



All of the service of Hashem is dependent upon the improvement of one's character traits.

Vilna Gaon - Even Shleima, Chapter 1

***Ahavas Chesed – Loving Kindness Module
Packet 5***

...כי באור פניך נתת לנו, ה' אלקינו, תורת חיים ואהבת חסד...

***...for with the light of Your face You gave us, Hashem, our G-d, the Torah of life and
a love of kindness...***

From the **שים שלום** (Establish peace) brachah in the Shmoneh Esrei.

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Contact Information

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Use of Material

The material in this *ACTT Module Packet* is intended for the use of the ACTT organization’s members and any other individuals interested in creating and sustaining meaningful changes in their lives. If an organization is interested in using this material, the ACTT organization would appreciate your contacting us. Thank you.

Version 20190218

ACTT Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness Module – Packet 5

Specific Goal Suggested for *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness 5* Module

To increase one's sensitivity and concern for others through attentive listening and taking action to help those in need.

General Goal of *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness* Module

To continue to develop an awareness and appreciation that continues to grow into an ever-increasing love for performing acts of chesed (kindness) and doing them on a daily basis.

Module Duration

This module is part 5 of the *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness* series and is scheduled for 188 days, including several catch-up days.

To Do List

- If you are not yet a member of the ACTT Organization, please fill out a membership application and submit it – see the Membership page or the ACTT Welcome Kit at www.actt613.org
- Please fill out the “ACTT Generic Commitment Form” for *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness 5*, keep a copy for yourself and, optionally, submit a copy to the organization – see Module page of www.actt613.org
- On a daily basis:
 - Follow the Learning Schedule and record your *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness* activity/action in your “ACTT Generic Daily Activity Log” for *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness 5* – the *ACTT Activity and Action Ideas* has some suggestions – see Module page of www.actt613.org for the generic activity log and activity/action ideas
 - Record your maintenance activity/action (from another module, e.g., *Ahavas Chesed*, *Judging Favorably*, *Kavanah During Davening*, etc.) in your “ACTT Generic Activity Log” for *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness 5* – the *ACTT Activity and Action Ideas* has some suggestions – see Module page of www.actt613.org for the activity log and activity/action ideas
- Participate in the chizuk activities, as desired:
 - ACTT *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness 5* kickoff event, including spaced repetition of listening to the featured speaker's presentation – see the Audio page of www.actt613.org
 - Read inspirational material from sources recommended by the ACTT organization and also distributed by the ACTT organization
 - Recommend inspirational material to the ACTT membership and submit inspirational material to be distributed to all the ACTT members

Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness Resources

The following are some resources for learning about *Ahavas Chesed - Loving Kindness*:

- [The Glittering World of Chesed - Stories, insights and guidance on sensitivity and concern](#) by Rabbi Paysach Krohn; Artscroll Mesorah; ISBN: 1-42262-252-5
- [Chofetz Chaim: Loving Kindness - Daily lessons in the power of giving](#) by Rabbi Fishel Schachter and Mrs. Chana Nestlebaum; Artscroll Mesorah; ISBN: 1-57819-746-5
- [Kindness - Changing people's lives for the better](#) by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin; ArtScroll / Shaar Press; ISBN: 1-57819-477-6
- [Ahavath Chesed - The Laws of Charity and Loving Kindness](#) by the Chofetz Chaim; Feldheim Publishers; ISBN: 0-87306-167-5
- "Tisha B'Av 2003: Shaping a World of Kindness" tape or CD with Rabbi Mattisyahu Salomon and Rabbi Yissocher Frand; Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation
- "Sefer Ahavas Chesed" tape or CD with Rabbi Fischel Schachter; Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

Middot Series #2 - Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

Harvey S. Hecker Character Development Series: Caring for others is the fuel for a vibrant life
by Rabbi Shraga Simmons

Reproduced with Aish HaTorah's permission from:

www.aish.com/sp/pg/1-Love-Your-Neighbor-as-Yourself.html

"Love your neighbor as yourself – I am G-d." (Leviticus 19:18)

"Love your neighbor" is the universal Golden Rule, which the Talmud defines as a "great principle" of Judaism.¹ How we treat others is a litmus test of our spiritual health. Since G-d is the ultimate "giver,"² our pursuit of G-dliness is driven by acts of giving.³

When I give, I become more embracing and inclusive of the world. I expand my "personal investment portfolio" of the people I've helped. Seeing that bit of self in another attaches me emotionally and endears me to them. In this way, the giving actually leads to love.⁴

This is the Kindness Paradox: the biggest beneficiary of kindness is the one performing it. (That's why parents love their children most of all; it is their greatest investment.) Significantly, the Hebrew word for "give" – hav – is the etymological root of ahava, meaning "love."⁵

Chasing Kindness

Practically speaking, one becomes a "giver" by focusing on the needs of others: What are they feeling? What are their worries? How can I help?

