

SEASON 1



SESSION 5: THE INGREDIENT FOR SUCCESS

OLAMI MENTORSHIP

DEAR MENTEE AND MENTOR,

Imagine for a moment that you are a veteran climbing instructor. You have been commissioned by a group of affluent climbers to guide them in scaling a notoriously difficult mountain with a next to impossible summit. You have personally climbed countless mountains, but not this particular mountain. You do your research, and you learn that there are three possible trails, each with its own unique set of challenges. You are unsure which of the three trails to attempt with this particular group. How do you decide?

One option is to pour over trail maps, speak to climbers that have taken each of these trails, and based on your research, to try to figure out the best trail. A far superior but much more demanding option would be to get out onto the mountain and climb it three separate times using a different trail each time. You will then have a clear understanding of which of the trails best suits this unique group.

Over 2,000 years ago, Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai challenged his students to “go out” and discover the best trail, the superior path to successfully scaling life’s peaks and valleys.

Each of his talmidim (students) came back with what they had discovered to be the path in life that worked best for their unique mission in life.

In this session, you will work on understanding their discoveries and attempting to identify the trail that speaks to your mentee’s unique journey.

We have provided three layers of this mishnah to facilitate the discussion. Feel free to use any or all of the materials.

Lastly, after this session you will be 50% of the way through the ten-session mentorship journey. We hope you are having a meaningful and enriching mentorship journey. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with us if we can be of any assistance or guidance.

Thanks so much for your time and efforts!

SETTING THE STAGE

Step 1:

Imagine that you had the opportunity to meet with one of mankind's most successful individuals. You have half an hour to pick their brain and hopefully glean invaluable information and life lessons. To launch the conversation, you ask this individual to try to distill the single most important ingredient that is needed in order to stay on the journey to success. What do you think that they would reply?

Step 2:

Around 2,000 years ago, Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai, one of our people's greatest teachers, challenged his key disciples to go out into the world and analyze success and ultimately identify that secret ingredient. Here are their findings:

Pirkei Avos 2:9

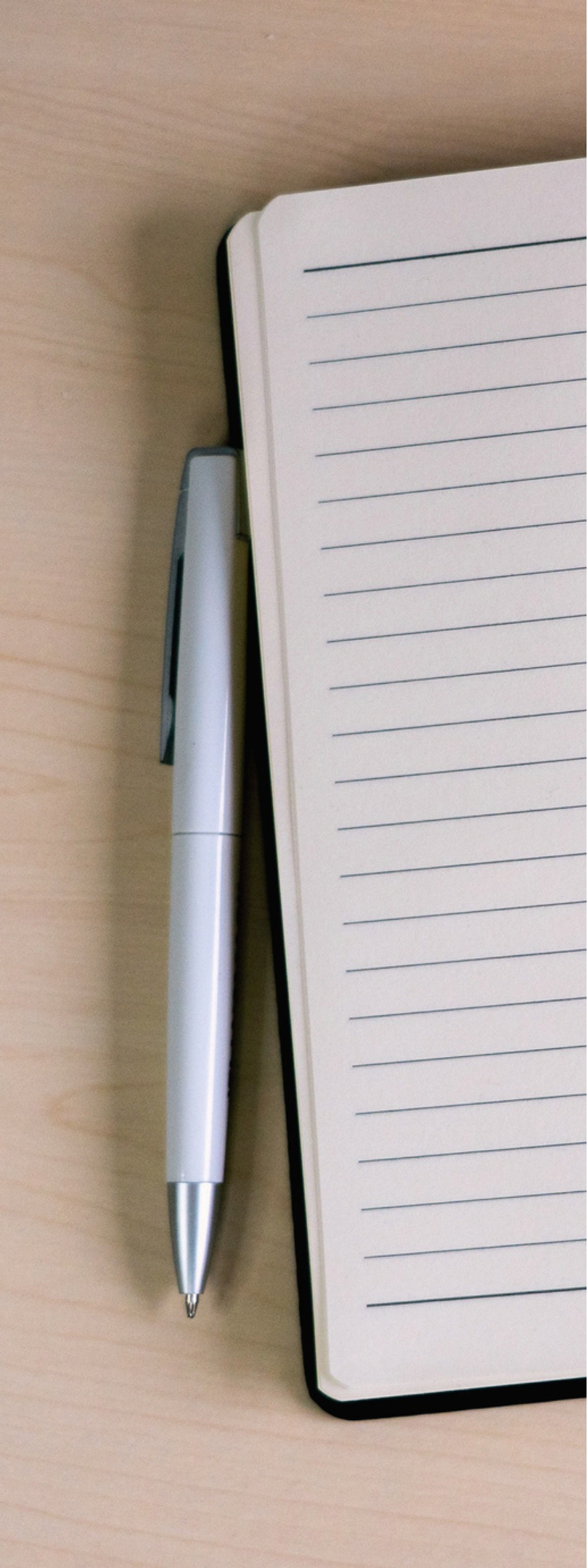
He (R. Yochanan b. Zakai) said to them "go out and observe which is the right path to which a man should cleave?" R. Eliezer says "a good eye." R. Yehoshua says "a good friend." R. Yosi says "good neighbors" R. Shimon says "the ability to foresee the consequences of one's actions." R. Elazar says "a good heart..."

