



# The Peoplehood Papers **27**

March 2020 | Adar 5780

## **Philanthropy and Jewish Peoplehood**

# The Peoplehood Papers are Celebrating Bar Mitzvah



Celebrating thirteen years of facilitating  
a Jewish Peoplehood conversation that yielded:

- ▶ 27 issues (and two more on the way).
- ▶ Over 350 individual articles representing the breadth of Jewish voices geographically, generationally, and across the diversity of engagement and practice.
- ▶ Thousands of readers across the Jewish world
- ▶ A deeper appreciation and understanding of Jewish Peoplehood concepts and language.

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המרכז לחינוך לעמיות יהודית  
The Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education

## **The Peoplehood Papers 27**

March 2020 | Adar 5780

# **Philanthropy and Jewish Peoplehood**

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## From the Editor

In 2012 the Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education published Peoplehood Papers 7 on **Reinvigorating Jewish Peoplehood - the Philanthropic Perspective**. We decided, together with **Taube Philanthropies** and the **Jewish Funders Network**, that in 2020 it may be worth turning the topic on its head and dedicating an issue to the topic of **Reinvigorating Jewish Philanthropy - the Peoplehood Perspective**. In other words, we wanted to explore the impact of the growing awareness to Peoplehood and its challenges on Jewish Philanthropy.

In the decade that transpired since our previous publication on this topic, Peoplehood became a common concept in the Jewish professional jargon and a cornerstone in framing the Jewish conceptual and practical conversation on Jewish identity and the Jewish collective enterprise. We were partly inspired to initiate this publication by an article recently published by Tad Taube and Shana Penn (see below), that highlights the way Peoplehood framed their philanthropic approach. We wanted to expand that conversation and explore how framing through a Peoplehood perspective can enrich and strengthen our philanthropic work, both in terms of its overall context as well as the nature of collaboration with the other players in the field.

In general, some of the topics we were interested in pursuing were:

- What makes Jewish Philanthropy unique?
- How does it connect conceptually to Jewish Peoplehood?
- How does embracing a peoplehood perspective influence our specific vision and mode of operation? What does it entail in terms of our relationship with other Jewish philanthropies and with communal bodies, like Federations or national agencies?
- What are the key challenges the Jewish people is facing today and how do they impact our specific work?
- What are some possible responses to today's challenges?
- How can philanthropy (which is becoming mostly an individual activity rather than a communal one) be a way of strengthening a sense of peoplehood? in that sense what is the interplay between individual and collective in philanthropy – and in the Jewish Community writ large?

- What is philanthropy's role in ensuring the cohesion of the Jewish People and even in defining what the Jewish People is?
- What are the issues/factors that threaten the strength of the peoplehood and how can philanthropy address them?

This publication does not attempt to exhaust the subject but rather to begin exploring the relationship between Peoplehood and Philanthropy. We recruited a diverse group of writers representing both individual and collective philanthropies. Some are veterans in the field and others bring a younger voice to the table. Ultimately, the Jewish people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is still wrestling with the challenges of modernity. What will the Jewish community look like locally and what will our Jewish collectivity mean globally? We believe that Philanthropy can play a key role in envisioning and shaping the Jewish future. We hope that this diverse collection of essays will indeed advance this conversation.

Special thanks to Taube Philanthropies for co-initiating this publication and funding it. To Andres Spokoiny for helping shape the questions of the call for papers. To Sharon Dwek, from JFN Israel, for helping recruit the writers on the Israeli side. To all the thoughtful writers who contributed to this conversation. We decided to lead with Andres Spokoiny's article in order to frame some of the questions and challenges to be addressed. The rest of the articles appear in the alphabetic order of their writers' names. We hope they will enrich your deliberations and thinking about the Jewish future.

Shlomi Ravid

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## How Philanthropy Can Strengthen Peoplehood in Polarized Times

**Andrés Spokoiny**

**Funders have an enormous role to play in this area. On the one hand, they need to provide funds for dialogue and encounter between Jews of different ideological persuasions; on the other, they need to stop funding organizations that promote division and incivility.**

There has always been an inextricable link between philanthropy and Jewish peoplehood. One of the first projects the Jewish people embark on after the Exodus is building the *mishkan*, the portable sanctuary in the desert, using the voluntary contributions of individual Israelites “from the generosity of their hearts.” Philanthropy is also a way of expressing our interconnectedness: one is supposed to give to the poor because they are “*achicha*” (your brother), and the well-known principle of “*kol Israel arevim ze baze*” (Jews are responsible for one another) gets expressed mainly through philanthropy, generosity and justice.

Naturally, the word “philanthropy” doesn’t appear in the Bible, but the action of giving is intrinsic to what makes us a people: a shared project and a network of internal solidarity towards one another. Philanthropy is not an addition, or a post-datum to our peoplehood idea; not an afterthought that came to correct some mistakes in the original design but a critical feature of how we understand “the art of being a people.”

In the Diasporic experience – including the American Jewish community – philanthropy was the bedrock of the community. Giving, especially in America, became a bond that contributed to a sense of shared destiny; or being part of the same people. When religious practices became less prevalent, philanthropic rituals took over. Even for those who did not keep kosher or go to synagogue, the attachment to the Jewish People could be expressed through a philanthropic engagement. Philanthropy became both an

identity building experience but also a substitute for other, more time-consuming ways, of expressing one's identity.

But the individualism of the last few decades has upended this traditional view of philanthropy, and therefore, the relationship between philanthropy and peoplehood.

The 21st century is a time of hyper-empowered individuals, and any attachment to a collective is seen and felt as a restriction of one's freedom and power. Individuals are not expected to submit themselves to a collective social project; rather the opposite, the main role of society is to guarantee the empowerment and the expression of all the individual's potential. Furthermore, the blurring of identity boundaries makes the ancient definition of "people" complicated to start with - more difficult. Who is today "my people"? Is there such a thing, or am I just a member of human race, with solidarity towards all?

In this world of hyper-empowered individuals, philanthropy ceases being a collective endeavor to and is instead a tool that the individual uses to express herself, to "leave a unique mark" or to "change the world."

It's no surprise then that individual or private philanthropy grows geometrically while communal philanthropy is stagnant. Communal philanthropy has a very difficult task: convince people to restrict their own individual freedom on behalf of a shared project.

**Individualism, and its impact on both identity and philanthropy, creates a vicious cycle: the less we feel part of a people, the less we are motivated to donate collectively with our communal institutions. And since donating collectively enhances our feeling of belonging and peoplehood, less communal giving means less feeling part of a people.**

So, what can funders that care about peoplehood do about this state of affairs?

First, there's a mental shift that is necessary. Private and communal philanthropy don't need to be seen as adversarial, nor as a "zero sum game." In fact, individual expression and collective good don't need to be mutually exclusive. Individual philanthropy can add important dimensions to the communal experience, through entrepreneurship, risk-taking and flexibility for innovation. Conversely, communal philanthropy ensures that core needs are met and frees up individual funders to focus on their innovative pursuits.