Growing up, my father, of blessed memory, modeled this trait. I remember riding with him through a classic Buffalo, New York rainstorm. He pulled up to a bus stop, rolled down the passenger-side window, and – in an era when people trusted one another more – asked: "Would anyone like a ride?"

We should be as concerned with other's needs as we are with our own. ⁶

The Sages speak of Rodef Chesed, literally "chasing kindness." In Jewish consciousness, kindness is not a function of begrudgingly acceding to someone's request. Nor is it giving with the (ultimately self-serving) expectation the kindness will be reciprocated.

Rather, "chasing kindness" means going out of our comfort zone to actively seek opportunities to give with the sole motivation to care for the welfare of others.

"Giving selflessly" is key. The giving of charity is regarded as a higher level when performed anonymously, as it is not tainted with the motivation of honor-seeking. ⁷ [One valid reason for not giving anonymously is to help inspire others to give.]

The Torah defines one particular act as the ultimate chesed, true act of kindness: Taking care of funeral arrangements for someone who died. This is true chesed because there is absolutely no expectation of return.

Foundation of Relationships

Years ago, when I was engaged to be married, I asked a great sage of Jerusalem: "What is the key to a successful, happy marriage?"

The foundation of any relationship, he explained, is a focus on giving: How can I best contribute to the other's welfare? If both partners share this attitude, the relationship flows beautifully in both directions, building connection and a common bond of unity and love.

Yet when the focus is on taking – "What will s/he do for me?" – the dynamic pulls in the opposite direction, away from the spouse, creating strain and tension.

Chesed starts at home; it's the foundation of a loving, enduring marriage.

Avoid the Negative

As any baby will attest, humans are innately selfish. That's why, in describing the kindness imperative, the great sage Hillel said: "What is hateful to you, do not do unto others." ⁸ This negative formulation of the Golden Rule forces us to think how it would feel to be on the receiving end of indignities we'd rather be spared.

Once this first stage of not harming others is inculcated – e.g. "Don't litter" – it extends to a higher level of ethical living, e.g. picking up trash on the street.

Some examples of "What is hateful to you...":

- Don't embarrass others. ⁹
- Don't gossip or speak negatively about others. ¹⁰
- Don't take revenge. ¹¹
- Don't disturb another person's concentration or sleep. ¹²
- Give people the benefit of the doubt. ¹³
- Don't keep others waiting. ¹⁴
- Don't display anger toward others. ¹⁵

- Protect others from injury or loss.¹⁶
- Be honest in business dealings.¹⁷

That's a long list. Each item takes a lifetime to master. And it's exactly what we're here for!

Empathy vs. Sympathy

An important way to build "kindness muscles" is to empathize with others' problems.

Imagine your friend is in a deep, dark hole. "Sympathy" means standing at the top of the hole, peering in, and saying "Oh, that's so hard!" "Empathy" means crawling into the hole and being there with them.

Moses, the greatest Jewish leader, went to the slave labor field and put his shoulder to the grindstone.¹⁸ He felt others' pain as his own and helped alleviate that burden.

In 19th century Lithuania, the Jewish community of Kovno operated a homeless shelter which fell into disrepair. Despite various appeals, the community failed to fix the facility.

One evening, the town's spiritual leader, Rabbi Yisrael Salant, went to sleep in the shelter. He vowed to continue doing so until proper repairs were made.

Fulfilling the Command

To inure this principle against varying moods and circumstances the Torah states "Love your neighbor" as an obligation. It is a mistake to wait until we're emotionally "inspired" to help others. People are influenced by their actions and eventually our emotions will catch up with our deeds.¹⁹

Everyday life presents myriad opportunities for doing good. Some fun and practical ideas:

- Greet everyone with a smile.²⁰
- Keep your word.²¹
- Help someone struggling with a load.²²
- Invite friends to a Shabbat dinner.²³
- Ask an elder for "sagely advice."²⁴
- Support a Gemach free loan fund.²⁵
- Visit patients at the local hospital.²⁶
- Care especially for widows and orphans.²⁷
- Call your mother with gratitude for the gift of life.²⁸
- Be careful with other's property.²⁹
- Offer a human word to the grocery clerk. ("Are you doing okay today?")
- Make peace between two people arguing.³⁰
- Serve meals at a homeless shelter.³¹
- Remove temptations for others to falter – e.g. don't make it easy for people to steal your things.³²
- Offer constructive criticism.³³
- Don't stand idly by when another's life is in danger.³⁴

Chesed is a crucial component of our spiritual-emotional health. The Dead Sea got its name because – as the lowest point on Earth – water flows in but never flows out. This inability to give to others is what the Talmud likens to the malnourished and withered "walking dead."

