Students Will Be Able To...

- Elucidate upon the pitfalls of nostalgia
- Define fundamentalism

Materials:

- A/V Capabilities
- The Film “Midnight In Paris”
- “Midnight in Paris” Assessment Appendix 2.4.1 (Pages 71-72)

Memorable Moment: Midnight in Paris.

This Memorable Moment should be billed as a movie night with pizza and popcorn, perhaps on a Saturday night.

Set Induction: Prior Knowledge Needed for Watching the Movie (5 minutes)

Ask several volunteers to read each of the descriptor paragraphs.

- **“Midnight in Paris” movie description:** “Gil and Inez travel to Paris as a tag-along vacation on her parents' business trip. Gil is a successful Hollywood writer but is struggling on his first novel. He falls in love with the city and thinks he and Inez should move there after they get married, but Inez does not share his romantic notions of the city or the idea that the 1920s were the golden age. When Inez goes off dancing with her friends, Gil takes a walk at midnight and discovers what could be the ultimate source of inspiration for writing. Gil's daily walks at midnight in Paris could take him closer to the heart of the city but further from the woman he's about to marry.”<sup>4</sup>
- **“Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald** (September 24, 1896 – December 21, 1940) was an American writer. His novels depicted the flamboyance and excess of the Jazz Age. Though he achieved popular success, fame, and fortune in his lifetime, Fitzgerald did not receive much critical acclaim until after his death.<sup>5</sup> Considered a member of the “Lost Generation” of the 1920s, today he is widely regarded as one of the greatest American writers of the 20th century. He finished four novels: *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Tender Is the Night*. The unfinished novel *The Last Tycoon* was published posthumously. Four collections of his short stories were published, as well as 164 short stories in magazines during his lifetime.”<sup>5</sup>
- **“Ernest Miller Hemingway** (July 21, 1899 – July 2, 1961) was an American journalist, novelist, short-story writer, and sportsman. His economical and understated style—which he termed the iceberg theory—had a strong influence on 20th-century fiction, while his adventurous lifestyle and his public image brought him admiration from later generations. Hemingway produced most of his work between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s, and he won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954. He published seven novels, six short-story collections, and two nonfiction works. Three of his novels, four short-story collections, and three nonfiction works were published posthumously. Many of his works are considered classics of American literature.”<sup>6</sup>
- **“Salvador Domingo Felipe Jacinto Dalí i Domènech, Marquis of Dalí de Púbol** (11 May 1904 – 23 January 1989) was a Spanish surrealist artist. Born in Figueres, Catalonia, Dalí was a skilled artist draftsman, best known for the striking and bizarre images in his work. His painterly skills are often attributed to the influence of Renaissance masters. His best-known work, *The Persistence of Memory*, was completed in August 1931, and is one of the most recognizable Surrealist paintings. Dalí's expansive artistic repertoire included film, sculpture, and photography, at

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1605783/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1605783/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)

<sup>5</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F.\\_Scott\\_Fitzgerald](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F._Scott_Fitzgerald)

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest\\_Hemingway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Hemingway)

times in collaboration with a range of artists in a variety of media. Dalí was highly imaginative, and also enjoyed indulging in unusual and grandiose behavior. To the dismay of those who held his work in high regard, and to the irritation of his critics, his eccentric manner and attention-grabbing public actions sometimes drew more attention than his artwork.”<sup>7</sup>

- “**Surrealism** is a cultural movement that started in 1917, best known for its visual artworks and writings and the juxtaposition of uncommon imagery. Artists painted unnerving, illogical scenes, sometimes with photographic precision, creating strange creatures from everyday objects, and developing painting techniques that allowed the unconscious to express itself. Its aim was, according to Breton, to "resolve the previously contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality, a super-reality", or *surreality*.”<sup>8</sup>
- “**Gertrude Stein** (February 3, 1874 – July 27, 1946) was an American novelist, poet, playwright, and art collector. Born in the Allegheny West neighborhood of Pittsburgh and raised in Oakland, California, Stein moved to Paris in 1903, and made France her home for the remainder of her life. She hosted a Paris salon, where the leading figures of modernism in literature and art, such as Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sinclair Lewis, Ezra Pound, Sherwood Anderson and Henri Matisse, would meet.”<sup>9</sup>
- “**Pablo Ruiz Picasso** (25 October 1881 – 8 April 1973) was a Spanish painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist, stage designer, poet and playwright who spent most of his adult life in France. Regarded as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, he is known for co-founding the Cubist movement, the invention of constructed sculpture, the co-invention of collage, and for the wide variety of styles that he helped develop and explore. Among his most famous works are the proto-Cubist *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1907), and *Guernica* (1937), a dramatic portrayal of the bombing of Guernica by the German and Italian airforces during the Spanish Civil War.”<sup>10</sup>
- “**T.S. Eliot (Thomas Stearns Eliot)** (26 September 1888 – 4 January 1965) was a poet, essayist, publisher, playwright, and literary critic. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, to a prominent Boston Brahmin family, he moved to England in 1914 at the age of 25 and went on to settle, work and marry there. He became a British subject in 1927 at the age of 39, subsequently renouncing his American citizenship. Considered one of the twentieth century's major poets, Eliot attracted widespread attention for his poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915), which was seen as a masterpiece of the Modernist movement. It was followed by some of the best-known poems in the English language, including *The Waste Land* (1922), "The Hollow Men" (1925), "Ash Wednesday" (1930), and *Four Quartets* (1943). He was also known for his seven plays, particularly *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) and *The Cocktail Party*

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<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador\\_Dal%C3%AD](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Dal%C3%AD)

<sup>8</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surrealism>

<sup>9</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gertrude\\_Stein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gertrude_Stein)

<sup>10</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pablo\\_Picasso](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pablo_Picasso)

(1949). He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948, 'for his outstanding, pioneer contribution to present-day poetry.'"<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T.\\_S.\\_Eliot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._S._Eliot)

## Appendix 2.4.1

### Midnight in Paris Assessment Question Guide

- The main character of Gil's novel that he can't write "works in a nostalgia shop" where items intended on invoking feelings of nostalgia are sold. Who would shop at these stores? What is the judgement against Gil's character?
- Remember back to our reading of Miniver Cheevy, why might Paul refer to Gil as Miniver Cheevy?
- "We are all bored" is a statement that has lived on through the ages. What are we really saying when we say we are "bored"?
- "No subject is terrible if the story is true and if the prose is clean and honest, and if it affirms courage and grace under pressure." Consider how your life story holds up to this statement.

- Gil is speaking to the surrealists about being from the future and being in love with two different women from two different eras; one says they see a photograph, one says they see a film, Gil says he sees an insurmountable problem and Dali says he sees a rhinoceros. What does this interchange tell us about perspective?
- “The artist’s job is not to succumb to despair, but to find an antidote for the emptiness of existence.” Put this sentence into your own words.
- How does Gil come to understand Nostalgia based on his exchange at the Moulin Rouge?
- “Nostalgia is denial; denial of the painful present” and Golden aged thinking are, as Paul puts it, “a flaw in the romantic imagination of people who find it difficult to cope with the present.” Why do we believe that the present is inadequate when compared to the past?



## Unit 3: Good Behavior? Bad Behavior? Who Will Be My Exemplar?

### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Confronting the world's moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one's personal values illumines a path toward one's Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one's Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

### UNIT ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- One's Unique Potential, while unique to themselves, depends upon one's own self-discovery and upon the relationships one fosters.
- Complex moral decisions require thought, calculation and consideration to determine plausible consequences.

### UNIT GOALS

- To encourage students to consider themselves a part of the bigger picture, a global citizen.
- To encourage students to consider that, while each of us have a Unique Potential, it is important to develop trusting relationships that push us toward said Unique Potential.
- To encourage students to see themselves as the most important person in their world, while also considering that the decisions they make impose consequences on the concentric societal circles surrounding them.
- To unpack the delicate balance between one's destiny and self-determination.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Determine the qualities to look for when considering a mentor.
- Determine the qualities of a true friend who embodies the value of Brother's Keeper.
- Express their understanding of their life's pursuit in terms of destiny as well as self-determination.

Unit 3: Good Behavior? Bad Behavior? Who Will Be My Exemplar?  
Lesson 1: Am I My Brother's Keeper?

Lesson Essential Questions:

- “Am I my Brother's Keeper?” (Genesis 4:9)
- Isn't it enough to be responsible for myself?
- How will I incorporate the value of Brother's Keeper?
- What role will Brother's Keeper play in the development of my Unique Potential?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to seek out friends and mentors who will push them to do their best.
- To encourage students to push their friends and families to do their best.
- To encourage students to see the connection between the relationships they foster and the quest to understand their Unique Potential.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Identify a time in which they helped another to achieve their best.
- Describe a time in which someone helped them achieve their best.
- Articulate the way in which Brother's Keeper will influence their quest to understand their Unique Potential.

Materials:

- “Four Corners” signs
- Cain and Abel Story Appendix 3.1.1 (Page 77)
- Pirkei Avot 1:16 text study sheet to be prepared by instructor

To The Teacher:

“Billy Madison” is a movie, starring Adam Sandler, that portrays the personal growth of the wealthy, unmotivated heir to “Madison Hotels.” Billy, a dunce in all regards, vows to return to grade school to prove to his father that he is capable of running the family corporation. In Billy's watershed moment, no pun intended, he notices that his 4th grade classmate and friend has peed in his pants. Billy proceeds to put water on his own pants to show to the fourth graders that peeing one's pants really isn't a big deal, in fact it's cool!

Set Induction: (5-10 Minutes)

In a classroom, the instructor will set up four corners that say “AGREE”, “DISAGREE”, “STRONGLY AGREE” and “STRONGLY DISAGREE”. Students are instructed to listen to each statement and respond to each statement by moving to the sign that corresponds with their opinion. Within this activity, the instructor might ask for responses, rationales, sharing, or small discussion within the groupings. Students should be encouraged to think for themselves, even if it is tempting to go with their friends.

Sample scenarios might include:

- A friend of mine started smoking/drinking/etc. I should try and convince them to stop.
- A true friend visits friends when they are sick.
- We are responsible for the success of our friends and family.

Activity 1: (10 Minutes)

Play The Clip From Billy Madison:

- <https://youtu.be/FEIfV-2H5vU>

After watching the clip ask these Guiding Questions:

- Could someone describe what Billy did for his classmate?
- What might have happened if Billy had not put water on his pants? What are the long-term implications of Billy’s decision?
- What do we learn from Billy’s decisive action?

Activity 2: Cain and Abel (15 Minutes)

First, the class should read the text in translation from Genesis 4:1-16. The instructor should first ask for a synopsis of the story and ensure that students have a working understanding of the narrative. The instructor should ask for 6 volunteers to play ha’Adam, Eve, HaShem, Cain, Abel and the Narrator (See Appendix 3.1.1 for script).

Guiding questions for after the play might include:

- How does your understanding of the text change when you see the story acted out versus listening to it?
- Why did Cain do what he did?
- What was the question Cain was really asking when he asked, “Am I my Brother’s Keeper?”
- What do we learn about the implications of being, or rather not being a “Brother’s Keeper”?
- What is the nature of Cain’s punishment? How could this have all been avoided? What role does Jealousy and Desire play in how we make our decisions, especially as those decisions relate to the relationships we foster?
- How do we define Brother’s Keeper?
- The text omits what Cain said to Abel in the field... What do we suppose he said? How do you think that conversation went?

This story teaches us two lessons:

- The first is obvious, that we are our Brother's Keeper and claiming ignorance is not an option.
- The second lesson is less obvious, but has to do with the relationship between Cain and God.

Ask:

- What is the nature of God's interaction with Cain?
- What is the nature of God's relationship with Cain?
- What lesson is God trying to teach Cain? Is Cain teachable?

Say:

- Pirkei Avot, a collection of ancestral wisdom, teaches us that we should, "Appoint for thyself a teacher, and acquire for thyself a companion and judge all men with the scale weighted in his favor."

Activity 3: Hevruta (15 Minutes)

Students should be placed in pairs or trios to consider this Mishnah as Hevrutot.

"Appoint for thyself a teacher, and acquire for thyself a companion and judge all men with the scale weighted in his favor."

—Pirkei Avot 1:6

Guiding questions might include:

- What role does a teacher play in one's life? What kind of teachers are there?
- How might Cain have acted differently if he had acquired for himself a teacher?
- How did Cain allow God to be his teacher?
- Did God judge Cain "with the scale weighted in his favor?" How so?
- How does one acquire a companion/partner/friend? What is the difference between a companion and a buddy/pal?