Part of that mental shift has to do with a willingness to compromise. In a paradoxical way, the individual needs to submit itself to the collective in some ways, so as to gain the benefits of the collective. You need to restrict your freedom in order to be part of a nation-state, but that nation state also guarantees your freedom and your prosperity.

You can't have freedom and prosperity without making some individual sacrifice. It's important to understand that, by definition, we can't fully control a collective project, but that, in aggregate we gain more than we lose from it.

Second, philanthropy can take an active role in promoting activities that strengthen a sense of peoplehood; programs like Birthright may not be perfect, but they do cultivate a sense of collectivity.

Third, **we are living in highly polarized times, which are further fraying the fabric of peoplehood. Funders have an enormous role to play in this area. On the one hand, they need to provide funds for dialogue and encounter between Jews of different ideological persuasions; on the other, they need to stop funding organizations that promote division and incivility.** There is today a philanthropically funded "rage machine" that demonizes other Jews. That is obviously antithetical to the idea of peoplehood. In a people you take everybody, not just the small sects with whom you agree.

In these times of polarization funders need to support initiatives that seek to provide forums where different ideas are debated, instead of the ideologically homogeneous echo-chambers that are currently attracting the most funding. It may sound counter-intuitive for a funder to fund, for example, a pluralistic Jewish media outlet that includes pieces he profoundly disagrees with, but for the Jewish people to remain a collective project, instead of a patchwork of sects, it's critical to have these places of open debate.

Funders can and should especially invest in forums for dialogue and exchange concerning Israel and Israel-Diaspora relations. In the political arena, where much of these issues are played out, short-termism and political gain will always prevail; but funders can influence the civil society in many ways. Through philanthropic partnerships, Israeli and Diaspora funders can also be the example and role model of a different paradigm in the relation between the two poles of Jewish life; one based on mutual respect, shared learning and equality. Funders need to be aware of the social influence they command, which goes well beyond their funding capacity. They can foster peoplehood through their own behavior; through the programs they fund and defund and through a mental model that understands that the collective and the individual are two sides of the same coin.

**Andrés Spokoiny is president and CEO of Jewish Funders Network, a community that grows the size and impact of Jewish philanthropy. Before joining JFN in 2012, he served as the CEO of Federation CJA in Montreal and, prior to that, was regional director for Northeast Europe for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Community (JDC).**



# The Power of Small Acts of 'Chessed'

**Haim Emil Dahan**

**Tikkun Olam is not done through revolutions or large and grandiose acts, but through small, modest steps and through perseverance...**

Compassion, charity, kindness and concern for the weak are among the cornerstones of Jewish tradition. In this context, Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel wrote: "The essence of a Jew is his involvement in the plight of others, as God is involved. The secret of our tradition is that God is in every human situation and man must be involved in it... According to our tradition, anyone who forgets one passage from the Torah performs a great sin. How great is his guilt if he remains apathetic to the sorrow of one person?" According to Rabbi Heschel, a Jew is not a specification of a person's ethnic belonging, rather "he is a person who is not indifferent to the suffering of others", therefore, as far as he is concerned "Worship without compassion is worse than self-deception; it is an abomination".

Jewish tradition often deals with the commandments that are between one person and another and emphasizes them more than the commandments that are between man and God. This is why one of the most important rules in Judaism is "Derech Eretz (Proper behavior) precedes the Torah". There are many commandments in the Torah on assistance that are backed by the spirit of the prophets that calls out: "It is to share your bread with the hungry, and to take the wretched poor into your home; when you see the naked, to clothe him" (Isaiah 58.7) – these are the basic qualities of social solidarity. In Jewish tradition, the utopian economy is not a socialist economy in which absolute equality exists, and a capitalist policy does not contradict Judaism.

The Torah of Israel does not object to financial wellbeing, it even supports it. And it doesn't prohibit a person from improving the quality of his life. The Torah allows a person to accumulate personal property, to trade and to make profits from his own money, and does not expect absolute economic equality and the abolition of economic gaps in

society. Those in need of support are a fact that exists in society, as it is determined in the Torah: "For there will never cease to be needy ones in your land" (Deuteronomy 15.11). Actually, a capitalist policy, in which there are also class differences, is what enables a person to carry out his desire to do charity and acts of kindness. However, alongside the free economy, there is also a need for welfare policy. The duty of charity that is imposed on the individual, "open your hand to the poor and the needy kinsman in your land", does not release the state from its responsibilities to care for the weak. The individual's duty and opportunity to care for the weak does not come as a substitute for the general welfare system, but rather as a supplementary and softening addition. This addition is the compassionate, caring, caressing personal touch.

The fulfillment of the individual's opportunity to care for the weak and to build a just society is done mainly through Chessed (charity). Maimonides counts eight different degrees of Chessed in descending hierarchical order. The highest level of Chessed, according to the Maimonides, is to help the poor or the weak, "in order to strengthen his hand until he need no longer be dependent upon others". Meaning, the aspiration is to give him a "fishing rod" and to teach him to "fish" independently so that he can get out of the cycle of poverty. The lowest level of Chessed, according to Maimonides, is to "give to him sorrowfully", meaning to give charity – or to give fish – from a place of having no other choice or out of compulsion. Here, too lies the hope that the giver - even without a choice - will feel the positive energies and the ripples of the effect of his act of giving, and then the need and desire to climb up the "ladder of Chessed " will awaken in him, for "He who strives to do good and kind deeds attains life, success and honor" (Proverbs 21.21).

**According to Jewish tradition, the act of Chessed is one of the main means for fulfilling the concept of Tikkun Olam** (repairing the world), which expresses the desire to make the world a better and more just place. In his speech to the participants of the JFN Conference in Tel Aviv, 2012, the ninth president of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres Z"L, defined the concept of Tikkun Olam like this: "What is the Jewish people's greatest contribution to the rest of the world? I would say that it is a lack of satisfaction. A real Jew cannot truly be satisfied. The moment he is satisfied, he begins to doubt his Judaism. A Jew who is never satisfied... not with himself and not with others... Generation after generation, the Jewish people stood at the forefront of changes, thought and revolutions. Why? Because we do not sleep, we are in constant search, constantly thinking about something new, something different. Something that we call Tikkun Olam".

**Tikkun Olam is not done through revolutions or large and grandiose acts, but through small, modest steps and through perseverance. For helping to repair**

**the world of one person is a reparation of an entire world. Each one of us is capable through our actions – even the smallest of them – of repairing the world.**

Maimonides went even further and determined: “if he were to fulfill just one mitzvah he would incline himself and the entire world toward merit and bring about salvation and redemption”.

**Through our acts of Chessed - even the smallest ones – we have the power to repair our world and the world of the weak and needy among us:** the world of a child, of a youth, of an elderly person, of a Holocaust survivor, of a disabled person, and more. By joining the circle of social involvement, action and giving - in the individual acts of Tikkun Olam of each one of us - we can serve as a light that illuminates the darkness of the world of others. A light that has the power to do wonders. “The miracle of the light”, wrote Emmanuel Levinas, “is that it is richer than the energies feeding it... It is the daily marvel of the spirit... It is a flame that burns with its own fervor... the will that undertakes to do something despite the paralyzing obstacles in its way; the hope that lights up a life... It concerns the infinite resources of the spirit that, as a creator, surpasses the prudence of techniques; without calculation, without past, it joyfully pours forth its feelings in space, freely and prodigiously entering into the cause of the Other.”