One good way to nurture a giving spirit is to declare each morning: "I accept to focus on the mitzvah of 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" ³⁵

King David said, *Olam chesed yi-baneh* – "the world is built on kindness." ³⁶ *Chesed* means reaching out altruistically, with love and generosity to all. The Talmud says that baseless hatred between Jews brought about the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. We can rebuild it through unconditional love.

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1. Jerusalem Talmud – Nedarim 9:1
 2. Psalms 145:8; Maimonides – Commentary to Mishnah Sanhedrin (First Principle of Faith)
 3. Deut. 11:22, 28:9
 4. Michtav M'Elياهو, Rabbi E.E. Dessler
 5. *ibid.*
 6. Mishneh Torah – Deyos 6:3
 7. Mishneh Torah – Matanot Aniyim 10:8.
 8. Talmud – Shabbat 31a
 9. Talmud – Baba Metzia 58b
 10. Leviticus 19:16
 11. Leviticus 19:18
 12. Talmud – Kiddushin 31a; Teshuvot V'Hanhagot 2:50
 13. Leviticus 19:15
 14. Mesilat Yesharim 11, s.v. "V'Lo Od"
 15. Talmud – Nedarim 22a
 16. Leviticus 19:16
 17. *Ibid* 25:14
 18. Exodus 2:11; Midrash Rabba – Exodus 1:27
 19. Sefer HaChinuch 16
 20. Talmud – Avot 1:15
 21. Deut. 23:24
 22. Exodus 23:5
 23. Talmud – Kiddushin 39b
 24. Talmud – Derech Eretz 6:2
 25. Sefer HaChinuch 479
 26. Talmud – Shabbos 127a
 27. Deut. 26:12
 28. Talmud – Kiddushin 30b
 29. Sefer HaChinuch 51
 30. Talmud – Avot 1:15
 31. Talmud – Avot 1:12
 32. Leviticus 19:14
 33. Deut. 26:12
 34. Leviticus 19:16
 35. Arizal
 36. Psalms 89:3

About this Series

Aish.com is proud to present the Harvey Hecker Character Development Series. The series is dedicated in memory of Harvey Hecker, the former President of Aish International, who believed that changing the world begins with ethics and integrity. Mr. Hecker was a master at calmly and appropriately dealing with others, especially amidst challenging situations. He gave freely of his time and wisdom, showing honor and humility to all. His mantra: "Strive to do the right thing." We hope this series will honor his memory.

Random Acts of Kindness

We wouldn't advocate random acts of spending. So why treat kindness any less seriously?
by Emuna Braverman

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www.aish.com/sp/pg/48892507.html

"Practice Random Acts of Kindness" reads the bumper sticker. Sounds so good, so warm and cozy. But is it the right attitude?

Now what kind of Scrooge would find fault with this philosophy? Well, traditional Judaism, for one, would. Not because, as some uninformed critics would have it, the G-d of the "Old Testament" is a vengeful, wrathful Creator. Nothing could be further from the truth. Love and kindness are cornerstones of Judaism. Our sages teach us that the world stands on three things: on Torah, on service of G-d, and on acts of loving kindness (Ethics of Our Fathers, 1:2). Judaism is definitely in favor of kindness! The problem lies in the random nature the bumper sticker alludes to.

Why should our acts of compassion and caring be any more random than the other actions in our life? We wouldn't advocate random acts of spending (except perhaps at a Barney's sale!), or bring that quality of whimsy and serendipity to our workplace. So why treat kindness any less seriously?

The Torah teaches that kindness should be offered in a thoughtful and appropriate way. A trivial example may lie in gift giving. Are you taking into account the wishes of the recipient and what gives him or her pleasure; or is it all about you? This is what I would want. Isn't it nice of me to think of them?

A more significant example may be visiting the sick. Does the patient really want visitors? Are you trying to make yourself feel better by making a hospital visit, or your ill friend? If it's about you, stay home. And whatever you do, don't make it random. There's nothing like an unwanted visitor when you're feeling miserable.

What about friendships? What demands of kindness do they require? It's not always simple. What if you have a friend who constantly wants to talk about her problems? Is listening the kind thing to do? Should you help her find a solution? Or tell her, lovingly of course, that it's time to move on?

Sometimes people need empathy; sometimes they need a kick in the pants. A practitioner of well thought out acts of kindness makes this determination. If your kindness is random you may wind up doing more harm than good.

Someone I know was having a hard time shouldering the financial responsibilities of his family. Promised funds never arrived, bills were left unpaid and tension was mounting. Desperate, he turned to his father who bailed him out with a large loan. Sounds like an act of kindness. And it's clearly not random. But possibly not well planned either. Was it really to this young man's benefit to have his father rush to his assistance? Would it teach him more responsibility in the future? Would it further his growth and deepen his marriage? Perhaps that loan actually hurt his son; perhaps it will inhibit his ability to fully stand up for himself, whatever the consequences.