Closure: Journaling (5-10 Minutes)

Students should be prompted to free write for several minutes, responding to a prompt intended to finish the thought "The value of Brother's Keeper will add to my personal growth and discovery of my Unique Potential because..." Students may be invited to share their thoughts or keep their work private.

### Appendix 3.1.1

**Narrator:** Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying,

**Eve:** “With the help of Adonai I have acquired a male son!”

**Narrator:** She then bore his brother Abel. Abel became a keeper of sheep, and Cain became a tiller of the soil. In the course of time, Cain brought an offering to Adonai from the fruit of the soil; and Abel, for his part, brought the choicest of the firstlings of his flock. Adonai paid heed to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering He paid no heed. Cain was much distressed and his face fell. And Adonai said to Cain,

**Adonai:** “Why are you distressed, And why is your face fallen? Surely, if you do right, There is uplift. But if you do not do right Sin couches at the door; Its urge is toward you, Yet you can be its master.”

**Narrator:** Cain spoke to his brother Abel ... and when they were in the field, Cain set upon his brother Abel and killed him. Adonai said to Cain,

**Adonai:** “Where is your brother Abel?”

**Narrator:** And he said,

**Cain:** “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

**Narrator:** Then He said,

**Adonai:** “What have you done? Hark, your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground! Therefore, you shall be more cursed than the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. You shall become a ceaseless wanderer on earth.”

**Narrator:** Cain said to Adonai,

**Cain:** “My punishment is too great to bear! Since You have banished me this day from the soil, and I must avoid Your presence and become a restless wanderer on earth—anyone who meets me may kill me!”

**Narrator:** Adonai said to him,

**Adonai:** “I promise, if anyone kills Cain, sevenfold vengeance shall be taken on him.” And Adonai put a mark on Cain, lest anyone who met him should kill him.

**Narrator:** Cain left the presence of Adonai and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

~fin~

Unit 3: Good Behavior? Bad Behavior? Who Will Be My Exemplar?  
Lesson 2: Will God Provide? Finding the Balance Between Faith and Action

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is the adequate balance between faith/patience/complacency and action/desire?
- Is the pursuit of one's Unique Potential a question of destiny or self-determination?
- How do we balance gratitude and sorrow with pride and accountability?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to find their own connection between faith and action.
- To encourage students to develop an understanding that life is both in one's control, outside of one's control and the ability to discern the difference takes practice.
- To facilitate a discussion on autonomy

Lesson Objectives: Students Will Be Able To...

- Define autonomy in their own words
- Express their feelings about faith and the role of faith in their lives.
- Express what role free will could play in the development of self.

Materials:

- A/V Equipment with YouTube Capability
- "That's What Makes the World Go Round" Lyric sheet (Appendix 3.2.1) (Page 81)
- Appendix 3.2.2 (Pages 82-83)
- The texts from Genesis 16:1-5, Genesis 18, Genesis 19, and Genesis 25:19-28.  
Tanakh or print out of recommended texts (one per student)

To The Teacher:

"The Sword in the Stone" is the origin story of the legendary King Arthur of Camelot. Arthur is portrayed as a poor boy who learns the power of love, kindness, knowledge and bravery with the help of a wizard called Merlin who guides Arthur on his path to become one of the most beloved kings in English history.

Set Induction: (10 Minutes)

Explain that this song comes from the movie “The Sword and the Stone” Disney’s attempt at King Arthur’s origin story; the story of King Arthur discovering his Unique Potential. Some background may be needed on King Arthur’s story.

After watching the clip in Appendix 3.2.1, ask students to consider the lyrics of the song.

- What stood out as good advice?
- What stood out as difficult to hear?
- Why might we be listening to this song in this course of study?

Activity 1: (5 Minutes)

Say: A football player has just scored a touchdown. The crowd is going wild. The football player takes a knee and says a prayer thanking God. Observing this scenario we might ask:

- What is the necessary balance between giving thanks to God for the good in our lives and acknowledging the role we play in our own accomplishments?
- If God provides the good, does God also provide the bad? How does this theology play out in the end zone?
- Should we be proud of our accomplishments or should all credit go to God?
- Who/what caused the touchdown? Who gets the credit?
- What is the balance between faith in one’s destiny (Unique Potential as Destiny) and the fulfillment of one’s Unique Potential through one’s efforts? What is the balance between gratitude and hard work?

Activity 2: (15 Minutes)

Assemble a series of quotes/pictures from notable figures seeking to find the balance between faith and action (Examples in Appendix 3.2.2). Ask students to note any themes/connections/similarities. Be sure to be able to provide context on who said each quote, why they said it, and what gives them the credibility to make such a statement. The instructor might ask:

- How might this notable figure have come to this conclusion?
- Does this statement resonate with you? Why or why not?
- Describe an instance/experience/circumstance where this statement would have been helpful for you. What advice/guidance would you have given your younger self at that moment?

Activity 3: Taking Action (25 Minutes)

Barrenness is a theme throughout the book of Genesis and in these scenes we see moments that balance faith and action and, by studying these texts, we seek to understand how our ancestors understood this difficult balance.

In this activity, the instructor should look at the texts from Genesis 16:1-5, Genesis 18, Genesis 19, and Genesis 25:19-28. In comparing and contrasting these texts as representative of barrenness in the Genesis, the class should take note of the parallel themes between each story, the motivations of the characters, the actions of the

characters and how the characters find the balance between having faith that God will provide and what they perceive their role is in fulfillment of their reproductive success.

Questions for discussion:

- How do we navigate circumstances that are out of our control?
- How do we determine what is in our control?
- What themes do we see throughout the stories of barrenness? How do the characters react to their circumstances?
- Are their moments of doubt/disbelief? Who displays said doubt? Who seems to be full of hope? What is the nature of the relationships within the stories?
- What lessons can these stories teach us about our own balance between faith and action?
- What is complacency? When can it be a tool and when is it a crutch?
- How can one remain grateful/positive/sane, in spite of trying circumstances? How can one take back control, when things feel out of control?
- What are you taking away from the text?

Closure:

(5 Minutes)

*Rachel is a very religious woman. One day, a local river bursts its banks and floods her town. The mayor warns everyone to leave. Everyone panics and starts evacuating except for Rachel, who says God will save her.*

*Soon, the water has filled her first floor, and Rachel goes up to a second story window. A rescuer passes by in a rowboat and offers to help Rachel leave, but she says no – God will save her.*

*Next, the water rises even further and Rachel clammers up on her roof. A helicopter passes and a rescuer offers to take Rachel away, but she refuses, explaining that God will save her.*

*Finally, the water rises even higher and Rachel drowns. She goes to Heaven, where she comes face to face with God and asks, “Why didn’t you save me?”*

*“I tried,” explains God. “First, I sent you an evacuation order from the mayor, but you didn’t listen. Then I sent you a rescuer in a rowboat and you didn’t listen. Then I sent you a rescue helicopter – and still you ignored me!”<sup>12</sup>*

Ask students to finish the sentence: “God saves, but we have to do our part because...”

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.aish.com/jw/s/11-Quintessential-Jewish-Jokes.html>



Appendix 3.2.1

Lyrics from [The Sword in the Stone](#)

<https://www.disneyclips.com/lyrics/lyrics108.html>

Composed by Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman

Performed by Karl Swenson as Merlin

Youtube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhwXgvOfJc8>

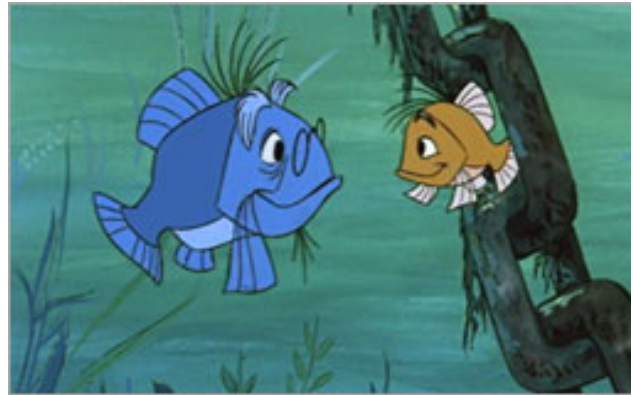
Left and right  
Like day and night  
That's what makes the world go round  
In and out  
Thin and stout  
That's what makes the world go round

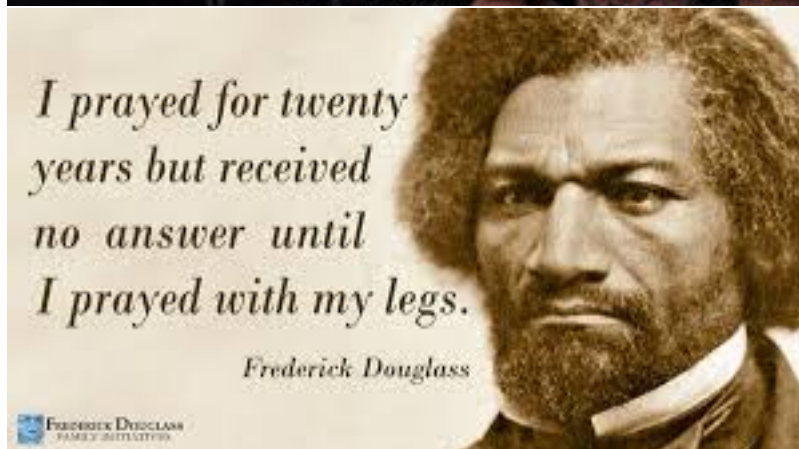
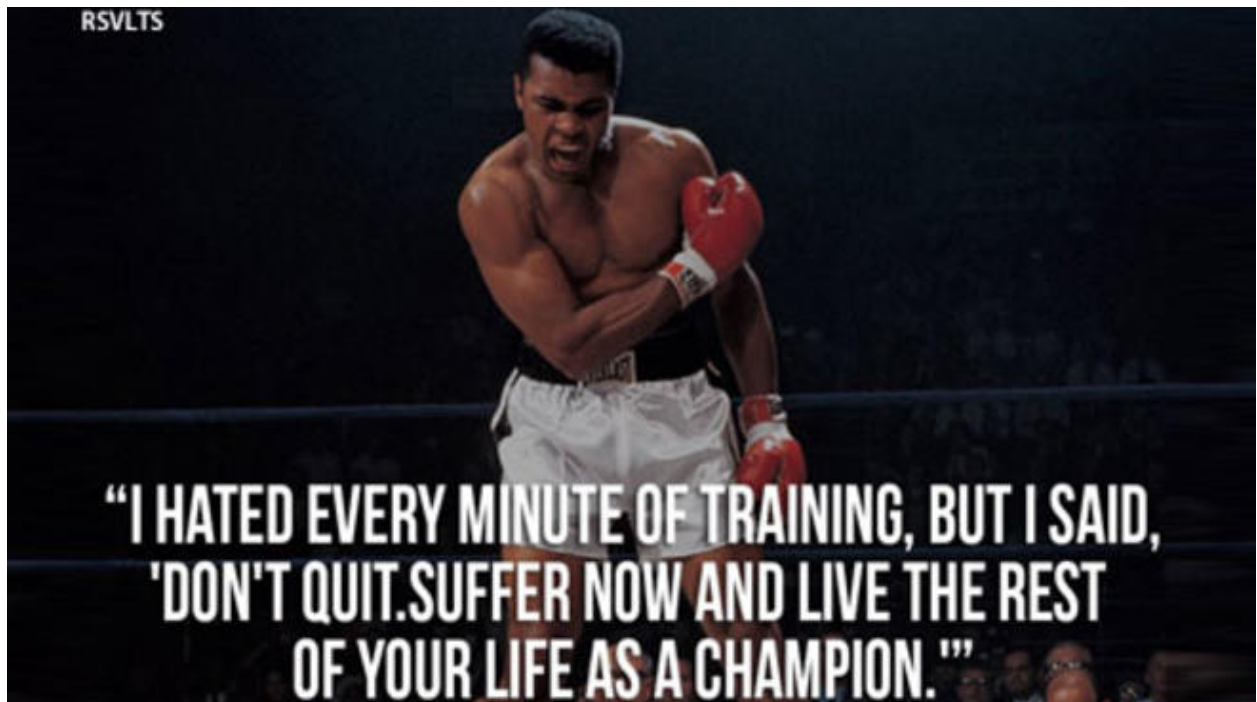
For every up there is a down  
For every square there is a round  
For every high there is a low  
For every to there is a fro

To and fro  
Stop and go  
That's what makes the world go round

You must set your sights upon the heights  
Don't be a mediocrity  
Don't just wait and trust to fate  
And say, that's how it's meant to be  
It's up to you how far you go  
If you don't try you'll never know  
And so my lad as I've explained  
Nothing ventured, nothing gained

You see my boy it's nature's way  
Upon the weak the strong ones prey  
In human life it's also true  
The strong will try to conquer you  
And that is what you must expect  
Unless you use your intellect  
Brains and brawn, weak and strong  
That's what makes the world go round







“When I marched in Selma, I felt my legs  
were praying.” —Abraham Joshua



Unit 3: Good Behavior? Bad Behavior? Who Will Be My Exemplar?  
Lesson 3 & 4: The Trial of Abraham (Memorable Moment)

Lesson Essential Questions:

- Was Abraham right or wrong? Did he have a choice?
- What is the balance between Justice and Mercy?
- What does this story tell us about ourselves? About God?
- What is the purpose of a trial (as either a courtroom exercise or as a test)?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to sympathize with God, with Abraham and with Isaac.
- To encourage students to question the position of God, Abraham and Isaac.
- To determine Abraham's culpability in the binding of Isaac

Lesson Objectives: Students Will Be Able To...