As we have joined our small light of action into the torch of social action, with our joint power we are able to illuminate society as a whole, and to bring about fundamental and significant social changes, which today might seem to us to be but a distant dream. This belief doesn't stem from naivety - although naivety is sometimes necessary in order to dream big - but from the recognition of the tremendous rewards that one little 'Chessed' can bring about.

**Dr. Haim E. Dahan is the author of “Touches of Grace – Philanthropy and Social Involvement in Israel” and the founder of Ofanim. Ofanim works to minimize the gaps in education through STEM enrichment activities for the children residing in small, weak and peripheral communities of Israel.**



## Philanthropy as a Vehicle for Peoplehood

Elizabeth Fisher

**For Jewish philanthropy to truly embrace the cause of peoplehood – the people need to give, lead, and feel ownership over Jewish organizations.**

Philanthropy has the opportunity and power to go beyond funding Jewish peoplehood to be a vehicle for peoplehood. To do so, we must recruit a broader group of donors – across income levels, identities, and communities - and engage those donors in values-based programs that are meaningful, fun, and build connections.

We enter a new decade with an urgent need to engage more donors in Jewish giving, particularly those of middle and low incomes. In Jack Wertheimer’s report, “Giving Jewish: How Big Donors Have Transformed American Jewish Philanthropy” he writes,

At the time of the Yom Kippur War in 1973, one million gifts were made to the combined North American Federations. [...] Even a superficial examination of the current scene suggests that Jewish philanthropy operates very differently in our own time. Most dramatically, the base of support has shrunk for almost every institution. Federations today rely upon some- where between 30-40 percent of the number of gifts they received at the time of the Yom Kippur War in 1973. The same is true of many national organizations and friends of Israeli institutions: Fewer give, but those who make grants tend to bestow large sums.<sup>1</sup>

This trend is not just about the decline in giving to Jewish causes; we see similar numbers in giving throughout the United States. While it does appear that charitable giving dollars in the US in 2019 were up after a weak 2019<sup>2</sup> indicators point to decreased giving at lower levels and increasing percentages of revenue coming from fewer sources.

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1 <https://avichai.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Giving-Jewish-Jack-Wertheimer.pdf>

2 [https://www.philanthropy.com/article/Donations-Grew-Last-Year/247856?cid=pw&source=ams&sourceid=4990062,](https://www.philanthropy.com/article/Donations-Grew-Last-Year/247856?cid=pw&source=ams&sourceid=4990062)

Over the past decades, organizations have rightfully understood that focusing on larger donors is more efficient and leads to crucial revenue. These donors also are often first-in capital, serving as important lead investors in new projects, programs, organizations, and buildings. Major donors are crucial to the success of Jewish communities. However, as organizations have focused on large gifts to the exclusion of continuing to focus on engaging other donors, we've created a communal challenge - a growing imbalance of ownership and leadership of Jewish organizations. As organizations are funded by fewer and fewer donors, it is harder for those organizations to fully represent and program for a variety of interests and communities. Rather, they often have to focus on the interests of their funders and on what those individuals and foundations perceive as community needs. This is especially true when large donors give restricted grants or fund specific projects and initiatives. **Peoplehood requires a voice at the table, and today those voices are too often represented of only the largest donors. For Jewish philanthropy to truly embrace the cause of peoplehood – the people need to give, lead, and feel ownership over Jewish organizations.**

The good news is that we enter a new decade with a new suite of tools to help us engage all different kinds of donors. There is much to be said about the opportunity of online giving to recruit new donors. In 2019, GivingTuesday raised \$511 Million online in the United States<sup>3</sup> and crowdfunding sites continue to grow and raise millions of dollars around the world. Projects like Righteous Crowd<sup>4</sup> and Millie<sup>5</sup> are new approaches to building online community around giving. Major foundations are also beginning to recognize the challenges and shifting their behaviors towards new ways to ensure giving is reflective of communities and flexible – like participatory grantmaking and giving unrestricted general operating support.

To truly embrace peoplehood in philanthropy, we also need meaningful in-person experiences. Communities and organizations need to engage donors of all levels in values-based conversations. At Amplifier, we've seen firsthand the power of meaningful, fun programs to do just this. As an example, in 2019, we held 24 pop-up giving circles, raising \$62,054 and engaging 750 participants and know of dozens more held by others using our materials. These pop-ups<sup>6</sup>, a 1 ½ hour experience of talking about values, learning about organizations, and making collective grants – allow people to experience being together in philanthropic community and making decisions about

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3 [https://issuu.com/givingtues/docs/givingtuesday\\_2019impactelectronic?e=0/75250497](https://issuu.com/givingtues/docs/givingtuesday_2019impactelectronic?e=0/75250497)

4 <https://www.righteouscrowd.org/>

5 <https://milliegiving.com/>

6 <https://www.amplifiergiving.org/resources/express-workbook/>

shared peoplehood and also enable host institutions to better understand the concerns and priorities of their donors.

We have a tremendous opportunity today to engage more people in meaningful giving – and for peoplehood and philanthropy to grow together, side by side. Bringing in new donors at all levels might not be the most efficient way to fund organizations, but it is a way to will ensure that organizations are representative and sustainable in the years to come.

**Liz Fisher is CEO of Amplifier, which ignites, strengthens, and informs giving inspired by Jewish values and wisdom. Amplifier envisions a world in which everyone has the opportunity to create powerful, positive change through giving.**



# Where Personhood, Peoplehood, and Philanthropy Meet

**Gideon Herscher**

**If we are serious about securing and perpetuating peoplehood, then we must first relate to and embrace a person-centric approach to our philanthropic interactions.**

It seems quite intuitive to draw a direct line between Jewish philanthropy and peoplehood. After all, isn't it the case that the funds we raise through our philanthropic relationships strengthen Jewish institutions and programs, foster Jewish leaders, and innovate Jewish community life—endeavors all at the heart of peoplehood?

But what if the opposite were also true? That the journey of the philanthropist in discovering his or her individual personhood is actually a precursor to meaningful engagement with peoplehood, and that the exploration into that personhood leverages and expands our philanthropic relationships to an even greater extent?

In *Building Community and Peoplehood in a Time of Personalism*, Dr. Jonathan Woocher, z"l, posits that, "without social capital, institutions eventually go bankrupt and collapse. People won't participate, and when they do, they do so without enthusiasm and deep loyalty." Woocher then highlights the importance of forging meaningful connections between individuals, remarking: "These relationships build the trust, concern, commitment, and sense of mutual responsibility – and also the joys of comradeship and familiarity – that give substance and spirit to, and thereby sustain, institutional life."