Our time is limited; there are a finite number of acts of kindness that we can do in one day, in one lifetime. How do we want to approach them?

If a charitable foundation announced that it was giving away its money randomly we'd be shocked and appalled. Why should we treat our kindnesses any differently?

An act of kindness is a precious gift -- with potential to change a life. But only when it's carefully thought out with the particular needs and sensitivities of the beneficiary in mind; not when it's random.

I'm designing a new bumper sticker: "Practice Strategically Planned and Well-Considered Acts of Kindness." Not so catchy, but ultimately more effective. Anybody want one?

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ACTT Module Packet Appendix

- **ACTT Generic Commitment Form**
- **ACTT Learning Schedule**
- **ACTT Activity and Action Ideas**
- **ACTT Generic Daily Activity/Action Log**
- **ACTT Glossary**



ACTT Generic Commitment Form For Any Module

Remember, it is better to commit to less – you can always do more!

Please PRINT all information

This commitment does not constitute a vow; I am doing the following, bli neder

From ___/___/___ To ___/___/___

In memory of _____

As a zechus for:

a refuah shelaimah for _____

a shidduch for _____

parnassa for _____

other _____

- _____ *act(s) daily in a ☺ mood*
act(s) Name of current module

(ACTT recommends 1-2 acts daily – the *ACTT Activity/Action Ideas* has suggestions)

- *Performing one or more of the following maintenance activities in a ☺ mood*
(ACTT recommends a total of 1-2 acts daily – the *ACTT Activity/Action Ideas* has suggestions)
 - ___ *Ahavas Chesed – Loving Kindness act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Judging Favorably act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Kavanah During Davening – Concentration During Prayers act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *HaKaras HaTov – Gratitude act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Bitachon – Trust in Hashem act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Anger Management for Positive Results act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Shmiras HaLashon – Guarding One’s Tongue act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Emes – Telling the Truth act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *The Six Constant Mitzvos act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Simchah – Happiness act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Slichah – Forgiveness act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Zerizus – Acting With Zeal & Alacrity act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Emunah – Faith in Hashem act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Kiddush Hashem – Sanctification of G-d’s Name act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*

- *Learning ___ minutes daily from* (ACTT recommends 5 minutes daily):

Name of current module’s source book (see current module’s Learning Schedule)

Commitment Signature

Signed: _____ Date _____

☺ *Be happy with your ability to Improve Yourself and Grow!* ☺



Ahavas Chesed – Loving Kindness Module 5 Learning Schedule

Source Book: The Glittering World of Chessed - Stories, insights and guidance on sensitivity and concern
by Rabbi Paysach Krohn

I am dedicating today’s learning of this sefer:

In memory of _____

As a zechus for:

a refuah shleimah for _____

a shidduch for _____

parnasah for _____

other _____

Learning Schedule

Date	Start Page	Date	Start Page	Date	Start Page	Date	Start Page
Mon 03/04/19	Preface	Fri 03/29/19	70	Tue 04/23/19	108	Sat 05/18/19	144
Tue 03/05/19	Intro	Sat 03/30/19	73	Wed 04/24/19	109	Sun 05/19/19	Catch Up
Wed 03/06/19	29	Sun 03/31/19	Catch Up	Thu 04/25/19	111	Mon 05/20/19	146
Thu 03/07/19	30	Mon 04/01/19	75	Fri 04/26/19	112	Tue 05/21/19	147
Fri 03/08/19	34	Tue 04/02/19	78	Sat 04/27/19	113	Wed 05/22/19	149
Sat 03/09/19	36	Wed 04/03/19	80	Sun 04/28/19	Catch Up	Thu 05/23/19	151
Sun 03/10/19	Catch Up	Thu 04/04/19	82	Mon 04/29/19	115	Fri 05/24/19	152
Mon 03/11/19	38	Fri 04/05/19	83	Tue 04/30/19	117	Sat 05/25/19	153
Tue 03/12/19	39	Sat 04/06/19	85	Wed 05/01/19	118	Sun 05/26/19	Catch Up
Wed 03/13/19	41	Sun 04/07/19	Catch Up	Thu 05/02/19	120	Mon 05/27/19	155
Thu 03/14/19	43	Mon 04/08/19	87	Fri 05/03/19	121	Tue 05/28/19	157
Fri 03/15/19	46	Tue 04/09/19	89	Sat 05/04/19	122	Wed 05/29/19	159
Sat 03/16/19	48	Wed 04/10/19	90	Sun 05/05/19	Catch Up	Thu 05/30/19	165
Sun 03/17/19	Catch Up	Thu 04/11/19	93	Mon 05/06/19	123	Fri 05/31/19	167
Mon 03/18/19	50	Fri 04/12/19	94	Tue 05/07/19	125	Sat 06/01/19	169
Tue 03/19/19	52	Sat 04/13/19	95	Wed 05/08/19	129	Sun 06/02/19	Catch Up
Wed 03/20/19	54	Sun 04/14/19	Catch Up	Thu 05/09/19	131	Mon 06/03/19	170
Thu 03/21/19	57	Mon 04/15/19	97	Fri 05/10/19	133	Tue 06/04/19	172
Fri 03/22/19	59	Tue 04/16/19	99	Sat 05/11/19	134	Wed 06/05/19	173
Sat 03/23/19	61	Wed 04/17/19	100	Sun 05/12/19	Catch Up	Thu 06/06/19	174
Sun 03/24/19	Catch Up	Thu 04/18/19	102	Mon 05/13/19	136	Fri 06/07/19	176
Mon 03/25/19	62	Fri 04/19/19	103	Tue 05/14/19	138	Sat 06/08/19	177
Tue 03/26/19	64	Sat 04/20/19	104	Wed 05/15/19	139	Sun 06/09/19	Catch Up
Wed 03/27/19	65	Sun 04/21/19	Catch Up	Thu 05/16/19	141	Mon 06/10/19	179
Thu 03/28/19	68	Mon 04/22/19	106	Fri 05/17/19	143	Tue 06/11/19	182