אָמַר לָהֶם, צְאוּ וּרְאוּ אִיזוֹהִי דֶרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁיִּדְבֹּק בָּהּ הָאָדָם. רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אָמַר, עֵין טוֹבָה. רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אָמַר, חֵבֵר טוֹב. רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר, שָׁכֵן טוֹב. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אָמַר, הַרוֹאֶה אֶת הַנוֹלָד. רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אָמַר, לֵב טוֹב...

Step 3:

Please feel free to spend time discussing what each of these concepts actually mean and why they are so critical to success that a Mishnic Rabbi identified them as the key ingredients: i.e., what is a "good eye" or a "good heart" and why would someone choose these as critical elements of success?

What follows is a deeper explanation of three of these key ingredients:



REMINDERS:

- ☐ Check-in: How was your week?
- ☐ Goal check-in. Do you both feel on track?
- ☐ Journaling: The journal is a space to track progress and growth throughout this journey.
- ☐ Set a time for your next meeting.

PATH 1:

AYIN TOVA/A GOOD EYE

Step 1:

Begin by sharing your understanding about the definition of a “good eye”

Meiri Avos 2:12

“A good eye” means: That a person derives pleasure from another person’s success. And that his matters are accepted by others and others accept his matters. Being beloved by and to all is the root of all positive traits.

שיהא נהנה בטובת זולתו שאז יתאהב לכל אדם ויהיה
ענינו מקובל אצל הכל והכל מקובלים אצלו. ואהבת
עולם הוא שורש כל המדות.

Step 2:

There is a word that is exclusively Jewish as it is perhaps only found in the Yiddish language. The word is “Fargin”. To fargin means to genuinely celebrate another person’s success.

To fargin means to genuinely be happy for a friend even when they get the contract that you were hoping to get. To fargin means to attend a friend’s wedding and celebrate with a full heart even if you are still single and desperate to get married. To fargin means to see a former co-worker building a beautiful new home (that is way out of your reach) and to truly be happy for them and their family. And to fargin means to see the spiritual or emotional successes of a counterpart and rejoice in their success even if you have personally fallen short in these areas.



PATH 1: AYIN TOVA/A GOOD EYE

Step 3:

Another approach

Rambam P”H 2:9

A “good eye” refers to one who is satisfied with what they have. This is the loftiest of character traits.

עין טובה. ההסתפקות במה שיש לאדם והיא ממעלות המדות.

These two definitions really go hand in hand. Here is why. Happiness is a function of the effort we put forth toward the realization of life’s goals. The degree to which we use our innate abilities and acquired resources in pursuit of meaningful goals – when we understand that our purpose in this world is to strive toward purposeful accomplishment – precisely to that degree will we experience happiness, independent of our success or failure. That others may have more or less than we do has no bearing whatsoever upon our efforts to make the most of our portion. The person who understands this and makes it the guiding philosophy in his life is the person who is truly happy, and truly rich.

PROFESSIONAL THOUGHT QUESTION: DOES YOUR WORK CULTURE GENUINELY CELEBRATE OTHERS’ SUCCESSES? CAN YOU THINK OF A SITUATION (AT WORK, SCHOOL, OR OTHER) IN WHICH YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO “FARGIN?” WERE YOU SUCCESSFUL?



PATH 2: FORESIGHT

RAMBAM P”H 2:9

R. SHIMON SAYS “THE ABILITY TO FORESEE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ONE’S ACTIONS.”

רבי שמעון אומר, הרוֹאֶה אֶת הַנּוֹלָד.

Step 1: Rabbeinu Yonah

Pirkei Avos 2:9

That he reflects on everything and foresees things that will be generated before they are generated. And when he sees something that seems rewarding at the beginning, but its end will bring a loss, he will distance himself from it. And this way, he will never sin - as he will weigh the benefits of the sin against the loss. Therefore, a person should make this concept a part of their life to constantly contemplate the consequences of one’s decisions.

