



CHOVERET CHINUCH #5 5784

TIME MANAGEMENT



The Choveret Chinuch is a project of Bnei Akiva of the US and Canada's Chinuch department. For comments or questions, please reach out to Rav Avishai Berman at aberman@bneiakiva.org

Dear Madrichim,

These next two weeks we'll be looking into different elements of the fast day Asara B'tevet, and how this special day reminds us to work on bettering ourselves.

We will be looking at the way we spend our time, and how we can handle our time better. In addition, we will discuss giving people the benefit of the doubt and not judging them unfairly.

Good luck,
Shani Becker



Week One

Why do we fast on the Tenth of Tevet?

This week we commemorate the fast day of Asara B'tevet, marking the beginning of the siege on Yerushalayim and ultimately the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash.



This fast fills us with a sense of loss, as it leads us through the fasts that commemorate our defeat (17 of Tammuz and Tisha B'Av, the ultimate and saddest day of the year.) It is said that every generation in which the Beit HaMikdash is not rebuilt, it is like it has been destroyed once again in that time. Hashem judges us both for the actions that we do, but in addition, we are also judged for everything that we could have done but chose not to.

What does this mean? If we look within, and we are truly honest with ourselves, we can observe that there are many better things we could have done with our time than how we chose to spend it. There was a lot of potential that we didn't necessarily maximize, many opportunities that were lost. Often we don't make the best use of our time and reach our potential.



On these fast days, we mourn for what we've lost. But we also mourn for who we could have been, of becoming the best version of ourselves. We need to ask ourselves what could we have accomplished if we had taken advantage of the time that we have.
(Rav Efram Goldberg)

Voltaire: "Every man is guilty of all the good deeds he did not do."

The Time Bank:

Imagine that there is a bank that credits you every morning with \$86,400.

The balance does not transfer from day to day.

Every night, any amount you haven't spent during the day is wiped out.

What would you do? Spend every dollar, of course!



Each of us has such a bank. It is called “The Time Bank”.



Every morning, when we wake up, we are given an amazing gift. We are rewarded with 86,400 seconds. Every night, what is not put to good use, is lost. The balance does not carry over to the next day.

Each day, the account is reopened. Each night, what remains is deleted. If we didn't use what was in the account - the entire loss is ours. We can't go back and regain that lost time.

- To understand what the value of one year is - ask a student who was kept back a grade.
- To understand the value of one month - ask a mother who gave birth prematurely.
- To understand the value of one week - ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.
- To understand what the value of one hour is - ask a student preparing for a crucial exam.
- To understand the value of one minute - ask the person who missed a train.
- To understand the value of one second - ask the person who survived a car accident.
- To understand the value of a millisecond - ask the athlete who won a silver medal.



It is important to understand the value of every moment and cherish it and to remember that time waits for no one.

There is a well-known quote that goes:

“Yesterday is history.

Tomorrow is a mystery.

Today is a gift. That's why it's called the Present.”

For some more info please watch this video of ‘Rabbi Sacks on Time’:



Discussion points:

- What are some things you feel that you waste time on?
- What do you feel is something that you'd want to spend more time on in your life?
- Have you ever missed out on playing a game or doing something fun because you were a few minutes late? How did that make you feel?
- Picture a time when you had to be quick, like catching a falling toy. How did that moment feel, and why was it important to act fast?



Ideas for activities:

1. Minute-to-win-it challenges: *Set up a series of quick and fun challenges that only take a minute to complete. This game emphasizes the importance of time and shows the Chanichim what they can get done in a short amount of time.*

Split the Chanichim up into two groups, and have a different volunteer come up from each group to complete the challenges. Make sure to bring a watch to the Peula to be able to time the kids.

- **Cookie Face Challenge:** Place a cookie on the two Chanichims forehead. They have to try and get the cookie into their mouth using only facial muscles in under a minute, without using hands.
- **Stack Attack:** Provide a stack of plastic cups. Call up two Chanichim and see who can create the tallest freestanding tower using all the cups in one minute.
- **Cotton Ball Scoop:** Provide Chanichim with a spoon and a bowl of cotton balls. Using only the spoon, they have to transfer as many cotton balls as possible from their bowl to their opponent's bowl in a minute. The winner is the one with the least amount of cotton balls left in their bowl.
- **Ping Pong Bounce:** Chanichim must bounce ping pong balls into a set of cups within one minute. Increase the difficulty by varying the distances between the cups.

2. The Empty Seat: *In this game, the Chanichim will be able to experience how in the same amount of time, some people can accomplish much more than others.*

Spread out seats all around the room and have the Chanichim sit on them. Place one extra seat. Have one Chanich stand in the center of the room. S/he must try

to sit in the empty seat. S/he can only walk heel to toe, and not regular paces. The other Chanichim (who are allowed to walk regularly) need to make sure the chosen Chanich does not make it to the seat (they do this by switching seats). Once s/he gets to the seat they win.