This stark truth is met by another one: **if we are serious about securing and perpetuating peoplehood, then we must first relate to and embrace a person-centric approach to our philanthropic interactions. Otherwise, we will have overlooked a critical stage in the engagement of the individual necessary for a substantive conversation on peoplehood.**

For our purposes, I am defining “personhood” as a profound and stable connection to one’s self, to one’s essence, purpose, and goals. My preferred definition of “peoplehood” is offered by Dr. Erica Brown in her article *What Peoplehood Means to Me*, where she refers to peoplehood as “the psychic understanding that we are part of an extended family with a purpose.” Only after one’s personhood is crystalized can the potential for a meaningful connection to peoplehood surface.

I have discovered this in my own practice as a fundraiser at JDC. I partner with individuals who have made the decision to take a portion of their wealth and allocate it to endeavors that lift the vulnerable and build a Jewish future. One could argue that anyone who is willing to give to those outside his or her immediate circles (family, community, or socio-economic cohort) has already recognized the significance of peoplehood and made a decision to engage in it. After all, aren’t they giving to something beyond themselves?

For many donors with whom I work, however, the notion of peoplehood as a compelling concept to engage with is only distantly relevant. The questions that preoccupy many of the philanthropists with whom I work are anchored first and foremost in personhood and their desire to live a generous, fulfilling and purposeful life.

Among the many questions I have encountered, four stand out. These have been posed by donors for whom peoplehood is not necessarily at the forefront of their motivations for giving. And yet these very questions pose unprecedented opportunities for Jewish organizations and fundraisers to understand why a critical part of their role, if not duty, is to join forces with the askers of these questions and together explore the possibilities.

1. What do I care most about and why?
2. What will I do to improve the status of that which I care most about?
3. Who can I trust enough to form a philanthropic partnership in order to achieve my goals?
4. How will my giving bring happiness and fulfillment to my life?

If a donor or prospect is sharing these questions with you, it usually means that the answer to question #3 is ...you. If the fundraiser is prepared to join the donor for the journey, the results can be manifold. There can be profound discoveries and insights into the donor's personhood, their dreams and fears. There can be the development of a lifelong relationship anchored in trust, whereby the donor's giving is an authentic manifestation of the insights that arose in your process together. And perhaps most powerful, there can be simultaneous transformations in the lives of philanthropist, those assisted, and even the life of the fundraiser.

I recognize that embarking on such a journey may feel as if you are going beyond the bounds of fundraising protocol, acting in many ways as a life coach or counselor. However, the role of guiding people on such endeavors requires careful attention and counsel in a personal way, serving as an integral part of any successful fundraiser's portfolio.

Many times, this journey culminates in a new level of engagement that allows for conversations about peoplehood and the building of bridges between personhood and peoplehood. So, what are the ingredients needed to arrive at this level of engagement and onward toward an exploration of peoplehood? These steps should be considered:

**1. Donor research: Do it with them, not on them.** In the past decade, sophisticated software and search engines have entered the fundraising market. Today, at the click of a button you can access estimates of one's net worth, giving history, hobbies, and more. While such tools can yield important information, I have found that interviewing your donor and engaging in a dialogue about their history, families, aspirations, and yes, wealth, builds strong foundations for a meaningful connection. Be genuinely curious about your donor's cares and concerns. Be prepared to share of yourself. Sharing yields sharing.

**2. Be sure it's a match:** Perform an initial check for synergy and shared affinities between what your organization does and what the donor may care about. Additionally, ask yourself if you are the best person to partner with the donor or whether there is someone else in your organization who may be a better match. And if so, develop a handover mechanism whereby knowledge is transferred and the next fundraiser is fully briefed and equipped for the journey.

**3. Broaden your fundraising horizons:** Consider a twofold donor engagement strategy that blends your organization's work with a personal engagement process based on a set of core questions that are developed and explored together. One way to achieve this is to work with the donor to create a personal philanthropic mission statement. This process can be time-consuming, but yields a critical reference that highlights the donor's commitment to interest areas, populations, passions, and more. This exercise also lends itself to exploring where peoplehood may or may not figure into the donor's vision.

**4. Manage expectations:** Be open and patient with the type of outcomes that surface from an exploration of personhood. Yes, you need to fundraise, and your organization will not prosper if it has self-realized individuals of wealth who are not supporting you financially. However, success should not be defined solely by your bottom line number this year, but by the number of individuals you have meaningfully engaged in a journey,

with the understanding that within a finite period of time, they will give. Giving is key to this formula because it is how they will manifest their passion and how you will change lives together. The giving may be because they believe in your mission or programs, or because they believe in you and are endlessly appreciative of the purpose and clarity you helped develop in their lives.

About a year ago, I conducted a philanthropy workshop with young American Jewish business owners. Toward the end of the workshop, I was approached by a participant who'd recently sold his business and struggled with taking the first step toward greater giving. He'd made several contributions to local institutions but couldn't explain the logic or motivation behind them. He wanted to dig deeper.

So, we embarked on a process defining impact, what concerned him most, the type of change that would give him the most fulfillment, and which populations he wanted to impact. We also explored his desire to leave his comfort zone, explore uncharted territories, and discover groups in need he was either not of or disenchanted with based on a long-held bias. Among those he was most curious about, and suspicious, were Haredim, or ultra-Orthodox Jews.

At the time, my organization was piloting a vocational skills training program for a subsection of Haredi students in some of Israel's top yeshivas who while gifted, could not sustain the rigorous daily study regimen. Through workshops, skill building, and testing for individual strengths, the appropriate industry can be found and a job secured.

And off we went. Not only did he engage and dialogue with members of the program, key Rabbis and Haredi leaders, and employment experts in this field, he also was able to draw from his business skills to help advise a steering committee of the program. At the conclusion, he made a six-figure gift and became one of the key investors in changing the lives of a population he previously misunderstood.

This moment of transcendence had the magic mix whereby personhood was not just expanded, but redefined towards peoplehood. It was driven by the desire to give, but to do so in way that addressed the simple, innate desire to be an agent of hope in the world. And its success rested on human connection and a journey touched by challenges, learning, perseverance, and a commitment to strengthening our people for the future.

**Gideon Herscher is JDC's Director of International Partnerships. For nearly twenty years, he has worked closely with philanthropists around the world to develop enduring, impactful, and fulfilling relationships that lift the lives of the most vulnerable.**



# You, Me and Us at our Passover Table

Michael Lawrence

**Our Jewish world and the wider global community is challenged greatly and influenced so considerably by intrusive and unforgiving political, religious and social discourse.**

In a couple of weeks from now, 97% of Israelis will join a Pesach night seder<sup>1</sup> and at least 70% of American Jews will participate in their own retelling of one of Judaism's foundation stories and experiences.<sup>2</sup> Tradition holds that as we read from the Haggadah we are to imagine ourselves being rescued from centuries-painful slavery and fleeing Egypt on an unknown path toward nation building and a promised land.