Ahavas Chesed – Loving Kindness Module 5 Learning Schedule (continued)

Source Book: The Glittering World of Chessed - Stories, insights and guidance on sensitivity and concern
by Rabbi Paysach Krohn

I am dedicating today’s learning of this sefer:

In memory of _____

As a zechus for:

a refuah shleimah for _____

a shidduch for _____

parnasah for _____

other _____

Learning Schedule (continued)

Date	Start Page	Date	Start Page	Date	Start Page	Date	Start Page
Wed 06/12/19	184	Thu 07/04/19	210	Fri 07/26/19	236	Sat 08/17/19	267
Thu 06/13/19	185	Fri 07/05/19	211	Sat 07/27/19	237	Sun 08/18/19	Catch Up
Fri 06/14/19	187	Sat 07/06/19	213	Sun 07/28/19	Catch Up	Mon 08/19/19	268
Sat 06/15/19	188	Sun 07/07/19	Catch Up	Mon 07/29/19	239	Tue 08/20/19	269
Sun 06/16/19	Catch Up	Mon 07/08/19	214	Tue 07/30/19	240	Wed 08/21/19	270
Mon 06/17/19	189	Tue 07/09/19	215	Wed 07/31/19	242	Thu 08/22/19	271
Tue 06/18/19	190	Wed 07/10/19	217	Thu 08/01/19	243	Fri 08/23/19	272
Wed 06/19/19	192	Thu 07/11/19	218	Fri 08/02/19	244	Sat 08/24/19	273
Thu 06/20/19	193	Fri 07/12/19	219	Sat 08/03/19	246	Sun 08/25/19	Catch Up
Fri 06/21/19	194	Sat 07/13/19	220	Sun 08/04/19	Catch Up	Mon 08/26/19	274
Sat 06/22/19	197	Sun 07/14/19	Catch Up	Mon 08/05/19	248	Tue 08/27/19	275
Sun 06/23/19	Catch Up	Mon 07/15/19	221	Tue 08/06/19	249	Wed 08/28/19	277
Mon 06/24/19	199	Tue 07/16/19	222	Wed 08/07/19	253	Thu 08/29/19	278
Tue 06/25/19	201	Wed 07/17/19	224	Thu 08/08/19	254	Fri 08/30/19	279
Wed 06/26/19	202	Thu 07/18/19	225	Fri 08/09/19	255	Sat 08/31/19	281
Thu 06/27/19	203	Fri 07/19/19	226	Sat 08/10/19	257	Sun 09/01/19	Catch Up
Fri 06/28/19	204	Sat 07/20/19	227	Sun 08/11/19	Catch Up	Mon 09/02/19	282
Sat 06/29/19	205	Sun 07/21/19	Catch Up	Mon 08/12/19	258	Tue 09/03/19	285
Sun 06/30/19	Catch Up	Mon 07/22/19	231	Tue 08/13/19	260	Wed 09/04/19	286
Mon 07/01/19	206	Tue 07/23/19	233	Wed 08/14/19	261	Thu 09/05/19	288
Tue 07/02/19	207	Wed 07/24/19	234	Thu 08/15/19	264	Fri 09/06/19	290
Wed 07/03/19	209	Thu 07/25/19	235	Fri 08/16/19	265	Sat 09/07/19	292

End of Schedule – Mazel Tov



ACTT Activity/Action Ideas

Acknowledgements:

- 1) Some of the ideas for *Acts of Chesed* were adapted from Areyvut's 2005 "A Kindness a Day Calendar: 365 Ways to Make a Difference", see website: www.areyvut.org
- 2) Some of the ideas for *Judging Favorably* were adapted from The Other Side of the Story by Yehudis Samet
- 3) Some of the ideas for *Kavanah During Davening* were adapted from Praying with Fire by Rabbi Heshy Kleinman
- 4) Some of the ideas for *Bitachon* were adapted from You Can Learn Bitachon by Yeshiva Zichron Eliezer and from The Garden of Emuna by Rabbi Shalom Arush
- 5) Some of the ideas for *Improving Anger Management* were adapted from Anger The Inner Teacher @ www.aish.com/spirituality/growth/Anger_The_Inner_Teacher.asp
- 6) Some of the ideas for *The Six Constant Mitzvos* were adapted from The Six Constant Mitzvos based on Rabbi Yitzchak Berkowitz's lectures and www.the-six-constant-mitzvos.com

IDEAS FOR AHAVAS CHESED - LOVING KINDNESS		
Offer to run an errand for a friend Cheerfully greet someone Bake an unexpected treat for a friend Remember someone's birthday Call someone going thru a difficult time Leave a friendly note for a family member Listen patiently to others Clean up after dinner without being asked Call someone who lives alone Greet everyone you see with a smile Introduce yourself to someone Apologize for something you've done Take out the garbage without being asked	Give someone an unexpected compliment Spend time with a child with a disability Help strangers in shul feel welcome Take an elderly person shopping Pay attention to what people are saying Spend quality time with family & friends Call or visit someone who is sick Cook a meal for a person in need Visit someone who may be lonely Call someone you haven't spoken to in a while Say thanks - no matter how small the deed Help a child with his / her homework Compliment someone who helps you	Give someone an encouraging note When asked to do something, respond right away in a cheerful and willing manner Drive someone to the doctor Help out family members even if you're busy Help someone find a job Buy a gift for a loved one for no reason Greet everyone with a pleasant "good morning" Write a letter to an elderly person Take a neighbor's garbage cans in from the curb Call someone who recently lost a loved one Congratulate siblings on recent accomplishments

IDEAS FOR JUDGING FAVORABLY	
Don't jump to conclusions Judge your neighbor's actions favorably "Judge your fellow man fairly" (Leviticus 19:15) Look for a possible explanation in another's behavior Give your friend the benefit of the doubt Look for the good in others "Judge all people to the side of merit" (Ethics of the Fathers 1:6) Think about "Love your neighbor like yourself", and apply it to others. We all find excuses for ourselves.	Realize that your friend did not see you carrying packages when he/she passed by Remember, it could be a miscommunication... Are we missing any facts? Look for people's strengths Remember, things are not always what they seem! Try to explain... not complain about other people's actions Focus on solutions - not recriminations Remember the excuses one makes for oneself - apply these excuses to the one who wronged you



ACTT Activity/Action Ideas (continued)

IDEAS FOR IMPROVING KAVANAH DURING DAVENING - CONCENTRATION DURING PRAYERS	
<p>Meditate for 5 minutes before davening Write translations to difficult words in your siddur Think about all Hashem has given you Say the words, “I am standing before Hashem” out loud Remember that Kavanah During Davening is a Halachik requirement of prayer Pronounce each word slowly and clearly Use a siddur, even for Tefillos you know by heart Establish a specific place for davening Concentrate for 3 seconds on each word of a specific tefillah</p>	<p>Learn the meanings of words you do not know Select one prayer a week to say with more kavanah Write down your favorite phrases from davening and focus on them when you daven Arrive before the minyan begins to daven and be ready when they start When davening at home, remove distractions from around you Select one word a day to say with more kavanah Select one phrase a day to say with more kavanah Before you start to daven, review what Hashem has given you in the last 24 hours</p>
IDEAS FOR HAKARAS HATOV - GRATITUDE	
<p>Recognize the good that you possess Appreciate what you do have rather than what you do not have Acknowledge that what you possess is a gift, not something you deserve Develop the habit of saying thank you for everything you receive, both big and small Realize that everything comes from Hashem and is for your good, then thank Him Always see the glass as being half full and be thankful Focus on developing an attitude of gratitude Appreciate the good that a family member does for you and say thank you Appreciate the good that a friend does for you and say thank you Appreciate the good that a colleague does for you and say thank you Appreciate the good that strangers do for you and say thank you</p>	<p>Write a thank you note to express your appreciation Make a telephone call to express your appreciation Give a gift to express your appreciation Express appreciation for routine actions such as taking out the garbage, preparing supper, doing the laundry, cleaning the house, bringing in the newspaper Thank the school bus driver Thank your teacher, thank your child’s teacher Thank the mail carrier for delivering the mail Say <i>Modeh Ani</i> each morning with great feeling Reflect on <i>Modim Anachnu Lach</i> in <i>Shmoneh Esrei</i> Thank Hashem for every breath that you take</p>
IDEAS FOR BITACHON - TRUST IN HASHEM	
<p>Trust that whatever Hashem does is for your good Believe that if Hashem wants, He can solve your problem this very minute Realize that Hashem forgets no one and that He loves each of His creations Ask Hashem to help you pray, to teach you how to pray, to open your mouth in prayer Internalize that success is from Hashem and if you turn to Him sincerely, He will certainly help you succeed if it is in your best interest Acknowledge that Hashem knows what is best for you, more than you yourself know</p>	<p>Believe that there is no one but Hashem and that no one can do you harm against Hashem’s will Acknowledge that just as Hashem has helped you many times in the past, He will help you again now Trust that whatever happened is what Hashem wanted to happen and that it is in your best interest Accept that the amount of money that you will make has been decreed by Hashem and have peace of mind that you will get exactly what you are supposed to get</p>