3. Hide the carrot: *This game is meant to show the Chanichim that without paying special attention they might miss things entirely.*

Have the Chanichim stand in a circle close together, with one Chanich standing in the center of the circle. The Chanichim need to pass around a carrot behind their backs, taking bites out of the carrot until it is finished without having the Chanich in the center of the circle see them eating the carrot. If he spots the carrot he wins, and if they finish the carrot before he sees it they win. (This game should be played in separate girl and boy circles).

Week Two

The Cookie Thief - Valerie Cox

A woman was waiting at an airport one night, with several long hours before her flight.

She hunted for a book in the airport shops, bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop.

She was engrossed in her book but happened to see that the man sitting beside her, as bold as could be. . . grabbed a cookie or two from the bag in between, which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene.

So she munched the cookies and watched the clock, as the gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock. She was getting more irritated as the minutes ticked by, Thinking, "If I wasn't so nice, I would blacken his eye."

With each cookie she took, he took one too, when only one was left, she wondered what he would do. With a smile on his face, and a nervous laugh, he took the last cookie and broke it in half.



He offered her half, as he ate the other, she snatched it from him and thought... ooh, brother.

This guy has some nerve and he's also rude, why he didn't even show any gratitude!

She had never known when she had been so galled, and sighed with relief when her flight was called.

She gathered her belongings and headed to the gate, refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate.

She boarded the plane, and sank in her seat, then she sought her book, which was almost complete. As she reached in her baggage, she gasped with surprise, there was her bag of cookies, in front of her eyes.

If mine are here, she moaned in despair, the others were his, and he tried to share.

Too late to apologize, she realized with grief, that she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

Question: What did you expect the ending of the story to be?



Many times we look at people and judge them before we know them, or we judge something they do or how they do things, only realizing afterward that we were mistaken.

It says in Pirkei Avot 2:5 - “Do not judge your fellow man until you have reached his place.” (וְאַל תִּדְיִן אֶת חֵבְרֶךָ עַד שֶׁתִּגִּיעַ לְמִקוֹמוֹ)

Rabbi Nachman of Breslev explains this Mishnah, that in truth you can never judge anyone, because you can never really be in the same position they are in. Even if the circumstances look identical, every person is different in how they react and respond to their situation. What to one person is a little problem, is to another person a major issue. We are all different and special in our own way; no two people are the same. In the story above we didn't know all the details, and that's why it wasn't fair to judge, but according to Rabbi Nachman, even if we were to know all the details, we still can't judge how the other person should have reacted.



For further discussion: How does this Mishnah here fit with the Mishnah in Pirkei Avot 1:6 “Judge all men with the scale weighted in his favor.” (וְהוֹי דָן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת)

Do you think this Mishnah means that we have to accept everyone's behavior?

Discussion points:

- Can you think of a time you misjudged someone?
- Have you ever been misjudged by someone else? How did it feel, and what steps did you take to change their perception of you?
- Can you share a story about a time you judged someone favorably and it turned out to be true.
- What are some ways we can remind ourselves to be understanding and not jump to conclusions about others?



Ideas for activities:

- 1. Cleaning the lion's mane:** *This game emphasizes the idea that people often interpret others' actions based on incomplete information. The Chanichim will resist the temptation of making quick judgments about the actions they observe.*
Ask three Chanichim to step out of the group. The remaining Chanichim inside the circle think together of an action, such as "Cleaning a lion's mane." Choose a participant from the circle and bring in the first Chanich who stepped out. Have the selected Chanich act out the chosen action silently. Then, bring in the second Chanich who stepped out and ask the first Chanich to mimic the action they just witnessed. Finally, bring in the third Chanich and have the second Chanich act out the action for them.
Following these actions, ask all three Chanichim who stepped out to guess what the original action was.
- 2. Yes, no, black, white:** *This game emphasizes Rebbe Nachman's idea that each person is different from everyone else. Each individual chooses a unique way to answer the questions.*
Have the Chanichim sit in a circle. The first Chanich starts by asking a question to the person on their right and the person must answer right away. The catch is that the answer can't have the words, "yes," "no," "black," or "white." Now the person who was asked asks the person on their right and so on.
- 3. Seven, Boom:** *This game comes to emphasize the importance of words, and how we must think twice before saying something.*
Have the Chanichim sit in a circle. Each Chanich takes turns counting upward. However, when they reach a number that is a multiple of seven or has the digit seven in it, they replace that number by saying the word "boom" instead.