And as we do so we are fulfilling that age-old special duty – to share the story of our people with our children and our children's children. "I do this because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt" (Exodus 13:8)

As we look forward again to singing *Ma Nishtana* in good spirits and then witness the timeless Q & A workshop going on with the Good, Wicked, Simple and Does Not Know How To Ask sons, Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks treats us to an examination of the nature of the "wicked" son and can help us to understand why the Haggadah throughout the generations has pigeonholed him as such.<sup>3</sup>

What is it about this person that has everyone upset? Why is it said that if he had been there in Egypt, he would not have been saved? This appears to be in direct contrast with that mitzvah to share the story of Pesach and exodus with your children. All children.

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1 A Jewish People Policy Institute survey of 3,000 respondents in 2018.

2 From a 2013 Pew Research Center study.

3 In his essay "The Covenant of Fate" in *Covenant & Conversation (Exodus: The Book of Redemption)* – Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

How careful we always are about the way we ask questions. "What does this ceremony mean to *you*"? says this son. Suddenly this is not about *his* story, but the story of the other. The others.

This is a person (albeit a child) who makes statements disguised as questions of curiosity but points the finger across the table at those who *are* in fact on a well-meaning journey that follows a resilient ancient people. Even today, we are drawn to sharing the story of hope, redemption, rescue, renewal and nationhood with the next generation.

The year is 2020 and we find ourselves in an election year for the United States, a Brexit and rollercoaster campaign in the United Kingdom just behind us, a third election in Israel in just eleven months and unpleasant coalition negotiations to come. Bitter exchanges, cruel accusations, nasty displays by "leaders" across the globe setting the tone for our modern societies and our children with their curious eyes, ears and access to information and media on an unprecedented scale.

In these times we are pulled in to unkind, unhelpful, often unwanted and regularly irresolvable conflict within our families, communities and across the globe. Priorities and our positions on topics and needs of crucial importance are placed in line for (re) consideration.

**Our Jewish world and the wider global community is challenged greatly and influenced so considerably by intrusive and unforgiving political, religious and social discourse. As we look at our organizations and our families, at our strategic priorities, at the endless needs and the pull-on resources, the lessons from Pesach's wicked son can be instructive for us.**

From this central part of our Seder night, we should allow ourselves to identify new tips for navigating those old-new questions about with whom we collaborate, with whom we pool resources, share innovations and new approaches and then how we choose which populations, which Jewish causes and other communities we choose to help, reach out to, impact, seed and grow.

Perhaps as Jews have done so often over the centuries, we can turn to Maimonides (1138-1204) arguably the most famous Jewish scholar, physician, thinker, philosopher and legal scholar for guidance at this time. Indeed, Chief Rabbi Sacks does so and points to Maimonides' criticism of one "who separates himself from the community, even if he does not commit a transgression, but only holds aloof from the congregation of Israel, shows himself indifferent when they are in distress... such a person has no share in the world to come".

Rabbi Sacks takes this and makes a most valid point equally as helpful and instructive in our lives in the 21st century. He explains:

"... no longer seeing oneself as part of the Jewish people, sharing its fate and hope or identifying with the plight of the Jewish people... That is what Maimonides means by "separating oneself from the community".

"To be sure, not all Jews today obey Jewish law. But many who do not, nevertheless identify with Israel and the Jewish people. They plead its case. They support its cause. When Israel suffers, they too feel pain. They are implicated in the fate of the people".

Summarizes Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks:

"that a Jew who does not say "You" when Jews or Israel are under attack, but "Me," has made a fundamental affirmation – to be part of a people, sharing in its responsibilities, identifying with its hopes and fears, celebrations and griefs".

So, *Ma Nishtana*? How might this Seder night be different from all other nights in another year of considerable "noise" that surrounds us? Perhaps we will internalize the message given us by a "wicked son". In our collaborations, in our planning for 2020 and beyond, toward sustainable and tangible impact, we will search for the partner *and* the beneficiary who speak of "me" as part of "us" and not of "you" when partaking in Q & A and the collision of ideas that have fragmented and reset the navigation systems in our communities.

And yet perhaps we cannot expect to create or strengthen peoplehood if we just say, "good riddance" to those who would write themselves out of our story. Perhaps in this new decade we should be looking to demonstrate a commitment to collectivity by awarding some grants precisely because other voices in the community believe the cause to be important—even though they lie beyond our own normal funding interests, guidelines or criteria. Fund things that actively engage people on the "uncomfortable fringes" - making a statement of embracing rather than condemnation. Fringes perhaps but not across red lines.

In 2020, in the complex conversations in which we find ourselves and with re(new)ed dangers plenteous, whatever our area of funding, activity or intervention, we could do worse and gain much by asking whether and how our grants, programs and projects draw Jews closer together and exhibit elements that advance unity.

**Michael Lawrence is Chief Development Officer and Israel Office Director for Financial Resource Development at The Jewish Agency for Israel in Jerusalem.**



## Calibrating the Collective

Arie Levy

**Bringing a wide range of partners to cooperate is what we need now to calibrate the collective and introduce Peoplehood as a *modus operandi*.**

"R. Yishmael says: the Torah is interpreted in thirteen principles... 7) *KLAL-PRAT-KLAL* general-specific-general..." (Sifra, Braita of R. Yishmael)

This famous quote from the thirteen rules can be interpreted not only as a hermeneutical approach the Midrash which provides us a toolbox for understanding text, but also as a way to manage our communal life: the collective, the particular and then back to the collective.

We are a people of the collective. Since biblical times we were commanded to pool funds together in the form of half a shekel for the upkeep of the Jewish rituals. At the same time, if someone wants to give more, beyond this obligatory requirement, one can do so and designate his offering for a particular cause. Later, when Jews were scattered in all communities, the model became a communal-collective one in which the central community leadership would collect funds in a central pot to eventually distribute them according to set priorities. This allowed the implementation of a central, organized community platform, that is described by the Rambam's as the "second level" (out of eight) of best tzedakah- the ones who gives do not know who they are giving to and the ones who receives do not know from whom.

Hence, central campaigns in the form of the North America Federations are not a new concept. They blend into the millennial old Jewish tradition of caring for everyone by everyone, a tradition that can be seen around the world, from Fes, Morocco to Krakow, Poland.

Because of the historical timing of the creation of the State of Israel and the needs of other communities across the world, the North American Federations movement

introduced the idea of a “united”, “combined” or “associated” campaign, which pooled together funds into a collective to meet these needs.

Since then, something unexpected happened: the central Jewish project of the last two millennia seems to have turned into a thriving, prosperous state. We found ourselves with two Jewish entities living side-by-side with no real financial dependence on one another, but with a clear need for each other.

The “not-living in Israel” side feels a need to connect and engage with the national aspect of the Hebrew identity, while the Israeli side needs to engage with the communal and Jewish aspects of the communities abroad, among other things. The collective is shifting from an existential need (that still exists, but is much less central) to a “Peoplehood” dimension, and now has come to express what connects Israelis and communities abroad. In both communities though, philanthropy follows trends that challenge the collective model. In Israel, most Israelis still feel their contribution to a collective is via their taxes or their military service and expect the State to do more. When they give, many Israeli philanthropists will develop or give to a particular cause. This is similar to growing designated gifts from North America, not to mention the wider support of Jewish donors to general causes in their respective communities (universities, museums, etc.).