ACTT Activity/Action Ideas (continued)

IDEAS FOR IMPROVING ANGER MANAGEMENT FOR POSITIVE RESULTS	
<p>In the past, when you have been able to overcome anger quickly, how did you do it? Learn from people who are able to remain calm in situations that get you angry Learn from people who are able to let go of their anger easily Give anger a chance to subside before speaking by counting from 1 to 10, 1 to 20, etc. When you notice that you are feeling angry, breathe slowly and deeply, exhale slowly When you are about to get angry because of something that someone did to you, focus on some good quality of that person</p>	<p>Use physical exercise to release anger: take a brisk walk, run, dance, jump rope, etc. Meditate on: "Ein od milvado - There is nothing else besides G-d" When you get angry, look at yourself in a mirror to see and hear yourself as others see and hear you when you are angry Write down all your angry thoughts in a letter addressed to the person you are angry at, but do not send it When you are about to get angry, ask yourself, "How important is this in my life?"</p>
IDEAS FOR SHMIRAS HALASHON - GUARDING ONE'S TONGUE	
<p>Think before speaking Pause to think about what to say and how to say it before responding to someone Give each person the benefit of the doubt Train yourself to avoid judging others Think positive thoughts and avoid negative thoughts Stay calm and avoid getting angry Avoid joking around that could lead to making fun of others Develop a character of humility - avoid arrogance</p>	<p>Be extra careful with Shmiras HaLashon for 1-2 hour(s) each day Never give up hope of one's ability to guard one's tongue Accept the idea that it is possible to speak without gossiping Train yourself to avoid complaining about others Learn the laws of Shmiras HaLashon Walk away from a group that is speaking Lashon Hara If someone starts speaking Lashon Hara to you, respectfully ask them to stop Realize and say to yourself: "It's Not That Important"</p>
IDEAS FOR EMES – TELLING THE TRUTH	
<p>Be honest while taking exams Return extra change if salesperson makes a mistake Do not cut corners on taxes If one doesn't know the answer, say "I don't know" Say items that can be fulfilled Be on time</p>	<p>Be honest with oneself - not hypocritical Don't promise items to one's children that one can't keep Do not keep people waiting Give people credit for items they do When quoting, mention the proper source for the quote Admit when one is wrong</p>
IDEAS FOR SIMCHAH - HAPPINESS	
<p>Repeat the mantra and internalize: "The City of Happiness is in the State of Mind" For ultimate happiness, work on building an amazing relationship with Hashem Become wealthy by being satisfied with what you have materially and striving to climb higher spiritually When you wake up in the morning, say Modeh Ani with great feeling and thank Hashem for your being alive, so that you can continue to grow and achieve Do selfless acts of lovingkindness for others and you will experience boundless joy</p>	<p>Say Modim in Shmoneh Esrei with great feeling and thank Hashem for all the little gifts that He gives you every single moment – focus on each breath and say thanks S.M.I.L.E. throughout the day → See <u>M</u>iracles In <u>L</u>ife <u>E</u>veryday Always serve Hashem with gladness and goodness of heart, especially when everything is abundant Look for the good in people and in events during the day – Hashem is total goodness Happiness is in your hands – make it a great day</p>
<p>Focus on what our Sages, of blessed memory, have taught us is the reason for creation: delight in Hashem and benefit from the radiance of His Shechinah (Divine Presence)</p>	



ACTT Activity/Action Ideas (continued)