- Analyze the Binding of Isaac story
- Construct arguments based on Biblical text as well as American case law.
- Defend their case in defense or prosecution of Abraham's actions at Mount Moriah.

Materials:

- Mock Trial Rules
- Mock Trial Evidence
- Tanakhim

#### To The Teacher:

The Akedah, the Binding of Isaac, is a story that has always presented sociological and theological problems. This story forces us to ask some of the most difficult theological questions: How could a person commit to killing his son, even if God asked them? How are we to interpret this grotesque test, especially when God told Abraham that his children would be “as many as the stars in the sky”?

In order for this activity to be optimally effective, students must have a stake in the outcome of this trial; it is up to the students to determine the spectrum of right from wrong. The participants of this trial, which should take part over two classes, are therefore, in effect, responsible for determining whether Abraham was a prophet, a murderer or a madman. Before beginning the trial, it will be important to set aside a class period to discuss the various participants of a trial, their role in the trial, determine who will take each role and prepare accordingly.

In the evidence folder, there are a few pieces of evidence that are not easily uncovered. As the instructor, it is up to you to decide how much help you will give. For example, Sarah’s death occurs in the chapter subsequent the Akedah and her death takes place—via the map—very close to where the Akedah took place.

#### The Trial Roles Are:

- Lawyers represent the defendant and the plaintiff arguing either for the defense or guilt of the defendant, respectively.
- Judge determines the verdict on advisement from the jury (if there is a jury) and determines the severity of the sentence if guilt is determined.
- Jurors hear the facts of the case, the testimony of witnesses and evidence provided as presented by the defense or the plaintiff.
- Witnesses testify, under a binding oath, the facts as they experienced them. Witnesses are instructed to be honest and forthright under penalty of perjury of law.
- The Defendant is the accused party.
- The Plaintiff is the accusing party.
- The instructor should recommend that each participant take notes so that they can participate fully and effectively in real time.

#### Rules of Objections:

- Either the prosecution or the defense is entitled to the objection of a question or piece of evidence submitted by the opposing council. If the reason for the objection is not clear, a judge might ask the attorney to clarify “on what grounds” does the council object? Depending on how the judge interprets the basis of the objection, the objection is either overruled and the evidence is permitted or the objection is sustained and the evidence is deemed impermissible. There are several reasons one attorney might object to a piece of evidence or line of questioning:
- Leading questions: during direct examination, attorneys must not lead their witnesses to answer questions in a particular way or try to elicit specific responses; witnesses must tell their own story, not the story the attorney wants to hear. During cross examination, leading questions are allowed.

- Hearsay: The questions and responses must be factual. If the response is beyond the scope of the witness' personal knowledge, an attorney may object to said evidence.
- Immaterial/irrelevant: If information is deemed not relevant or closely related to the case, an attorney might object to its admission.
- Opinions and conclusions: An opinion is only valid from an expert witness.
- Non-responsive answer: An attorney might object if the witness is not answering the question asked.

#### The Trial:

It is the intent of this trial to determine if Abraham Avinu is guilty of one count of attempted murder and one count of child endangerment against his son, Isaac. Abraham has entered a plea of not guilty by reason of a test from the Holy One. Abraham, his son Isaac and two servants travel to the "heights" of Moriah to make a sacrifice to God. Isaac believes they will be sacrificing a sheep. After separating from the servants, Abraham ties up his son and places him on the altar, claiming he is being directed by God. As Abraham lifts the knife to kill his son, an angel intervenes. Isaac is spared. Abraham returns to the servants. It is unclear whether Isaac goes with him. The biblical transcript, which can be found in Genesis 22, describes the account in full detail. It is the role of the Defense to seek acquittal for Abraham and the role of the Plaintiff, the Jewish people, to determine Abraham's culpability.

- **The Defendant:** Abraham
- **The Plaintiff:** The Jewish People
- **The Charges:** Attempted murder and child endangerment
- **Facts of the Case:** Abraham, his son Isaac and two servants travel to the "heights" of Moriah to make a sacrifice to God. Isaac believes they will be sacrificing a sheep. After separating from the servants, Abraham ties up his son and places him on the altar, claiming he is being directed by God. As Abraham lifts the knife to kill his son, an angel intervenes. Isaac is spared. Abraham returns to the servants. It is unclear whether Isaac goes with him.

#### Trial Format:

- Opening Arguments
- Prosecution introduces themselves, the charges against the defendant, give a synopsis of the argument and the facts that support the prosecution's case.
- Defense team introduces themselves, explains the evidence in defense of the defendant, lays out their argument and facts that support the defense's case.
- Trial
- Direct examination is the process by which attorneys question the witnesses they would call in support of their case.
- Prosecution Direct Examination is followed by defense cross examination. In this portion, the cross examiner is permitted to ask leading questions and must emphasize testimony/depositions/evidence that favor the defense.

- This process is repeated with Defense Direct Examination.
- Due process allows rebuttal for each to recall any witnesses in the same order and process as direct examination/cross examination. All lines of questioning in rebuttal must be pertain solely to prior testimony.
- Closing Arguments—Beyond a reasonable doubt...
- Prosecution presents a summation of their case and the precise justification for guilt as prescribed by the law.
- Defense presents a summation of their case, reminds the jury of their responsibility to be impartial, and tries to convince the jury that the evidence presented during the trial has proved their case.
- NO NEW EVIDENCE MAY BE INTRODUCED IN CLOSING ARGUMENTS
- Deliberations
- Judge or Jury should be instructed to review the definitions of the charges to determine Abraham's culpability. The Jury can only find the defendant guilty if they are convinced "beyond a reasonable doubt" of the defendant's guilt. The jury should vote on each count separately; guilt or innocence for one count is not contingent on the other.
- Attempted Murder Definition: A first-degree **attempted murder** charge requires premeditation or a willful act; a second-degree **attempted murder** charge is any other act that is not planned or deliberate. ... **Federal laws** for **attempting** to kill a member of Congress or other **federal** official impose **penalties** ranging from 70 to 162 months.
- Child Endangerment Definition: "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual **abuse** or exploitation"; or. "An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm." ([www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov))
- Verdict
- After deliberations, the jury will hand down a verdict to the judge to be read aloud.

#### Closing Discussion Questions:

- What does a mock trial, especially in this case, teach us about being our best?
- American court systems are based, ideally, on the presumption of innocence. How might this value contribute to nurturing one's Unique Potential?
- What lessons did we learn about the discovery/fostering/nurturing of one's Unique Potential from the various participants of the trial (i.e. defense lawyer, prosecutor, judge, jury, witness)? How might these roles shape who we are?

## Evidence Folder:

### Charges against the Defendant

- Attempted Murder Definition: A first-degree **attempted murder** charge requires premeditation or a willful act; a second-degree **attempted murder** charge is any other act that is not planned or deliberate. ... **Federal laws** for **attempting** to kill a member of Congress or other **federal** official impose **penalties** ranging from 70 to 162 months.
- Child Endangerment Definition: "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual **abuse** or exploitation"; or. "An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm." ([www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov))
- Witness Depositions/Witness Information:

### Abraham

- Genesis 22
- B'reishit Rabbah 56:4—"And Itzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said: My father" (Gen. 22:7). Samael went to the our father Avraham and said: "Old man, old man! Have you lost your mind [lit. have you lost your heart]? You are going to slay a son given to you at the age of a hundred!" 'Even this I do,' replied he. [Samael said:] 'And if He sets you an even greater test, can you stand it?!' [as it is written] "If a thing be put to you as a trial, will you be wearied" (Job 4:2)? 'Even more than this,' he replied. [Samael said:] 'Tomorrow He will say to you, "You are guilty of murder, you murdered your son!" He replied: 'Still I go'. Seeing that he could achieve nothing with him, he approached Itzchak and said: 'Son of an unhappy mother! He is going to slay you!' He replied: 'Still I go'. Samael said: 'If so, all those fine tunics which your mother made be a legacy for Ishmael, the hated of her house, and you don't care [lit. don't let it enter your heart]?' If a word is not completely effective, it may yet be effective in part, that's why it is written, "And Itzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said: My father": why [his] father, [my] father twice? So that he should be filled with compassion for him. "And he said: Behold, the fire and the wood. Avraham said to him: 'May that man who has thus seduced him be drowned! Any way, "God will provide himself the lamb, my son"; and if not you are "the lamb for the burnt-offering my son." So "they went both of them together" (Gen. 22:8) — one to slaughter and the other to be slaughtered.

### Isaac

- Genesis 22
- B'reishit Rabbah 56:4—"And Itzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said: My father" (Gen. 22:7). Samael went to the our father Avraham and said: "Old man, old man! Have you lost your mind [lit. have you lost your heart]? You are going to slay a son given to you at the age of a hundred!" 'Even this I do,' replied he. [Samael said:] 'And if He sets you an even greater test, can you stand it?!' [as it is written] "If a thing be put to you as a trial, will you be wearied" (Job 4:2)? 'Even more than this,'



he replied. [Samael said:] ‘Tomorrow He will say to you, “You are guilty of murder, you murdered your son!” He replied: ‘Still I go’. Seeing that he could achieve nothing with him, he approached Itzchak and said: ‘Son of an unhappy mother! He is going to slay you!’ He replied: ‘Still I go’. Samael said: ‘If so, all those fine tunics which your mother made be a legacy for Ishmael, the hated of her house, and you don’t care [lit. don’t let it enter your heart]?’ If a word is not completely effective, it may yet be effective in part, that’s why it is written, “And Itzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said: My father”: why [his] father, [my] father twice? So that he should be filled with compassion for him. "And he said: Behold, the fire and the wood. Avraham said to him: ‘May that man who has thus seduced him be drowned! Any way, “God will provide himself the lamb, my son”; and if not you are “the lamb for the burnt-offering my son.” So "they went both of them together" (Gen. 22:8) — one to slaughter and the other to be slaughtered.

#### Sarah

- Genesis 23:1-2—Sarah’s lifetime—the span of Sarah’s life—came to one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years. Sarah died in Kiriath-arba—now Hebron—in the land of Canaan; and Abraham proceeded to mourn for Sarah and to bewail her.

#### Servants

- Genesis 22

#### God

- Genesis 22

#### Angel

- Genesis 22

#### Samael

- B’reishit Rabbah 56:4—“And Itzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said: My father” (Gen. 22:7). Samael went to the our father Avraham and said: “Old man, old man! Have you lost your mind [lit. have you lost your heart]? You are going to slay a son given to you at the age of a hundred!’ ‘Even this I do,’ replied he. [Samael said:] ‘And if He sets you an even greater test, can you stand it?!’ [as it is written] “If a thing be put to you as a trial, will you be wearied” (Job 4:2)? ‘Even more than this,’ he replied. [Samael said:] ‘Tomorrow He will say to you, “You are guilty of murder, you murdered your son!” He replied: ‘Still I go’. Seeing that he could achieve nothing with him, he approached Itzchak and said: ‘Son of an unhappy mother! He is going to slay you!’ He replied: ‘Still I go’. Samael said: ‘If so, all those fine tunics which your mother made be a legacy for Ishmael, the hated of her house, and you don’t care [lit. don’t let it enter your heart]?’ If a word is not completely effective, it

may yet be effective in part, that's why it is written, "And Itzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said: My father": why [his] father, [my] father twice? So that he should be filled with compassion for him. "And he said: Behold, the fire and the wood. Avraham said to him: 'May that man who has thus seduced him be drowned! Any way, "God will provide himself the lamb, my son"; and if not you are "the lamb for the burnt-offering my son." So "they went both of them together" (Gen. 22:8) — one to slaughter and the other to be slaughtered.