So, what is it we need to achieve in order to have a better connection between Peoplehood and Jewish Philanthropy? To me, this requires three steps:

First, *KLAL*- we need to acknowledge that the “collective” is a must and the best and purest expression of what still bonds our people: Jews caring for others anywhere in the world, together. It might need to be modernized, reviewed or reformed, but the collective must continue to maintain that Jewish “insurance policy” worldwide, while focusing on the connection between our communities. A global Jewish network of funding and philanthropy that puts the subject of Jewish Peoplehood at its center, while continuing to care for the ever-changing needs of communities worldwide.

Second, *PRAT*- as we need to embrace the fact that individual donors and foundations will continue to express their values via philanthropy and designate funds to the causes they hold dear.

Third, *KLAL* as a course of action - not the regular collective or individual giving, but something that brings them together: **Coalitions**. It could be around one particular subject, geographic area, or anything such a group of funders would consider. It would not necessarily be around a subject the collective would fund, nor would it be something a specific funder would consider. Focusing on one cause that attracts funders of all

kind together, in cooperation, coordination, and on a "willing" basis (as opposed to an obligatory formula), is probably what we need more of. With such a method, we can have foundations, federations, governments and others come together; and even if the cause is not issues related to Peoplehood, the methodology and the coalition itself is an implementation of the idea of bringing together a wide range of funders from both sides – and they will develop these bonds we seek in Peoplehood.

An example of such a coalition was built around the Negev region by federations who understood that their time and effort required them to see not only their specific partnership region, but to zoom out and work together to maximize the effect. This brought new and surprising partners into the fold (such as ministries, regional clusters, etc.) and while the leverage of funding is great, the connections developed within this partnership are ones of great depth and developed interactions that wouldn't have been developed otherwise.

Coalitions are not easy to maintain. However, they allow developing new, additional bonds between people and organizations - to pursue a specific goal. When in the area of Jewish life and Israel, coalitions allow people to engage in a more active form of philanthropy, in which partners and funders learn to get involved in crafting solutions and programming instead of only allocating and steering.

Thus, Peoplehood becomes not only a subject to be funded and to develop programs that promote its implementation, but a methodology. When coalitions are created on any subject, this methodology brings unusual partners to work together in a multi-organizational setting.

**The Jewish collective as it is today is still the best expression of Jewish Peoplehood in terms of its goals and content. However, since we are working in a dynamic philanthropic world, we can embrace individual giving and invite them to join wider coalitions in order to deal with specific subjects. Bringing a wide range of partners to cooperate is what we need now to calibrate the collective and introduce Peoplehood as a *modus operandi*.**

**Arie Levy is the Director General of Jewish Federations of Canada-UJA, Israel Office**



# Philanthropy and Peoplehood – Giving with Jewish Wisdom

**Seth Linden**

**Effective philanthropy, in a sense, might provide connection, meaning, and purpose both to those who give, and to those who receive.**

What makes Jewish philanthropy unique? There may be as many answers as rabbis. While many in Jewish philanthropy aim to be relational (some point to a family systems theory), we might interrogate our assumptions here. Relational by whose standards, on whose terms, and who benefits? Others base Jewish philanthropy on the idea of *Tzedakah*, charity, or justice. And still others maintain that Jewish philanthropy remains too homogenous and self-serving.

According to the Chronicle of Philanthropy, “Jewish donors—especially those of modest means—are among the most generous Americans, says a new report. And many of them make a high proportion of their gifts to causes that have nothing to do with their faith. About 76 percent of Jewish donors say they made a charitable gift last year, compared with 63 percent of non-Jews.”

The Nonprofit Quarterly reports that American Jews lead in per capita giving “because it is ingrained in their traditions of charity, or *tzedakah*... Sixty percent of Jewish households earning less than \$50,000 a year donate, compared with 46% of non-Jewish households in that income bracket... And while Jews, like other Americans, give to religious institutions, they give relatively less to religion and more to secular causes. While culture is critical, Jewish giving is boosted by two additional factors—education and wealth...”

Jack Wertheimer’s study, *How Big Funders Have Transformed American Jewish Philanthropy*, focuses exclusively on big giving to Jewish causes. He claims that Jewish giving has taken on a highly elastic meaning in recent decades to the point where any philanthropy that helps others is treated as an expression of Jewish imperatives or “values.”

At the Jim Joseph Foundation, for example, there is a model of liberal humanism, balancing the twin engines of universalism and particularism. Their Roadmap of strategic priorities is based on the following assumption: "In a world that is constantly shifting and changing, there remains a strong and persistent human desire for connection, meaning, and purpose. Judaism has continually evolved over thousands of years to meet these needs. Through investing in Jewish learning experiences, we can help individuals identify new ways to enhance their lives, strengthen their families and communities, and contribute to a better world." In other words, Jewish education (and the philanthropy that drives it) is a means to an end, rather than the end in and of itself. We all want to feel connected, find meaning and have purpose - not only Jews (and not only as Jews) - and Judaism has particular wisdom about how to do this.

The Jewish Virtual Library writes, "The American Jewish communal enterprise is a unique blending of Jewish religious traditions and the democratic pluralistic traditions of the United States. Out of biblical injunctions to protect the poor, orphans, widows and strangers, a vast institutional infrastructure, supported by voluntary philanthropy, has developed... The American Jewish philanthropic tradition has a parallel history. From Torah to Maimonides, American Jewish way of giving is influenced by a strong religious imperative for individualized *tzedakah* and by the development of modern American legal mechanisms that encourage private philanthropy."

After years of dialogue with the eminent Dr. Shlomi Ravid, I have come to believe that Jewish philanthropy does connect to Peoplehood, and yet there is a long way to go for a fully inclusive and collective culture therein. I see three themes being most resonant:

- **Collective Belonging.** *Am Yisrael.* We Jews are a family. Rabbi Soloveitchik reminds us of Abraham's dual covenant of fate (a shared history) and destiny (a shared future). We do it together, we are part of a collective. It is the Jewish trademark and source of strength. In these points and more, Jewish philanthropy seeks to create, build, and nurture community - a collective belonging to one another. And let us not forget those who have been traditionally excluded from Jewish life. As a wise colleague reminded me recently, "[Jews of Color] have had to essentially create their own organizations to give them place and power, to then over time ultimately be adapted into the broader performative White Jewish hegemony."
- **Universal vs. Particular.** *Tikkun Olam.* As noted often in [Pirkei Avot](#), it is not our duty to finish the work, but neither are we at liberty to neglect it. Jews do not have a monopoly on repairing the world, yet there is a shared tradition in heeding Hillel's quote, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?" We are told to look out first for ourselves, but simultaneously

for the world. Holding these two in comfortable disequilibrium might be Jewish philanthropy's most precious tension.