שנותן עיניו על כל דבר
ורואה כל הדברים
הנולדים קודם שיוולדו
וכשרואה דבר שיש שכר
בתחלתו וסופו מביא לידי
הפסד מתרחק ממנו. ובזה
לא יחטא לעולם. כי יחשוב
שכר עבירה כנגד הפסדה.
ועל כן יש לאדם להדבק
בדרך ההיא לחשב
בתחלה מה יהיה בסוף.

Step 2:

We all want to achieve great things with minimum effort. A great sage said: “A person wants to become great overnight, and get a good night’s sleep, too!” Realize that true growth is a long process. That’s why deliberation is an important tool, because it forces you to slow down, exercise patience, and stretch the limits of your powers.

THOUGHT QUESTION:
CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHERE
CAREFUL DELIBERATION SAVED THE DAY?

PATH 2: FORESIGHT

Step 3:

The timeless words of R. Menachem Meiri 1249-1315 ibid are more relevant today than ever before...

Forethought is the greatest form of preventative medicine. One who plans ahead will be saved from physical, spiritual and emotional maladies... i.e.. one that is meticulous to eat lean foods in moderate quantities and at the right intervals will stay healthy and will not need to seek doctors or healing.

Step 4:

Consider the above while reading this quote taken from the DPH Website (Department of Public Health 2022)

According to the CDC, coronary artery disease (CAD), which can lead to heart attacks, is the most common heart disease in the United States. Here is a simple thing that you can do to lower your risk of a heart attack: Treat high blood cholesterol by eating a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in fiber, keep a healthy weight...

Step 5:

Finally... even Steven Covey valued this Mishna!

The ability to subordinate an impulse to a value is the essence of the proactive person.

- **Steven Covey**

THOUGHT QUESTION: CONSIDER YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF SUCCESS. DOES FORESIGHT PLAY A ROLE? HOW? WHERE OR HOW CAN YOU BETTER INCORPORATE FORESIGHT TO HELP YOU REACH SUCCESS?



PATH 3: IT'S ALL ABOUT HAVING A GOOD HEART



Step 1:

Rabbeinu Yonah Pirkei Avos 2:9

“A good heart...” That is the tolerant one who is not short tempered, he distances himself from the trait of anger and answers softly. Even when someone does evil to him, he tolerates him.

ר"ל מדת הרצון זהו הסבלן שאינו קצר רוח. ומתרחק ממדת הכעס ומשיב במענה רך. אף (אך) כי יעשו לו דבר רע יסבלהו.

Step 2:

Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik (1853-1918) related the following story about his father, Rabbi Yosef Dov, author of the Beit HaLevi. They were once sitting together learning in the Slutzk yeshiva when one of the town butchers entered the study hall and started screaming and shaming Rabbi Yosef Dov. Among other insults, he accused the great Rabbi of judging unfairly, for he had judged him and another butcher the previous day. He claimed that even though he was innocent, he had been found guilty because the other butcher had bribed Rabbi Yosef Dov.

When he heard what the butcher was accusing him of, he put on his hat and jacket, stood up and quietly looked down at the ground. The butcher saw that he was standing shamefaced, so he continued with his tirade. He cursed all the rabbis and called Rabbi Yosef Dov a dishonest person. He even lifted his hand and threatened to hit him. All this time, Rabbi Yosef Dov controlled himself and bore his shame in silence. As the butcher began to leave the study hall, he continued mouthing curses and insults, but Rabbi Yosef Dov did not try to justify himself or scold him. Instead, he ran after him saying, “I forgive you, I forgive you!”

PATH 3: IT'S ALL ABOUT HAVING A GOOD HEART



Step 3:

Rambam Talmud Torah 7:13

This was the practice of the pious of the early generations. They would hear their shame and not answer. Furthermore, they would pardon and forgive the person who insulted them.

וְכֵן הָיָה דֶּרֶךְ חֲסִידֵי הָרִאשׁוֹנִים שׁוֹמְעִים
חֶרְפָּתָם וְאֵינָן מְשִׁיבִין וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא
שְׂמוֹחִים לְמַחֲרָף וְסוֹלְחִים לוֹ.

THOUGHT QUESTION: WHILE TOLERANCE IS AN IMPORTANT TRAIT, THERE ARE CERTAINLY TIMES THAT ONE MUST RESPOND AND ADVOCATE FOR THEMSELVES? HOW CAN WE KNOW WHEN TO REMAIN SILENT AND WHEN TO RESPOND?

PROFESSIONAL THOUGHT QUESTION: HOW DOES THE CONCEPT OF TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS PLAY OUT IN THE WORKPLACE? HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN EPISODE IN WHICH YOU WERE ABLE TO APPLY THIS CONCEPT?

**For educational questions or support,
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