#### HaSatan

- Sanhedrin 89b:9—Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei ben Zimra: This means after the statement [devarav] of Satan, as it is written: "And the child grew, and was weaned, and Abraham prepared a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned" (Genesis 21:8). Satan said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, this old man, you favored him with a product of the womb, i.e., a child, at one hundred years of age. From the entire feast that he prepared, did he not have even one dove or one pigeon to sacrifice before You as a thanks-offering? God said to Satan: Did Abraham prepare the feast for any reason but for his son? If I say to him: Sacrifice your son before Me, he would immediately slaughter him. Immediately, after these matters, the verse states: "And God tried Abraham."
- Sanhedrin 89b:12-13—Satan preceded Abraham to the path that he took to bind his son and said to him: "If one ventures a word to you, will you be weary...you have instructed many, and you have strengthened the weak hands. Your words have upheld him that was falling...but now it comes upon you, and you are weary" (Job 4:2-5). Do you now regret what you are doing? Abraham said to him in response: "And I will walk with my integrity" (Psalms 26:11). Satan said to Abraham: "Is not your fear of God your foolishness?" (Job 4:6). In other words, your fear will culminate in the slaughter of your son. Abraham said to him: "Remember, please, whoever perished, being innocent" (Job 4:7). God is righteous and His pronouncements are just. Once Satan saw that Abraham was not heeding him, he said to him: "Now a word was secretly brought to me, and my ear received a whisper thereof" (Job 4:12). This is what I heard from behind the heavenly curtain [pargod], which demarcates between God and the ministering angels: The sheep is to be sacrificed as a burnt-offering, and Isaac is not to be sacrificed as a burnt-offering. Abraham said to him: Perhaps that is so. However, this is the

punishment of the liar, that even if he speaks the truth, others do not listen to him. Therefore, I do not believe you and will fulfill that which I was commanded to perform.

#### Rabbinic Authority

- Midrash tanchuma vayishlach 8:3—Rabbi Yannai asserted: The account book of the man who makes a vow which he fails to fulfill is examined in the presence of the Holy One. God asks: Where is that person who made a vow on a certain day? Observe that it is written concerning the time that Jacob went to Aram-naharaim: And Jacob vowed a vow, saying: “If God be with me” (Gen. 28:20). At first God granted his every request. Abraham went there and became wealthy, but when he returned without fulfilling his vow, He turned Esau against him, and Esau sought to kill him. And though Esau took the two hundred she-goats from him, Jacob did not trouble to perform his vow. Whereupon He turned the angel against him and they wrestled together, but still he did not take note, as it is said: And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him (ibid. 32:26). It was Samael, Esau’s guardian angel, who wanted to kill him, as is said: When he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh (ibid., v. 27). When he still was not persuaded to fulfill his vow, the anguish occasioned by Dinah’s experience befell him, as is said: And Dinah went out. When he continued to refrain from carrying out his vow, the tragedy of Rachel’s death occurred, as it is said And Rachel died and was buried (ibid. 35:19). This confirms the opinion of R. Samuel the son of Nahman that one who vows and fails to fulfill his vow brings about the death of his wife, as it is said: If thou hast not wherewith to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee? (Prov. 22:27).
- Sanhedrin 106a:15—Rabbi Yohanan says: Everywhere that it is stated: And he dwelt, it is nothing other than an expression of pain, of an impending calamity, as it is stated: “And Israel dwelt in Shittim, and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moab” (Numbers 25:1). It is stated: “And Jacob dwelt in the land where his father had sojourned in the land of Canaan” (Genesis 37:1), and it is stated thereafter: “And Joseph brought evil report of them to his father” (Genesis 37:2), which led to the sale of Joseph. And it is stated: “And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the land of Goshen” (Genesis 47:27), and it is stated thereafter: “And the time drew near that Israel was to die” (Genesis 47:29). It is stated: “And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree” (I Kings 5:5), and it is

stated thereafter: "And the Lord raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the king's seed in Edom" (I Kings 11:14).

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- And while they were walking along, Isaac spake unto his father, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where then is the lamb for a burnt offering before the Lord?" And Abraham answered Isaac, saying, "The Lord hath chosen thee, my son, for a perfect burnt offering, instead of the lamb." And Isaac said unto his father, "I will do all that the Lord hath spoken to thee with joy and cheerfulness of heart." And Abraham again said unto Isaac his son, "Is there in thy heart any thought or counsel concerning this which is not proper? Tell me, my son, I pray thee! O my son, conceal it not from me." And Isaac answered, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is nothing in my heart to cause me to deviate either to the right or the left from the word that He hath spoken unto thee. Neither limb nor muscle hath moved or stirred on account of this, nor is there in my heart any thought or evil counsel concerning this. But I am joyful and cheerful of heart in this matter, and I say, Blessed is the Lord who has this day chosen me to be a burnt offering before Him."
- Abraham greatly rejoiced at the words of Isaac, and they went on and came together to that place that the Lord had spoken of. And Abraham approached to build the altar in that place, and Abraham did build, while Isaac handed him stones and mortar, until they finished erecting the altar. And Abraham took the wood and arranged it upon the altar, and he bound Isaac, to place him upon the wood which was upon the altar, to slay him for a burnt offering before the Lord. Isaac spake hereupon: "Father, make haste, bare thine arm, and bind my hands and feet securely, for I am a young man, but thirty-seven years of age, and thou art an old man. When I behold the slaughtering knife in thy hand, I may perchance begin to tremble at the sight and push against thee, for the desire unto life is bold. Also I may do myself an injury and make myself unfit to be sacrificed. I adjure thee, therefore, my father, make haste, execute the will of thy Creator, delay not. Turn up thy garment, gird thy loins, and after that thou hast slaughtered me, burn me unto fine ashes. Then gather the ashes, and bring them to Sarah, my mother, and place them in a casket in her chamber. At all hours, whenever she enters her chamber, she will remember her son Isaac and weep for him."
- And again Isaac spoke: "As soon as thou hast slaughtered me, and hast separated thyself from me, and returnest to Sarah my mother, and she asked

thee, Where is my son Isaac? what wilt thou answer her, and what will you two do in your old age?" Abraham answered, and said, "We know we can survive thee by a few days only. He who was our Comfort before thou wast born, will comfort us now and henceforth."

- After he had laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac on the altar, upon the wood, Abraham braced his arms, rolled up his garments, and leaned his knees upon Isaac with all his strength. And God, sitting upon His throne, high and exalted, saw how the hearts of the two were the same, and tears were rolling down from the eyes of Abraham upon Isaac, and from Isaac down upon the wood, so that it was submerged in tears. When Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son, God spoke to the angels: "Do you see how Abraham my friend proclaims the unity of My Name in the world? Had I hearkened unto you at the time of the creation of the world, when ye spake, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that Thou visitest him? who would there have been to make known the unity of My Name in this world?" The angels then broke into loud weeping, and they exclaimed: "The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth, he hath broken the covenant. Where is the reward of Abraham, he who took the wayfarers into his house, gave them food and drink, and went with them to bring them on the way? The covenant is broken, whereof Thou didst speak to him, saying, 'For in Isaac shall thy seed be called,' and saying, 'My covenant will I establish with Isaac,' for the slaughtering knife is set upon his throat."
- The tears of the angels fell upon the knife, so that it could not cut Isaac's throat, but from terror his soul escaped from him. Then God spoke to the archangel Michael, and said: "Why standest thou here? Let him not be slaughtered." Without delay, Michael, anguish in his voice, cried out: "Abraham! Abraham! Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him!" Abraham made answer, and he said: "God did command me to slaughter Isaac, and thou dost command me not to slaughter him! The words of the Teacher and the words of the disciple- unto whose words doth one hearken?" Then Abraham heard it said: "By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed My voice."

- At once Abraham left off from Isaac, who returned to life, revived by the heavenly voice admonishing Abraham not to slaughter his son. Abraham loosed his bonds, and Isaac stood upon his feet, and spoke the benediction, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who quickenest the dead."



## Unit 4: Dreams, Wrestling, Reconciliation

### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Confronting the world's moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one's personal values illumines a path toward one's Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one's Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

### UNIT ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- Dreams, struggle, and acceptance frame the human experience; how one navigates these experiences determines one's success in the pursuit of one's Unique Potential.

### UNIT GOALS

- To explore the connection between dreams and one's Unique Potential.
- To confront one's internal struggles as a window into one's Unique Potential.
- To learn to live life on life's terms.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Creatively express the connection between one's dreams, one's struggles, and one's Unique Potential.

Unit 4: Dreams, Wrestling, Reconciliation—  
Lesson 1: The Case for Dreams (Assessment)

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is the benefit of dreaming (at night or of the future)?
- Why might Genesis put so much stock into the dreams of its characters?
- How do we navigate life's obstacles that come in the way of our dreams?

Lesson Goals:

- To explore the value of dreams.
- To acknowledge one's current circumstance.
- To develop skills to maintain focus on one's dreams in spite of life's obstacles.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Determine what circumstances have brought them to this moment in time.
- Lay the foundation for a personal Life Goals flowchart

Materials:

- One large poster-board
- One poster-board for each student
- Post-it notes
- Pencils
- Appendix 4.1.1 (99)
- Text of Genesis 28:10-22



Set Induction: (5 Minutes)

Ask:

- What is the greatest dream you have ever had?
- What does that dream represent for you?

Activity I: (30 Minutes)

Provide Appendix 4.1.1 to be completed in Hevruta or small groups. No more than three or four in a group. When the groups have finished filling in their graphic organizer. Students might use any resources available to them (i.e. the internet/cell phones).

Activity 2: Jacob's Soliloquy Assessment (15 Minutes)

Each student should take fifteen minutes to put themselves into Jacob's shoes and write a soliloquy expressing the feeling of being between the pain of Jacob's father and his dreams and aspirations for himself.

Example of a Soliloquy from William Shakespeare's Hamlet:

To be, or not to be, that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles  
And by opposing end them. To die—to sleep,  
No more; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to: 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;  
To sleep, perchance to dream—ay, there's the rub:  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause—there's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life.  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
And thus the native hue of resolution

Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
And enterprises of great pitch and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry  
And lose the name of action.

Closure: (5-15 Minutes)

Each student will have the opportunity to recite their soliloquy for the class.

## Appendix 4.1.1

Text	Guiding Questions	Response:
<p><b>Harlem</b>            What happens to a dream deferred?</p> <p>Does it dry up            like a raisin in the sun?            Or fester like a sore—            And then run?            Does it stink like rotten meat?            Or crust and sugar over—            like a syrupy sweet?</p> <p>Maybe it just sags            like a heavy load.  <i>Or does it explode?</i></p>	<p><i>Who was Langston Hughes?</i>  <i>Why is this poem considered quintessential Langston Hughes?</i>  <i>What does this poem tell us about Langston Hughes' experience in Harlem?</i>  <i>Mr. Hughes poem is essentially a series of questions and one downtrodden suggestion of an answer. Do these questions have answers?</i>  <i>Read the poem at least five times. What is Mr. Hughes really talking about?</i></p>	
<p>“Hope deferred            is a source of sickness            for the heart—            and a yearning realized is a Tree            of Life.”            —Proverbs 13:12</p>	<p><i>Why might deferred hope cause the heart sickness?</i>  <i>The Tree of Life is mentioned several times in the book of Proverbs and, of course in the Garden of Eden. What is the Tree of Life?</i>  <i>What is the connection between “Harlem” and this verse?</i></p>	
<p>Genesis 28:10-22</p>	<p><i>Genesis 28:11 has clause “the place” three times in one verse. Paraphrased the text says, “He happened upon the place... one of the stones of the place... he laid down in ba’makom ha’hu THE place.” Rashi tells us that the place refers to the place where the Akedah took place. How does this verse affect your reading of Jacob’s story?</i>  <i>Isaac was arguably never the same after the Akedah...What were Isaac’s dreams deferred?</i>  <i>Jacob renews the covenant God had made with his father and his grandfather. How might Jacob see himself in regard to his personal growth?</i></p>	

Unit 4: Dreams, Wrestling, Reconciliation—  
Lesson 2: God Wrestler

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to wrestle with God? To wrestle with one's self?
- Is internal struggle an integral part in the pursuit of one's Unique Potential?
- How do our struggles become our blessings?
- How do we balance between our divine nature and our animalistic nature?

Lesson Goals:

- To explore the value in wrestling with life's big questions.
- To encourage wrestling with one's Unique Potential, avoiding complacency.
- To encourage students to see themselves as both biological beings and as spiritual beings imbued with divinity.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Name aspects of life with which they are wrestling and explain how they are wrestling with said aspects of life.

Materials:

- Appendix 4.2.1 (Page 103)
- Appendix 4.2.2 (Page 104)
- A/V with Internet Capability
- Tanakhim for students
- Writing Utensils
- Journals

Set Induction:

(5 Minutes)

Begin by showing students Appendix 4.2.1 and asking:

- Who can tell me what this is a picture of?
- Who are the characters in this painting?
- What is the connection between the two characters?