- **Mutual Responsibility.** *Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh La Zeh.* All of Israel are responsible for one another. Jews are responsible for one another and accountable for how other Jews behave and act. In this sense, it has been remarkable to see the shared communal response to #MeToo (#GamAni) and the evolution and progress of the Safety Respect Equity Coalition. Jews share a fate and a covenant of destiny. Throughout time, the Jewish community provided. And Jewish philanthropy provides and is responsible for itself and the welfare of its people.

**These overlapping themes say a good deal about philanthropy and peoplehood. For one, philanthropy can be, and should be, relational and collaborative. Effective philanthropy, in a sense, might provide connection, meaning, and purpose both to those who give, and to those who receive. It might guide not just the *what*, but the *why* and the *how* of giving.** Philanthropy has provoked major [consolidations](#) in operations of local and national institutions, with the confluence of mergers, [partnerships](#), closures, and merely staying relevant.

Today's challenges are many. Rampant anti-Semitism, institutional racism, sexism that is all too pervasive, and white supremacy that threatens all of us. We hear cries of Jews assimilating and Jews seeking more diversity in their pews.

And yet for as many challenges as we face in the Jewish community, there is opportunity for hope that philanthropy can revive and revitalize. Trustees and boards of directors have an important role to play as the stewards of both private and family foundations, and the nonprofit beneficiaries whom they fund and lead. Greater partnerships between lay and professional, more intentional pipelines of volunteer leaders, additional data aligning performance with organizational metrics, and a new paradigm of board structure and process may be needed. More than anything, a culture of inquiry might move boards in the right direction to foster a greater collaborative and curious approach to philanthropy.

Greater gender equity is needed in top Jewish leadership positions. Greater racial and ethnic diversity overall is needed, and boards and search committees can also help in this regard. The leaders of Jews of Color Field Building Initiative, Bend the Arc, and Leading Edge among many others, are doing essential, culture shifting work here. And a greater sense of trust - a philanthropy based on trust - is needed. Brilliant thinkers, scholars and researchers like [Sharon Brous](#), [Yehuda Kurtzer](#) and [Ari Y. Kelman](#) continue

to speak openly about the power dynamics in philanthropy and what might be done to mitigate them.

Philanthropy can strengthen Jewish peoplehood by focusing both on the individual and the collective. What if we had more inclusive grant committees that involved community members, students, educators, and other direct beneficiaries in the process of giving. With the proliferation of donor advised funds and giving circles, foundations and philanthropy have the singular role and responsibility to convene others and promote equitable and inclusive thought leadership in the field.

Philanthropy's role might be to take the lead from educators and community needs. In the words of Bryan Stevenson, let's get more proximate to the issues, be direct, prioritize and personalize. Philanthropy can convene, philanthropy can reinforce, philanthropy can hold the center. Jewish philanthropy, like Jewish peoplehood, can be a guiding light for our ethics, morals, and *mussar*. Leading with *Anavah*, *Savlanut*, and *Rachamim*, among others, giving with Jewish wisdom and character might be a salve for what ails us as a community now.

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# The Global Jewish Philanthropic Collective – Where Next?

**David Mallach**

**The Jewish collective is seen as having fewer and fewer demands on our resources. We have successfully come full circle to the time a century and a half ago where the global collective was affirmed but not supported.**

In the Jewish tradition, a great deal has been written about philanthropy on many levels from the Biblical era up to today. While it is fashionable to quote כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה as a central consistent message of our heritage, and from there propose that Jewish Peoplehood, writ large, is the central focus of our communal philanthropic activity for the past two millennia, it is far from that simple today or at any time in the past.

In the Torah there are injunctions on the importance and obligation of עני עירך – the poor of your city. That raises two clear problems – one: is it all the poor or only the Jewish poor? And within the Jewish community what are the priorities once you go beyond your family? The rabbis began a discussion which has lasted for the past 2000+ years. The Talmud – both Jerusalem and Babylonian – posit that it is all the poor of the city for the sake of peace – דרכי שלום. In modern language one might say to discourage anti-Semitism, a position articulated by Rashi who focused on the concept of 'needy'. Rabenu Bachya takes a stronger stand in favor of all poor, arguing that it is a key to Job's righteousness and thus has divine sanction, not just practical value. Others have held that talmidei chachamim – scholars - are equivalent to the poor of your city. Sifri Devarim and the Chatam Sofer affirm that the poor of Eretz Yisrael and especially of Jerusalem are a special priority, although the latter holds, not above the poor of your city. In part, this limited vision regarding the focus of communal concern may result from the difficulty of distributing philanthropy more broadly and the relative limited level of Jewish resources for any philanthropy, but it also reflects a deeper conviction that Jews far away need not be our concern.

The revolution in Jewish Philanthropy comes with the emergence of the new 'Diasporas' of the late 19th century – the US, UK, Etc. There were three distinct overlapping changes in global Jewish reality. For the first time, vast numbers moved far from their home towns. Global Jewry exists as a vivid experience in the lives of millions of Jews, not just for small elites of rabbis and very well to do. Up to then, Jews lived and died within ten miles of where they were born. Thus, the concentric circles hierarchy of responsibility – your family, your relatives, your community – were in conflict as your relatives may be living in Vilna while your family and home are in Scranton, PA. The third upheaval was Zionism. While the numbers who actually made aliya prior to the Holocaust were minimal, at most 3% of world Jewry live in Palestine in 1939, the power of the myth of returning to the land of Israel was immensely powerful for far larger numbers. The global Jewish Collective mattered to individual Jews for the first time in many centuries.

The two most powerful expressions of this new global Jewish philanthropy were the JDC in the US and United Israel Appeal/ Keren Hayseed throughout the Jewish World. They are now taken for granted but at the time the vast majority of Jews gave Tzeddakah to where their rabbi told them or to reflect their ideological and geographic disposition – Orthodox, secular, socialist Zionist, Haredi etc. The global collective philanthropic revolution was on two levels – it crossed ideological lines as well as being truly collective. When JDC was formally organized in 1915 it had representatives of the Orthodox, the socialist-secular unions, the German philanthropists, and the emerging Russian entrepreneurs – it truly was a joint distribution committee. The experience played a part in laying the foundation for many of those same people to set up the New York Jewish Federation of Philanthropies two years later.

For the rest of that century the vision of collective Jewish action prospered. It led to national UJA and the Federation system which was built on the vision of one gift covering needs of local and global Jewry, across ideological boundaries in both spheres. It is hard today to appreciate how different this was from the longstanding prior Jewish philanthropic activity.

The central premise underlying the whole system was that Jews who had 'made in' in America had both an opportunity and an obligation to help Jews globally. And the global Jewish people mattered to them as much, if not more, than those at home – Aniyei Irchah. Those in need in Israel were often seen as having a first claim, so much so that in the middle 1970's there was something of a revolt in local Jewish life to remember that there were poor Jews in American cities as well. That probably helped to re-balance, but most Federations continued to view the global obligation as equal to the local one, and more so during the numerous times of crisis in Israel.