IDEAS FOR FULFILLING THE SIX CONSTANT MITZVOS	
<p>Talk about <i>Emunah</i> to reinforce your knowledge of Hashem's existence</p> <p>Love life and identify each circumstance in life as an opportunity for spiritual perfection</p> <p>Identify the yetzer hara (evil inclination) as a messenger from Hashem that challenges you and helps you grow</p> <p>Study nature and Torah as a means of building love for Hashem</p> <p>Consider the spiritual consequences of your actions as seriously as you consider their physical consequences</p> <p>Avoid situations in which your eyes might see something that could lead you to sin</p> <p>Try talking to Hashem on a regular basis aside from the scheduled prayer services-- this will help to make Him a real part of your life and your decision making process</p>	<p>Use prayer as an opportunity to build a relationship with Hashem by asking Him for the things you need to serve Him properly, not just for the things you want</p> <p>Each day when you say Shema take a moment to recognize that any hardship or challenge in your life is really a gift from Hashem to bring you closer to Him</p> <p>Take a moment each day, either during davening, while learning, or before going to sleep and thank Hashem for something good in your life</p> <p>At the end of each day take a moment to make a cheshbon hanefesh (spiritual accounting) of your actions that day - ask yourself if you succeeded in building and maintaining your relationship with Hashem or if you damaged it</p> <p>Try to develop an emotional relationship with at least one daily mitzvah or area of Torah by learning more about the deeper <i>kavanas</i> (intentions)/ <i>hashkafa</i> (religious outlook/perspective) in order to see how it helps to connect you to Hashem</p>
IDEAS FOR EMUNAH - FAITH IN HASHEM	
<p>Recognize Hashem's greatness and constantly hold onto this awareness - Hashem is the source of everything: Ein od Milvado (There is nothing other than Him)</p> <p>Review the events of your day, realize what Hashem did to make them happen, and thank Hashem for making them happen</p> <p>Acknowledge that Hashem gives you everything that you need in your life and be happy with what you do have</p> <p>Fully believe that whatever happens to you in your life is exactly what Hashem wants to happen to you and that it is in your best interest</p> <p>Thank Hashem for everything that happens to you, both good and what appears to be not so good knowing that no one can cause you any harm against Hashem's will</p>	<p>Fully believe that Hashem will keep all of His promises and that at the appointed time He will bring Mashiach Tzidkeinu and will resurrect the dead</p> <p>Realize that Hashem helps you do what you know how to do well, that He helps you do what you may not know how to do well, and that He protects you from whatever is not good for you even though you think it is good or you want it</p> <p>Talk with Hashem throughout the day using your own words</p> <p>Accept the fact that all the events that have occurred since Creation and that will occur are part of Hashem's Master Plan, which is beyond human comprehension</p> <p>Pursue the truth through Torah and consistently perform mitzvot and maasim tovim with a full heart and genuinely happy manner, both inside and out</p>
IDEAS FOR KIDDUSH HASHEM - SANCTIFICATION OF G-D'S NAME	
<p>Speak gently to everyone and at all times</p> <p>Act as a role model of proper behavior to others: at home, in your extended family, with your friends, in the community, at work</p> <p>Say <i>Yehei Shmei Rabbah</i> (May His Great Name be blessed) with great kavanah</p> <p>Say <i>Kedushah</i> in davening with great kavanah and internalize it</p> <p>Commit to live every day for the sake of Kiddush Hashem and make Kiddush Hashem your mission in life</p>	<p>Develop a broad understanding of how the mitzvah of Kiddush Hashem is a theme that runs through all the mitzvot and the Torah in its entirety</p> <p>Throughout the day, focus on striving to create a Kiddush Hashem in all that you do</p> <p>Examine your actions daily and record what has been a Kiddush Hashem</p> <p>Examine your actions daily and record how to increase your Kiddush Hashem</p> <p>Examine your actions daily and record what was or what might have been a Chillul Hashem that needs to be avoided</p>

ACTT Glossary

Ahavas Chesed	.....loving kindness
B'li Neder	.....without making a formal commitment
Bitachon	.....trust in Hashem
Chesed	.....kindness
Chizuk	.....moral support
Davening	.....praying
Emunah	.....faith
HaKaras HaTov	.....gratitude
Kavanah	.....concentration
Kiddush Hashem	.....sanctification of G-d's name
Klal Yisrael	.....the Jewish people
Lashon Hara	.....evil tongue (speech) - any derogatory or damaging (physically, financially, socially, or stress-inducing) communication
Maasim Tovim	.....good deeds
Midah, Midos	.....character trait, character traits
Mitzvah	.....a commandment
Mussar	.....ethical teaching
Neshamah	.....soul
Nisayon	.....a test
Ona'as Devarim	.....causing hurt through the spoken word
Parnasa	.....livelihood
Rechilus	.....gossip-mongering - any communication that generates animosity between people
Refuah Shleimah	.....a complete recovery from an illness
Sefer	.....a book
Shidduch	.....a match of two eligible and marriageable Jewish singles
Shiurim	.....classes
Shmiras HaLashon	.....guarding one's tongue
Siddur	.....prayer book
Siyata D'Shmaya	.....Divine Assistance
Talmid, Talmidim	.....student, students
Tefillah, Tefillos	.....prayer, prayers
Teshuva	.....repentance
Yad Hashem	.....hand of Hashem
Zechus	.....merit