When students have had the opportunity to respond show the students Appendix 4.2.2 and ask:

- What is implied now, that was not implied in the first version?
- What has changed about the relationship between Adam and God, when a brain is the backdrop for God and the angels?
- If the implicit intention of the artist is to say that God is part of an internal dialogue, how does this shape the conversations that we might have surrounding the divine?

Activity 1:

(15 Minutes)

Watch Video as a class:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFPBf1AZOQg>

Aristotle believed that humans have two parts to them: the Irrational and the Rational. The Irrational is the animalistic, biological nature of all living things, focused only on survival and reproduction. The Rational, as Aristotle understood it, is the ability to contemplate, reflect and seek fulfillment or true happiness. True happiness, Aristotle explains, is a question of one's ability to overcome one's animalistic tendencies and contemplate one's potential.

Ask:

- What, according to Aristotle, constitutes the Irrational human tendencies? The Rational human tendencies?
- What is the message/lesson that both Aristotle and the scene between Adam and God from the Sistine chapel trying to express?
- Are there benefits to both the Irrational and Rational, the animalistic and the godly aspects of humanity? How does the dichotomy play out in our lives and in the development of our Unique Potential?

Activity 2:

(20 Minutes)

There are many different ways to read the Torah. For this exercise, four basic constructs will guide us through the text. The P'shat, the Remez, the Drash and the Sod. The P'shat, which means surface, deals with the literal meaning of the text; the words on the page. The Remez, which means hints, deals with the allegory, the metaphor and implied meaning of the text; to read between the lines. Drash, which means inquiry or expound, is the process by which midrash is developed comparing similar words, texts and contexts. Sod, the final principle, means secret, which is to say that within the text, secrets can be revealed. For this activity, we will be dealing primarily with the Remez or the allegory asking ourselves the question, "What is the text trying to teach us?"

In Genesis Chapter 32, we find Jacob still on the run from his brother Esau, still dreading the moment when they meet again. Jacob, a long time ago, took his elder brother's birthright and his father's blessing. Jacob, a homebody and a simple shepherd, is no fierce hunter like Esau. Scared for his life, Jacob sends his entire family and encampment to cross the River Yabbok, while he spends the night alone on the other side.

As a class, read Genesis 32:23-33.

Ask:

- If Jacob is wrestling with an ordinary Ish (man), what's all of the fuss about a divine being?
- According to the P'shat (the surface reading of the text), with whom did Jacob wrestle?
- According to the P'shat, who is the divine being with whom Jacob had striven and prevailed?
- In the spirit of the allegorical, sometimes implicit reading of the text, with whom might Jacob have been wrestling?
- What could the meaning of the text imply if Jacob was wrestling with an angel?
- Rabbis have suggested that Jacob may have been wrestling his brother Esau and others have suggested that Jacob was wrestling with an angel, what happens to the story if Jacob was actually wrestling with himself?
- How might Jacob's wrestling be a metaphor or an allegory for the internal struggle that is within all of us?

Activity 3: (15 Minutes)

Invite students to take the next 15 Minutes to journal on the following prompt:

- What does the internal struggle between Animalistic and Godly look like for you?
- What are you struggling internally with?
- How do you balance that which are your animalistic desires with that which will help you fulfill your sense of Unique Potential?

Closure: (5 Minutes)

Provide students the opportunity to share what they wrote, but only if they are comfortable doing so.

#### Appendix 4.2.1





## Appendix 4.2.2





Unit 4: Dreams, Wrestling, Reconciliation  
Lesson 3: Reconciliation: Living Life on Life's Terms

Lesson Enduring Understanding

- Ascription of meaning to life produces a life of purpose

Essential Questions

- What is the meaning of life?
- What is meaning and how are we to ascribe meaning to life?
- How does one search for meaning?
- How do we navigate life to be able to find meaning in suffering?

Lesson Goals:

- To begin to ascribe meaning to life.
- To explore the statement: life is meaningless until meaning is ascribed

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Ascribe meaning to their life.
- Reimagine struggle as an opportunity for growth and an engine for meaning

Materials:

- Appendix 4.3.1 (Pages 108-115)
- Appendix 4.3.2 (Pages 116-118)
- Water color paints, Pencils, Markers, Crayons, Magazines, scissors, string glue, paper, colored paper, scrapbooking materials, etc.
- Speakers for music
- A playlist of music conducive for meditation

Set Induction: (10 Minutes)

As a class, watch this video on Viktor Frankl & Man's Search for Meaning:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVhuCpgLCTE>

Questions to ask after having watched this video:

- In spite of a horrific existence, how could he find life worth preserving?
- What meaning exists in suffering?
- Do you have a strong "why" in life? What are you living for? What is your purpose?
- What are you really saying when you say "I am bored"?
- If we cannot control people, places or things—What do we have control over in life?
- Why is attitude so important in the face of life's challenges?
- How does perspective change perception?
- "Success, like happiness, cannot be pursued" what does this quote mean?

Activity 1: A Case Study in Suffering (15 Minutes)

Read the text of Genesis 3 and ask:

- What did Adam and his wife do that forced them to leave the garden?
- What is the source of their suffering?
- How does their suffering play out?
- What meaning or purpose do they derive from their suffering?
- Did Adam and his wife's lives have a purpose or meaning before leaving the garden? How did Eve get her name?
- According to this reading of the text, what is the source of purpose and meaning? What did God mean when God said, "Now that humanity has become one of us, knowing good from bad, what if they should stretch out their hands and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever?" What is the connection between humanity's suffering and our relationship to God/Godliness?

Activity 2: Expressive Kavannah: Life is Like Vapor (30 Minutes)

Ecclesiastes or Kohelet is a book of ancient wisdom in the Tanakh. Kohelet spends 12 chapters wrestling with life's apparent randomness and meaninglessness. He compares all of life to a fleeting breath of air, that hangs suspended for a moment before dissipating and drifting away. This book asks one main question and is the main prompt for this activity:

- What can we do to ascribe meaning to something as fleeting as life?

Room Set Up:

- Hang the enlarged version of the quotes from Ecclesiastes (Appendix 4.3.1) on the walls with a small envelope or paperclip holding individual copies of each quote (Appendix 4.3.2) for students to take their own copy.
- On a table should be a buffet of supplies the students can use to creatively express themselves including, but certainly not limited to: crayons, paint, magazines, glue, scissors, string, pastels, markers, pencils, paper, etc.
- It is important to intentionally refer to the creative element as anything other than "art".

Expressive Kavannah Activity: (based on the program by Edna Miron Wapner)

Ask:

- What does it mean to do something with intention? (purposeful, meaningfully, focused, etc.)

Say:

- The instructor will define the term Expressive Kavannah as, “the opportunity to express oneself with meaningful intentionality.”
- *Eloquent silence* is encouraged.

Once intentionality is defined, students will be informed of the three parts of the program:

- Students will walk around the room and find a quote that is meaningful to them, find a space of their own to be alone and read over the quote. They should read it at least 5-10 times slowly, and intentionally. Students will have the opportunity to and are encouraged to meditate, stretch and sit with their quote as they take in the music and the quote they have selected.
- After  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the allotted time for this activity (adjust depending on time), students will be invited to select items from the supply table to create something emotional, something meaningful and something intentional as a result of their reflection upon the quote. There is no right or wrong creation, the students should be made to feel as comfortable as possible. The idea being to express the feelings through a creative medium. The instructor should be available as a resource guiding the students back to focusing on the quote they have selected as the inspiration for their creativity.
- After several minutes ( $\frac{1}{2}$  of the allotted time) of creating and expressing themselves, the instructor should ask the students to finish what they are doing and put their supplies down.

Closure: (10 Minutes)

Students will have the opportunity to share what they created and how it relates to the prompt. The instructor should remind students of the prompt and ask the students to share their verse from Kohelet as part of their presentation. Students should explain:

- Their Kohelet quote and what they thought of it.
- The way in which the quote pertains to the search for a life of meaning.
- How the quote and this search for meaning contributed to what they created.

A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven: (3:1)

The case of the man who is alone, with no companion, who has neither son nor brother; yet he amasses wealth without limit, and his eye is never sated with riches. For whom, now, is he amassing it while denying himself enjoyment? That too is a futility and an unhappy business. (Ecclesiastes 4:8)

When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. For He has no pleasure in fools; what you vow, fulfill. (Ecclesiastes 5:3)

For much dreaming leads to futility and to superfluous talk. (Ecclesiastes 5:6)

A worker's sleep is sweet, whether he has much or little to eat; but the rich man's abundance doesn't let him sleep. (Ecclesiastes 5:11)

Only this, I have found, is a real good: that one should eat and drink and get pleasure with all the gains he makes under the sun, during the numbered days of life that God has given him; for that is his portion. Also, whenever a man is given riches and property by God, and is also permitted by Him to enjoy them and to take his portion and get pleasure for his gains—that is a gift of God. (Ecclesiastes 5:17-18)

A good name is better than fragrant oil, and the day of death than the day of birth. It is better to go to a house of mourning than to a house of feasting; for that is the end of every man, and a living one should take it to heart. (Ecclesiastes 7:1-2)

Don't say, "How has it happened that former times were better than these?" For it is not wise of you to ask that question. (Ecclesiastes 7:10)

So in a time of good fortune enjoy the good fortune; and in a time of misfortune, reflect: The one no less than the other was God's doing; consequently, man may find no fault with Him. (Ecclesiastes 7:14)



So don't overdo goodness and don't act the wise man to excess, or you may be dumfounded. Don't overdo wickedness and don't be a fool, or you may die before your time. It is best that you grasp the one without letting go of the other, for one who fears God will do his duty by both. (Ecclesiastes 7:16-18)

Who is like the wise man, and who knows the meaning of the adage: "A man's wisdom lights up his face, So that his deep discontent is dissembled"? (Ecclesiastes 8:1)

Whatever it is in your power to do,  
do with all your might. For there is  
no action, no reasoning, no  
learning, no wisdom in Sheol,  
where you are going. (Ecclesiastes  
9:10)

If one watches the wind, he will  
never sow; and if one observes the  
clouds, he will never reap.  
(Ecclesiastes 11:4)

How sweet is the light, what a  
delight for the eyes to behold the  
sun! (Ecclesiastes 11:7)

O youth, enjoy yourself while you are young! Let your heart lead you to enjoyment in the days of your youth. Follow the desires of your heart and the glances of your eyes—but know well that God will call you to account for all such things— and banish care from your mind, and pluck sorrow out of your flesh! For youth and black hair are fleeting. (Ecclesiastes 11:9-10)

#### Appendix 4.3.2

A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven: (3:1)

The case of the man who is alone, with no companion, who has neither son nor brother; yet he amasses wealth without limit, and his eye is never sated with riches. For whom, now, is he amassing it while denying himself enjoyment? That too is a futility and an unhappy business. (Ecclesiastes 4:8)

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O youth, enjoy yourself while you are young! Let your heart lead you to enjoyment in the days of your youth. Follow the desires of your heart and the glances of your eyes—but know well that God will call you to account for all such things— and banish care from your mind, and pluck sorrow out of your flesh! For youth and black hair are fleeting. (Ecclesiastes 11:9-10)

## Unit 5: The Joseph Saga: How Do I Discover My Unique Potential?

### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Confronting the world's moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one's personal values illumines a path toward one's Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one's Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

### UNIT ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- The hero of any story experiences, learns, and develops tools and relationships to navigate life's challenges to pursue destiny: The Unique Potential.
- Reflection upon one's experiences provide fertile opportunity for growth.

### UNIT GOALS

- To explore the hero within.
- To plot out an ideal life course, while considering life's potential challenges.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Create a flow chart describing three possible life courses based on the choices they have and the decisions they make.

Unit 5: How Do I Discover My Unique Potential?—The Joseph Saga  
Lesson 1-3: “The Hero’s Journey”

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What is the significance of the Hero’s Journey?
- How does one shape one’s future based on past experiences and their dreams?
- How might one tell one’s story, such that one is the hero of one’s own story?

Lesson Goals:

- To understand the Hero’s Journey motif as a way of telling a compelling story.
- To encourage students to find a connection between Joseph's story and their own.
- To encourage students to see themselves as the hero of their story.
- To understand that a Unique Potential is both uncovered and developed.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Explain how they are the hero of their own story.
- Elucidate the various elements of the Hero’s Journey as pertaining to the Joseph Story and their own story.

Materials:

- Appendix 5.1 Teacher’s Guide (Pages 130-137)
- Appendix 5.1.1 (Pages 123-124)
- Appendix 5.1.2 Joseph Saga Graphic Organizer (Page 125)
- Appendix 5.2.1 (Page 127)
- Appendix 5.3.1 (Page 129)
- Tanakhim (one per student/group)

To The Teacher:

Joseph Saga: A Hero’s Journey

For this three part lesson series, students will receive a graphic organizer for each class as way of looking at the Joseph Saga and one’s personal journey in pursuit of their Unique Potential through the lens of the Hero’s Journey.<sup>13</sup> In Hevruta, students will read the Joseph saga, beginning with Genesis 37:1. While they read the stories, they should utilize the graphic organizers to take notes on how and where the Joseph Saga plays with the themes of the Hero’s Journey.

Upon completion, students have the opportunity to reflect on their own life’s journey. This comparison to and personalization of the Joseph Saga through the lens of the Hero’s Journey is the foundation for the final Authentic Assessment in which students will write a college application essay.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.movieoutline.com/articles/the-hero-journey-mythic-structure-of-joseph-campbell-monomyth.html>



Big questions to consider and reflect upon with regard to the intersection of the Joseph Saga, the Hero's Journey and the pursuit of one's Unique Potential:

- How might the discovery of their Unique Potential be a call to adventure?
- How is the pursuit of one's Unique Potential a dance between freewill and destiny?
- How is the discovery and pursuit of one's Unique Potential difficult?
- What does one look for in a mentor?
- How do we distinguish periods of growth in our lives?
- If the quest for one's Unique Potential is life long, what stories and experiences do we use as trail markers?
- How can a practice of solitude and reflection guide one toward a path of personal growth and discovery?
- How do we make meaning out of toil?
- What reward exists "in the pursuit of wind"?

This process for these three lessons is the same for each lesson, with separate graphic organizers for each. While steps 10-12 are pertinent for the Hero's Journey, they tend to deal more with fantasy type stories and do not necessarily apply to our scope. They are included at the end as a resource if students should find those typically fantastical elements of the Hero's Journey to be helpful and meaningful in describing their own journey.

Finally, please note that the Hero's Journey is a motif and not all of the Joseph Saga is 100% aligned. An appendix is provided at the end of this lesson which breaks down the Joseph Saga in terms of the steps of the Hero's Journey and by chapters and verses in Genesis. This will be useful in guiding the students through their graphic organizers.

## Unit 5, Lesson 1:

### Set Induction for Hero's Journey Steps 1-3:

On the board or on a large piece of paper make two columns. One column should say "Heroes" and the other "Attributes." Ask the students to create a list of Heroes (don't necessarily need to be Jewish Heroes) and a list of Attributes all of the Heroes share. It is important in this set induction to provide plenty of time and space for students to think and speak. When the list is exhausted, ask:

- Are there attributes that apply to every hero?
- What does the list of attributes of heroes say about how heroes are perceived?
- Can anybody be a hero? Why or why not?

### Introducing the Hero's Journey:

Say: Over the next three classes we will take a dive into the story of Joseph and the story of you through the lens of the age old the Hero's Journey. So first we must ask: What makes a journey a Hero's Journey?

Cut and paste each step of the Hero's Journey onto a piece of poster-board and conceal each item from view. (Appendix 5.1.1)

- Ask students what steps make up the Hero's Journey and, giving the students the benefit of the doubt, remove the concealment to reveal each step they guess. (Examples of the Hero's Journey include: Luke Skywalker, Moana, Dorothy, The Lion King, Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings)
- If they cannot guess each step, guide them through the final elements of the Hero's Journey.

At this point, instruct the students to begin to reading the Joseph Saga in Genesis 37 using the graphic organizer (Appendix 5.1.1)

### Closure:

When students have finished filling in their graphic organizers, reassemble the class for reflection and debrief AND/OR have them journal on the following questions—

Questions to be posed for either discussion or journaling:

- What about the Hero's Journey/Joseph Saga was relatable for you in your life?
- How might the discovery of their Unique Potential be a call to adventure?
- How is the pursuit of one's Unique Potential a dance between freewill and destiny?
- How is the discovery and pursuit of one's Unique Potential difficult?
- How has this research shaped the way in which you think of your own story thus far?

Ordinary World

Call To Adventure

Refusal of the Call

Meeting the Mentor

Crossing the Threshold

Tests, Allies, Enemies

Retreat Inward

Ordeal

Reward

The Road Back

Resurrection

Elixir

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>1. Ordinary World</b></p> <p>This is where the Hero's exists before his present story begins, oblivious of the adventures to come. It's his safe place. His everyday life where we learn crucial details about our Hero, his true nature, capabilities and outlook on life. This anchors the Hero as a human, just like you and me, and makes it easier for us to identify with him and hence later, empathize with his plight.</p>		
<p><b>2. Call To Adventure</b></p> <p>The Hero's adventure begins when he receives a call to action, such as a direct threat to his safety, his family, his way of life or to the peace of the community in which he lives. It may not be as dramatic as a gunshot, but simply a phone call or conversation but whatever the call is, and however it manifests itself, it ultimately disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World and presents a challenge or quest that must be undertaken.</p>		
<p><b>3. Refusal Of The Call</b></p> <p>Although the Hero may be eager to accept the quest, at this stage he will have fears that need overcoming. Second thoughts or even deep personal doubts as to whether or not he is up to the challenge. When this happens, the Hero will refuse the call and as a result may suffer somehow. The problem he faces may seem too much to handle and the comfort of home far more attractive than the perilous road ahead. This would also be our own response and once again helps us bond further with the reluctant Hero.</p>		

## Unit 5, Lesson 2

### Set Induction for Hero's Journey Steps 4-6:

As a class watch this famous scene from Star Wars, which depicts Luke being taught by Yoda, Luke's stepping over the threshold in accepting his destiny, and facing his first test: a psychological battle with Darth Vader.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=infZSKB5L9I>

### Ask:

- With or without knowing the plot of STAR WARS, what is the nature of the relationship between Luke (the young man) and Yoda (the green creature)?
- Yoda, the mentor, tells Luke that he will not need his weapons, and yet Luke does not listen. What does this tell us about the relationship between mentors and mentees? What is the balance between learning in a classroom or learning through experience?

At this point, the students will continue to read the Joseph Saga and fill out the graphic organizer (Appendix 5.2.1)

### Conclusion:

- What does one look for in a mentor?
- How do we distinguish periods of growth in our lives?
- If the quest for one's Unique Potential is life long, what stories and experiences do we use as trail markers? How and why do we choose these stories to tell?

<p><b>4. Meeting The Mentor</b></p> <p>At this crucial turning point where the Hero desperately needs guidance he meets a mentor figure who gives him something he needs. He could be given an object of great importance, insight into the dilemma he faces, wise advice, practical training or even self-confidence. Whatever the mentor provides the Hero with it serves to dispel his doubts and fears and give him the strength and courage to begin his quest.</p>		
<p><b>5. Crossing The Threshold</b></p> <p>The Hero is now ready to act upon his call to adventure and truly begin his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He may go willingly or he may be pushed, but either way he finally crosses the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. It may be leaving home for the first time in his life or just doing something he has always been scared to do. However the threshold presents itself, this action signifies the Hero's commitment to his journey and whatever it may have in store for him.</p>		
<p><b>6. Tests, Allies, Enemies</b></p> <p>Now finally out of his comfort zone the Hero is confronted with an ever more difficult series of challenges that test him in a variety of ways. Obstacles are thrown across his path; whether they be physical hurdles or people bent on thwarting his progress, the Hero must overcome each challenge he is presented with on the journey towards his ultimate goal.</p> <p>The Hero needs to find out who can be trusted and who can't. He may earn allies and meet enemies who will, each in their own way, help prepare him for the greater ordeals yet to come. This is the stage where his skills and/or powers are tested and every obstacle that he faces helps us gain a deeper insight into his character and ultimately identify with him even more.</p>		

## Appendix 5.2.1

### Unit 5, Lesson 3

#### Set Induction for Hero's Journey Steps 7-9:

Consider the quote "In a Place where there is no Leader, Strive to be a Leader" from Pirkei Avot 2:5

Ask:

- Who do you consider to be a leader in the world today?
- What qualities do each of these leaders share?

To the Teacher: Record the answers presented in the set induction in two columns.

At this point, students will continue to read the Joseph Saga and fill out the graphic organizer (Appendix 5.3.1)

#### Conclusion:

- What role does leadership play in the realization of one's Unique Potential?



<p><b>7. Approach To The Inmost Cave</b></p> <p>The inmost cave may represent many things in the Hero's story such as an actual location in which lies a terrible danger or an inner conflict which up until now the Hero has not had to face. As the Hero approaches the cave he must make final preparations before taking that final leap into the great unknown. At the threshold to the inmost cave the Hero may once again face some of the doubts and fears that first surfaced upon his call to adventure. He may need some time to reflect upon his journey and the treacherous road ahead in order to find the courage to continue. This brief respite helps the audience understand the magnitude of the ordeal that awaits the Hero and escalates the tension in anticipation of his ultimate test.</p>		
<p><b>8. Ordeal</b></p> <p>The Supreme Ordeal may be a dangerous physical test or a deep inner crisis that the Hero must face in order to survive or for the world in which the Hero lives to continue to exist. Whether it be facing his greatest fear or most deadly foe, the Hero must draw upon all of his skills and his experiences gathered upon the path to the inmost cave in order to overcome his most difficulty challenge. Only through some form of "death" can the Hero be reborn, experiencing a metaphorical resurrection that somehow grants him greater power or insight necessary in order to fulfill his destiny or reach his journey's end. This is the high-point of the Hero's story and where everything he holds dear is put on the line. If he fails, he will either die or live as he knows it will never be the same again.</p>		
<p><b>9. Reward (Seizing The Sword)</b></p> <p>After defeating the enemy, surviving death and finally overcoming his greatest personal challenge, the Hero is ultimately transformed into a new state, emerging from battle as a stronger person and often with a prize. The Reward may come in many forms: an object of great importance or power, a secret, greater knowledge or insight, or even reconciliation with a loved one or ally. Whatever the treasure, which may well facilitate his return to the Ordinary World, the Hero must quickly put celebrations aside and prepare for the last leg of his journey.</p>		

- Appendix 5.3.1

For the Teacher: (Appendix 5.1)

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<b>Ordinary World</b> This is where the Hero's exists before his present story begins, oblivious of the adventures to come. It's his safe place. His everyday life where we learn crucial details about our Hero, his true nature, capabilities and outlook on life. This anchors the Hero as a human, just like you and me, and makes it easier for us to identify with him and hence later, empathize with his plight.	Genesis 37:1-11	
<b>Call To Adventure</b> The Hero's adventure begins when he receives a call to action, such as a direct threat to his safety, his family, his way of life or to the peace of the community in which he lives. It may not be as dramatic as a gunshot, but simply a phone call or conversation but whatever the call is, and however it manifests itself, it ultimately disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World and presents a challenge or quest that must be undertaken.	Genesis 37:12-36	

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Refusal Of The Call</b></p> <p>Although the Hero may be eager to accept the quest, at this stage he will have fears that need overcoming. Second thoughts or even deep personal doubts as to whether or not he is up to the challenge. When this happens, the Hero will refuse the call and as a result may suffer somehow. The problem he faces may seem to much to handle and the comfort of home far more attractive than the perilous road ahead. This would also be our own response and once again helps us bond further with the reluctant Hero.</p>	<p>Genesis 39</p>	
<p><b>Meeting The Mentor</b></p> <p>At this crucial turning point where the Hero desperately needs guidance he meets a mentor figure who gives him something he needs. He could be given an object of great importance, insight into the dilemma he faces, wise advice, practical training or even self-confidence. Whatever the mentor provides the Hero with it serves to dispel his doubts and fears and give him the strength and courage to begin his quest.</p>	<p>Genesis 41:1-45</p>	

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Crossing The Threshold</b>  The Hero is now ready to act upon his call to adventure and truly begin his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He may go willingly or he may be pushed, but either way he finally crosses the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. It may be leaving home for the first time in his life or just doing something he has always been scared to do. However the threshold presents itself, this action signifies the Hero's commitment to his journey and whatever it may have in store for him.</p>	<p>Genesis 41:46-57</p>	
<p><b>Tests, Allies, Enemies</b>  Now finally out of his comfort zone the Hero is confronted with an ever more difficult series of challenges that test him in a variety of ways. Obstacles are thrown across his path; whether they be physical hurdles or people bent on thwarting his progress, the Hero must overcome each challenge he is presented with on the journey towards his ultimate goal.</p> <p>The Hero needs to find out who can be trusted and who can't. He may earn allies and meet enemies who will, each in their own way, help prepare him for the greater ordeals yet to come. This is the stage where his skills and/or powers are tested and every obstacle that he faces helps us gain a deeper insight into his character and ultimately identify with him even more.</p>	<p>Genesis 39  Genesis 40  Genesis 42:1-43:29</p>	

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Approach To The Inmost Cave</b>  The inmost cave may represent many things in the Hero's story such as an actual location in which lies a terrible danger or an inner conflict which up until now the Hero has not had to face. As the Hero approaches the cave he must make final preparations before taking that final leap into the great unknown.</p> <p>At the threshold to the inmost cave the Hero may once again face some of the doubts and fears that first surfaced upon his call to adventure. He may need some time to reflect upon his journey and the treacherous road ahead in order to find the courage to continue. This brief respite helps the audience understand the magnitude of the ordeal that awaits the Hero and escalates the tension in anticipation of his ultimate test.</p>	<p>Genesis 43:30-34</p>	

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Ordeal</b></p> <p>The Supreme Ordeal may be a dangerous physical test or a deep inner crisis that the Hero must face in order to survive or for the world in which the Hero lives to continue to exist. Whether it be facing his greatest fear or most deadly foe, the Hero must draw upon all of his skills and his experiences gathered upon the path to the inmost cave in order to overcome his most difficulty challenge.</p> <p>Only through some form of "death" can the Hero be reborn, experiencing a metaphorical resurrection that somehow grants him greater power or insight necessary in order to fulfill his destiny or reach his journey's end. This is the high-point of the Hero's story and where everything he holds dear is put on the line. If he fails, he will either die or life as he knows it will never be the same again.</p>	<p>Genesis 44</p>	

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Reward (Seizing The Sword)</b> After defeating the enemy, surviving death and finally overcoming his greatest personal challenge, the Hero is ultimately transformed into a new state, emerging from battle as a stronger person and often with a prize.</p> <p>The Reward may come in many forms: an object of great importance or power, a secret, greater knowledge or insight, or even reconciliation with a loved one or ally. Whatever the treasure, which may well facilitate his return to the Ordinary World, the Hero must quickly put celebrations aside and prepare for the last leg of his journey.</p>	Genesis 45-47	
<p><b>The Road Back</b> This stage in the Hero's journey represents a reverse echo of the Call to Adventure in which the Hero had to cross the first threshold. Now he must return home with his reward but this time the anticipation of danger is replaced with that of acclaim and perhaps vindication, absolution or even exoneration.</p> <p>But the Hero's journey is not yet over and he may still need one last push back into the Ordinary World. The moment before the Hero finally commits to the last stage of his journey may be a moment in which he must choose between his own personal objective and that of a Higher Cause.</p>	46:29-47:1	

The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Resurrection</b></p> <p>This is the climax in which the Hero must have his final and most dangerous encounter with death. The final battle also represents something far greater than the Hero's own existence with its outcome having far-reaching consequences to his Ordinary World and the lives of those he left behind.</p> <p>If he fails, others will suffer and this not only places more weight upon his shoulders but in a movie, grips the audience so that they too feel part of the conflict and share the Hero's hopes, fears and trepidation. Ultimately the Hero will succeed, destroy his enemy and emerge from battle cleansed and reborn.</p>	<p>Genesis 48-49</p>	



The Hero's Journey	Joseph Saga	My Saga
<p><b>Return With The Elixir</b></p> <p>This is the final stage of the Hero's journey in which he returns home to his Ordinary World a changed man. He will have grown as a person, learned many things, faced many terrible dangers and even death but now looks forward to the start of a new life. His return may bring fresh hope to those he left behind, a direct solution to their problems or perhaps a new perspective for everyone to consider.</p> <p>The final reward that he obtains may be literal or metaphoric. It could be a cause for celebration, self-realization or an end to strife, but whatever it is it represents three things: change, success and proof of his journey. The return home also signals the need for resolution for the story's other key players. The Hero's doubters will be ostracized, his enemies punished and his allies rewarded. Ultimately the Hero will return to where he started but things will clearly never be the same again.</p>	<p>Genesis 50</p>	

Unit 5: The Joseph Saga: How Do I Discover My Unique Potential?  
Lesson 4: Defining My Path: What is My Unique Potential?

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What makes me unique?
- How is my Unique Potential shaped by my skills, passions and desire to grow?

Lesson Goals:

- To develop a sense of self based on one's skills, passions and desire for growth.
- To encourage students to see themselves as the hero of their story.
- To encourage students to become active listeners, invested in the stories of others.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Develop a list of their skills, passions, and areas where they desire personal growth.
- Explain what life events or series of life events inspired said skills, passions and areas of personal growth.

Materials:

- Paper
- Writing Utensils
- Post it notes (preferably three different colors)
- Appendix 5.4.1 (Pages 141-143)

Set Induction: (5 Minutes)

Ask each student to present one fact about themselves that:

- No one else in the room knows about them.
- No one could tell about them just by looking at them.

Say: These things that are hidden about you, are you unique about you make up a big part of you who you are. Today we will be assessing our qualities, skills, talents, hobbies and passions.

Activity 1: (15 Minutes)

Using Appendix 5.4.1, students should write:

- 5 things they enjoy
- 5 things they are good at
- 5 things they are passionate about, but want to improve upon.

Using Appendix 5.4.1, while looking at this collection of things they enjoy, are good at and want to improve upon, they should create a list of life events that brought them to or correspond with each of these items.

- **For Example:** I like to read. Growing up, reading was a big part of my night time ritual with my dad. Reading is a moment for me to be alone with my thoughts and I often think about my dad when I read at night.

Activity 2: (15 Minutes)

On a piece of poster board, students will write the various life events (in chronological order to create a timeline) that have inspired this collection of things they enjoy, are good at and want to improve upon and place the Post-It Notes with the corresponding life events.

Each student will then write three points regarding the life event, explaining:

- How it was meaningful
- How it affected them
- How it produced the thing they enjoy, are good at or want to improve upon.

The purpose of this activity is to create a timeline or story board of significant life moments that have shaped who the students are at this moment; a personal story board.

Activity 3: (20 Minutes)

In small groups of three to five, have students share one or two of their moments with each other. At the end of each share, allow time for the listening students to ask clarifying questions, or questions of intrigue. The goal here, is to both give the opportunity to create a personal narrative and to actively listen to another's personal narrative.

Closure: (5 Minutes)

When the class has reconvened, give students the opportunity to share with the class:

- Moments that were inspiring.
- Moments that piqued interest.
- Moments that were surprising.

#### Appendix 5.4.1

I Enjoy:	Significant/Pertinent/Corresponding Life Events:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

I Am Good At:	Significant/Pertinent/Corresponding Life Events:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

I Am Passionate, But Want to Improve Upon:	Significant/Pertinent/Corresponding Life Events:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

## Unit 5: The Joseph Saga: How Do I Discover My Unique Potential?

### Lesson 5: Development of Self

#### Lesson Essential Questions:

- Where am I going and how will I get there?
- How do I use the tools I have developed to realize my Unique Potential?
- What does my life course look like?

#### Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to look ahead 1 year, 3 years, 5 years, 10 years.
- To allow students to see how possible life courses might transpire.
- To develop an aptitude in assessing potential outcomes based on life decisions.

#### Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Create a flow chart, mapping the course of their lives for the next ten years.
- Make connections between life decisions and outcomes

#### Materials:

- Posterboard
- Writing Utensils
- Appendix 5.5.1 (Page 146)
- Appendix 5.5.2 (Page 147)



Set Induction:

(5 Minutes)

Begin by asking students:

- If they know what a flow chart is?
- If they have ever seen a flow chart before?
- If they know how a flow chart works.

Show them a fun flow chart like in Appendix 5.5.1 and guide them through it so that they get the gist of how a flow chart works.

Activity: Creating Your Life's Flow Chart

(40 Minutes)

Referring to Appendix 5.5.1, explain to the students that using a flow chart can help them navigate the next several stages of their lives. In 10th grade, they have already experienced so much growth and change, and yet are on the cusp of graduating high school and moving on to the so called "real world".

Using the work they did in the previous lesson and Appendix 5.5.2, students should develop their own flow charts based on their skills, interests, and areas where they would like to improve.

For each item of their flow chart, they should have one positive consequence, one negative consequence and one lateral consequence in order to demonstrate their understanding of the relationship between choices, decisions and their consequences.

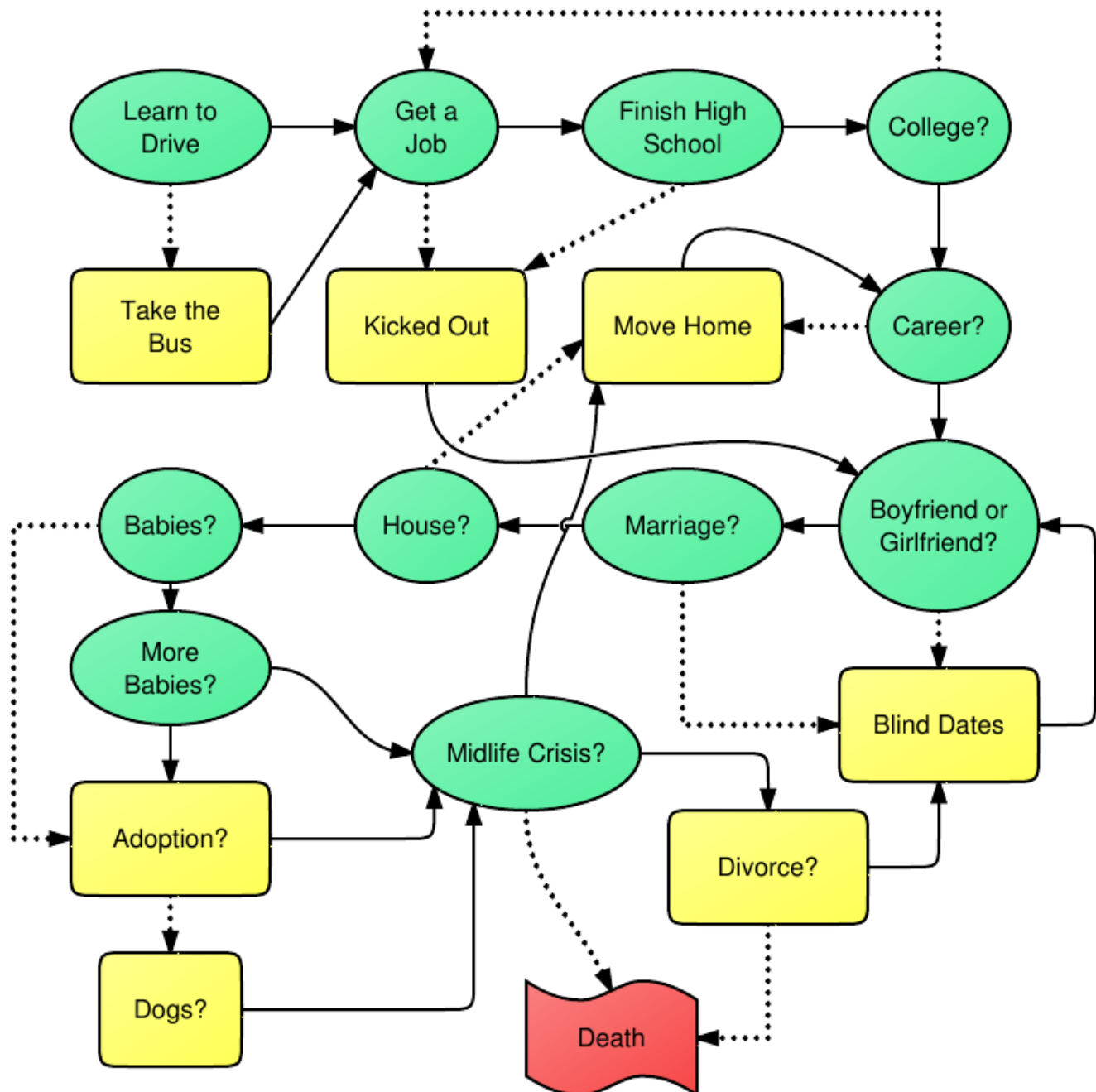
Closure:

(15 Minutes)

Each student should have the opportunity to explain their ideal life path and what steps it will take to get there using the flow chart as their visual aid.



# Life Flow Chart



## Unit 6: “God Meant This For Good”: What Do I Do with My Unique Potential?

### COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Confronting the world’s moral complexity in a godly way embodies our obligations as Jews.
- Calibrating the internal compass of one’s personal values illumines a path toward one’s Unique Potential.
- The discovery of and tending to one’s Unique Potential is the canvas upon which one illustrates their life.

### UNIT ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- The Unique Potential and its life-long pursuit, begins when one begins to chase it.
- The pursuit of one’s Unique Potential derives from one’s choices, the decisions one makes and the way in which one navigates the consequences.

### UNIT GOALS

- To explore the connection between dreams and reality.
- To plot out an ideal life course, while considering life’s potential challenges.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Write a College Application Essay that is a true reflection of the pursuit of their Unique Potential.
- Give specific, kind and helpful feedback.

### To The Teacher:

Over the course of this final unit, students will have the opportunity to formulate an authentic College Application Essay; the culmination of the entire curriculum and Authentic Assessment. As this is a confirmation curriculum guide, the application of this essay might also be used as the foundation for a speech delivered at the confirmation ceremony. The unit begins by introducing the essay project and introduces the protocol by which students will write, critique and edit their essays.

Unit 6: “God Meant This For Good”: What Do I Do with My Unique Potential?  
Lesson 1: Introduction to the College Application Essay Project

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What makes an effective College Application Essay?
- How do I use the tools I have developed to pursue my Unique Potential and apply them toward writing a College Application Essay?

Lesson Goals:

- To introduce students to the culminating project.
- To encourage students to select a College Application Essay topic that they are comfortable with.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Select a College Application Essay topic that will reflect the work they have accomplished over the course of the year.

Materials:

- Paper and Pencils (for pro and con list)
- Appendix 6.1.1 (Page 152)

To The Teacher:

If the synagogue or confirmation program has or might consider plans to have each confirmand speak at confirmation, this project could be used as preparation for that responsibility. In addition to a speech for confirmation, this project should be introduced as a College Application Essay that can be adapted later to meet the specific prompt required by the specific college or university.

Set Induction: (10 Minutes)

Instructor will ask students to look back over the portfolio the students have created over the course of the year asking them to create a reflection that they will present to the class. The prompt for the reflection should include:

- Who was I?
- What did I learn?
- Who am I now?
- What am I particularly proud of?

Activity 1: Introducing the Project (20 Minutes)

Introduce the final unit as the opportunity to write a College Application Essay (and/or speech for confirmation).

Say:

- We will use the vast amount of learning we have done over the course of this year to write a College Application Essay
- And we will do it through the process by which Austin created his scientific butterfly.
- In this sense we are working on two projects: we are creating essays that describe our quest thus far toward our Unique Potential and we are developing the skills to provide and receive feedback with the expressed goal of creating a useable College Application Essay.

Ask:

- What topics might colleges ask you to write about for a College Application Essay? (Be sure to keep a running list)

To fill in any blanks, say:

As of 2019/2020, Princetonreview.com says that these are the Common Application Essay Topics:

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma—anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
- Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

- Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?

Activity 2: Hevrutah

(15 Minutes)

Hand out Appendix 6.1.1 and Say:

- In Hevrutah and with the help of your portfolio, help your Hevrutah partner create a pro's and con's list to determine which essays you would like to pursue.
- Take several minutes to read over each prompt and narrow down the prompts to your top two that you might like to write.
- When you have come to a well thought out decision, we will reconvene as a group.

Closure:

(10 Minutes)

Invite each student to share what topic they have chosen and how they came to that conclusion.

Inform the students that their assignment for the next session is to begin working on their essay. By the next session, students need to have written the first draft of their essay. In order to make the most of this assignment and write this essay, they will need to use their journals, portfolios and work that they have accomplished over the course of this curriculum. The students should bring enough copies of their work for each student or, ideally, email their work to their classmates ahead of time. If there are more than five or six students, the instructor should consider two groups of students for peer review sessions.

### Appendix 6.1.1

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma—anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
- Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?

For More guidance go to:

- <https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/application-essay-topics>
- <https://blog.prepscholar.com/how-long-should-a-college-essay-be>



Unit 6: “God Meant This For Good”: What Do I Do with My Unique Potential?

Lesson 2: Development a Peer Review Protocol

Lesson Essential Questions:

- What does good feedback look like?
- How can I use what I have learned in this course to ensure that my classmates will have the most success in writing their essays?
- Am I invested in the Unique Potential of others?

Lesson Goals:

- To develop a protocol for giving kind, specific and helpful feedback.
- To encourage students to become invested in the success of their peers.
- To synthesize the work accomplished this year into a College Application Essay.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Provide kind, specific and helpful feedback to their peers.
- Write a College Application Essay that is a true reflection of the pursuit of their Unique Potential.

Materials:

- A/V with internet capabilities
- Peer Review Protocol (Appendix 6.2.1) (Page 155)

Set Induction:

(15 Minutes)

As a class, watch “Austin’s Butterfly”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqh1MRWZjms&t=311s>

Ask:

- What is the lesson we are supposed to learn from “Austin’s Butterfly”?
- How would you describe the feedback “Austin” received from his “classmates”?
- Why is it important for feedback to be kind, specific and helpful?

Activity 1: Setting up a Peer Review Protocol:

(15 Minutes)

What is a protocol? A protocol is the official procedure or governing set of rules. In order to both efficiently and effectively review each students essay, we must agree upon the way in which we review each essay.

Ask:

- What role should the author play in our protocol? What input should the author have with regard to what we might need to focus on while reading their work? (Answer: give author the opportunity to introduce their work and provide guiding questions for peer reviewers to focus upon)
- What should be the first step in reviewing peer work? (Answer: reading the work with an eye for content, grammar and moments that might be confusing or need further clarification)
- Once we have read the work, how might we begin to give feedback? (Answer: asking clarifying questions and provide suggestions as to how to help the peer accomplish their stated goals, making sure to provide kind, specific and helpful feedback through the lens of “I notice... I appreciate... I wonder...” [“I notice that your essay is on this particular topic, I appreciate the way you did this, I wonder how it might look if you took this approach”])

Ask:

- Given that we have one hour to review everyone’s work, how long should we allocate to each student’s work?
- How long should the student’s introduction to their work take? How much time should be allocated for clarifying questions? How much time should be allocated for constructive feedback? How much time should be allocated for the student to respond to feedback?

Activity 2: Peer Review

(Rest of Class)

Students should spend the rest of the class period reviewing the work of their peers highlighting:

- Clarifying questions
- Things that are noticed/appreciated/and are cause for wonder
- Grammar/spelling
- Does the essay follow the prompt?

## Appendix 6.2.1

### Sample Peer Review Protocol:

<u>Student Presents Work</u>	<u>(1 Minute)</u>
<u>Peers Clarifying Questions</u>	<u>(3 Minutes)</u>
<u>Kind, Specific, and Helpful Feedback About Work</u>	<u>(5 Minutes)</u>
<u>Presenter's Response to Feedback</u>	<u>(1 Minute)</u>

Unit 6: “God Meant This For Good”: What Do I Do with My Unique Potential?  
Lesson 3: Peer Review

Lesson Essential Questions:

- Is the feedback I give kind, specific and helpful?
- Am I able to try on the feedback and, if I disagree with it, can I let it go?
- Am I invested in the work of my peers?

Lesson Goals:

- To provide the opportunity to grow as people who can give and receive constructive feedback.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Give kind, specific and helpful feedback.
- Create a College Application Essays

Materials:

- Peer Review Protocol
- One copy of each essay for each student.

Teacher will tell the story of Nachshon:

*Nachshon was a slave with all the other Israelites who found redemption at the hand of God. He was Let Go, with a capital L and a capital G, brought out with a Mighty Hand. He packed and didn't let the dough rise and ran, breathless and scared and grateful, away from the land of Pharaohs and pyramids and slavery. Nachshon ran into freedom. And then he got to the sea. He and some 600,000 other un-slaved people, stopped cold by the Red Sea. It was huge and liquid and deep. They couldn't see the other side. It was so big they couldn't see any sides. Just wetness from here to forever.*

*And behind him, when he and the 600,000 others dared to peek, were Pharaoh and his army of men and horses and chariots, carrying spears and swords and assorted sharp, pointy things. Even at a distance, the sharp, pointy things loomed quite large in the eyes of Nachshon and his recently freed landsmen. They were caught between the original rock and a hard place – or, I guess, between water and sharp, pointy things. At that point, I don't think anyone involved cared much about getting the metaphor exactly right; what they cared about was getting out from that perilous middle – and fast.*

*Moses went to have a chat with God, and just like that, he got an answer--- a Divine Instant Message. All the Children of Israel needed to do was walk forward into the sea, that big, wet, deep forever sea. God would provide a way. "Trust Me," God seemed to say, "I got you this far, didn't I? I wouldn't let you fall now!"*

*Nachshon and the 600,000 stood at the shivery edge of that sea, staring at that infinite horizon in front and the pointy, roiling chaos of death and slavery behind them. They stood, planted – and let's face it: not just planted, but rooted in their fear and mistrust and doubt. They may have felt reassured by the image of God as a pillar of smoke or fire – impressive pyrotechnics, to be sure – but the soldiers and the sea were so there, present and much more real.*

*Then, in the midst of that fear and doubt, something changed. Nachshon – recently freed, trapped between death by water and death by bleeding – did the miraculous. He put one foot in front of the other and walked into the sea. The 600,000 held their collective breath, watching the scene unfold before them as Nachshon did what they could not: He decided to have faith. And though the water covered first his ankles, then his knees, then his chest, then kept rising, until he was almost swallowed whole, Nachshon kept walking, kept believing. And just when it seemed that he was a fool for his faith, that he would surely drown in that infinite sea, another miracle: The waters parted.*

*The sea split and Nachshon, so recently in over his head, walked on dry land. The 600,000 breathed again, in one relieved whoosh of air, and they found their own faith and followed Nachshon into the dry sea to across to the other side. And then the journey truly began.<sup>14</sup>*

Ask:

- Why might I tell the story of Nachshon as we begin to review each others work?
- Who would like to be our Nachshon?

<sup>14</sup> <https://reformjudaism.org/blog/2015/01/29/faith-fear-and-story-nachshon-and-red-sea>

### Peer Review

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Following the decided upon protocol for Peer Review (example in Appendix 6.2.1), each student should present their College Application Essay and receive feedback according to the protocol.

### Conclusion:

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At the end of the first session of Peer Review, students should make their changes and send the new draft to their classmates at least 48 hours in advance, giving their classmates the opportunity to do the same review process as with the first draft focusing on:

- Clarifying questions
- Things that are noticed/appreciated/and are cause for wonder
- Grammar/spelling
- Does the essay follow the prompt?

Unit 6: “God Meant This For Good”: What Do I Do with My Unique Potential?  
Lesson 5: Memorable Moment: “Who Am I?”

Lesson Essential Questions:

- How has this course shaped your understanding of yourself?
- How has this course shaped your understanding of your Unique Potential?
- How have you grown over the course of this year?

Lesson Goals:

- To encourage students to look back on the ways in which they have grown over the course of the year.

Lesson Objectives: By the End of this Lesson Students Will Be Able To...

- Demonstrate a pattern of growth through personal narrative.
- Students will have the opportunity to provide critique

Materials:

- Appendix 6.5.1 (Page 161)

Final Class Session:

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This final class may well not be a final class, it may be the confirmation ceremony itself whereby students have the opportunity to deliver their College Application Essays as speeches to the class or to the community.

It is highly recommended that some final session be devoted to debriefing and discussing the process as a whole.

Final Activity:

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Begin by distributing the lyrics (Appendix 6.5.1) of “I Am Moana (Song of the Ancestors)” from the movie “Moana” and play this link for the class:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEiSF8HpyDg>

Ask:

- How has this course shaped your understanding of yourself?
- How has this course shaped your understanding of your Unique Potential?
- How have you grown over the course of this year?
- How might this course be improved upon for subsequent classes?

Provide each student a page containing the scope and sequence (Appendix 6.5.1) of the class and ask that they provide comments and suggestions as they see fit, such that the class might be improved and streamlined for subsequent use.



### Appendix 6.5.1

“I Am Moana (Song of the Ancestors)” from the movie “Moana”

Lyrics: (Gramma Tala):

I know a girl from an island  
She stands apart from the crowd  
She loves the sea and her people  
She makes her whole family proud

Sometimes the world seems against you  
The journey may leave a scar  
But scars can heal and reveal just  
Where you are

The people you love will change you  
The things you have learned will guide you  
And nothing on Earth can silence  
The quiet voice still inside you  
And when that voice starts to whisper  
Moana, you've come so far  
Moana, listen Do you know who you are?

(Moana): Who am I?  
I am the girl who loves my island  
I'm the girl who loves the sea  
It calls me  
I am the daughter of the village chief  
We are descended from voyagers  
Who found their way across the world  
They call me I've delivered us to where we are  
I have journeyed farther  
I am everything I've learned and more  
Still it calls me

And the call isn't out there at all  
It's inside me  
It's like the tide, always falling and rising  
I will carry you here in my heart  
You'll remind me  
That come what may,  
I know the way

I am Moana!



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