While some rebalancing may have been inevitable, great events such as the Six Day War, Soviet Aliya, re-birth of Jewish life in Europe ran their course - the trend has swung too far. The global collective, Jewish Peoplehood, has lost its place on our communal agenda. The most globally oriented Federations may give up to 40% of their income to the Jewish collective beyond our borders – Israel, FSU, etc. while the averages are in the 20% range, and this trend is not only evident at the local level. At the same time, more of what is given is focused on specific entities that are most attractive to the funders, the growth of what has been variously called 'boutique or 'emotive' philanthropy reflects this trend. **The Jewish collective is seen as having fewer and fewer demands on our resources. We have successfully come full circle to the time a century and a half ago where the global collective was affirmed but not supported.**

There are serious consequences to this trend, both in the donor and recipient communities. To expect an emerging of Jewish leaders and philanthropists to care for the global collective – including Israel – when the current leadership is less and less willing to devote resources to it, is a massive delusion. To expect the next generation to adopt a commitment to the collective when almost every organization in Jewish life explains why its goal is the magic bullet for the Jewish future wherever it is located, would be a benign delusion. Except that the lessons are well learned – there are no priorities anymore, there are only selective interests. There needs to be a return to the concept of a shared agenda and a 'joint distribution'. One small example, the local colleges in Israel are valuable institutions for the advancement of the working class, but to believe that each of the dozens of such schools has the place to undertake independent fundraising in the US rather than work as a collective, is a prescription for despair; a few will succeed, but the system will fail. How many chief rabbis are there in Ukraine today, one does not know, but the proliferation of such titles, and the competitive Tzedakah campaigns do little to help Ukrainian Jews or convince North Americans to invest in the future of Ukrainian Jewish life.

Today, the Jewish people can select its direction. If it wishes to see itself as a global collective it will need to act as such, or it will continue on the road to attending to local and ideological designations and the global collective – Jewish Peoplehood – will not be able to care for itself.

**David Mallach has lived in Israel and the US and has worked for 40 years in building the links among Jews across the many divides – cultural, religious, geographic, ethnic – by which identify ourselves. He proudly lives in New Jersey and can be reached at [mallachdavid@gmail.com](mailto:mallachdavid@gmail.com)**



## More and Less: Jewish Peoplehood, Jewish Philanthropy

**Reuven Marko**

**We need to set the stage and plan a future where less will come into Israel from abroad, and more will go from Israel to support Jewish causes outside of Israel.**

Two decades ago, when I founded my own business I made a strategic decision that the company, beyond having to provide excellent service in its field and be profitable, will also have a philanthropic facet to its work. This could be achieved in two ways: first through a cash-based philanthropy, or the second through an action based philanthropy. The former implies the investment of a portion of our profits philanthropically; the latter, investing time and effort in areas where we can make a difference. I opted to be involved both ways. Volunteering my time was not new to me. I grew up in one of the first Israeli Reform synagogues in Netanya, a shul which my parents were among its founders. At the age of thirteen, after losing our cantor to an American congregation, I volunteered to become the congregation's lay cantor, which I still enjoy doing today, fifty years later!

The past decade, though, has made me much more aware of the needs of the Jewish people. Not that I was not aware of them, but, as many native Israelis of my generation, the belief was that Jews in the diaspora have a responsibility towards the Jews striving towards the rebirth of the Jewish nation in our homeland. However, it came about that I became increasingly involved with the Israel Reform Movement and exposed to its breadth and depth. Moreover, being a hi-tech professional, I got to know Jews from around the world, mainly in the USA and primarily on the west coast. This opened my eyes even wider to the Jewish diversity and a different conversation from the discourse I was used to originally. Working together and listening to each other made me think very differently about the roles I wished to take on the path to make the world a better place to live in.

One of my first decisions was to concentrate my efforts on only three non-profit organizations. To one, Reut - a rehab hospital in Tel Aviv, we donate money annually.

I was introduced to this institution by close family friends, was convinced that our donations would be impactful, and became committed as a financial donor. The second organization, Unistream, focuses on the entrepreneurial education of high school students throughout Israel. The organization was founded by a successful Israeli entrepreneur who felt it was time for us to also educate the next generation and make them better prepared to contribute to Israel's start up ecosystem. In this case, we donate both money and time. For me it is an opportunity to meet young Israelis of all walks of life and religions. The advances we have seen these youngsters make over the past decade are impressive and I am proud to be associated with this organization.

Last but certainly not least is the Israel Reform Movement. Over the past decade, I have served on board committees, on the board itself, and from 2014 to 2019, I served as the board's chairperson. Many important accomplishments were achieved during this past decade, too many to name. These include the successful establishment of a pre-army social leadership program, Mechina, a growing youth movement, more than a doubling the number of congregations from 23-52, fighting for equality at the Western Wall, making strides towards equal state funding to non-orthodox streams of Judaism, and much more. The primary focus of our philanthropy including our financial resources, efforts and time, are in this sphere.

After the collapse of the Israeli government resolution on the Kotel, and the shameful withdrawal of the prime minister from agreements that were masterfully woven together, I observed with increasing concern how that negatively influenced Jewish peoplehood. Unfortunately, agreements aside, Jews outside of Israel have been constantly pushed away and ignored, especially the non-orthodox Jews. This is something that Israel cannot afford. It may be worthwhile in terms of short-term political gain, but may yield disastrous results when Israel will most need the support it has counted upon for decades.

One of the unfounded arguments I often hear is that Reform Jews are going to disappear. I have been hearing that for the past 50 years. In fact, I keep a newspaper clipping in which a writer in the early 70s predicted that there would be no more Reform Jews in America within fifty years. The results are clearly far removed from this prediction. Nonetheless, it does not mean that the challenge there is less significant. The opposite is true. While Judaism may well survive in the USA and elsewhere, with all streams, the connection with Israel is a different matter. Moreover, as a committed philanthropist in Israel, and an avid Zionist, I think we need to take a very different stand.

**Our challenge today, here in Israel, is on one hand to build an accepting and welcoming society that will include all the Jewish streams in equality, dignity and respect.**

In addition, we must lay the foundation in which the responsibility for the future of Israel and the Jewish people will be shifted away from Jews living outside of Israel to Jews living in Israel. **We need to set the stage and plan a future where less will come into Israel from abroad, and more will go from Israel to support Jewish causes outside of Israel. There is much to share, there is much to be responsible for, and we will need new methods for doing so. Jewish peoplehood will count on that, and Jewish philanthropy will have to lead the way to that change.**

**Reuven Marko is an electronics engineer who has over two dozen patents under his belt. He enjoys being involved in different areas, including music (composed a new melody for Kol Nidrei) and published a book (a collection of sermons he delivered over the past decade). He is married, a father to two daughters and four sons, and is the grandfather of three.**



# Philanthropy – the Bridge to Future Peoplehood

**Shlomi Ravid**

**Jewish philanthropy, needs to mobilize the creative forces hidden in our people, in all of their diversity and local concerns, to envision the next phase of Judaism as a collective civic and communal enterprise.**

The foundations of modern Jewish philanthropy, were developed in Eastern Europe against the background of the 16th-18th centuries. The historian Simon Dubnow, writes: “The Jewish community constituted not only a national and cultural, but also a civil, entity. It formed a Jewish city within a Christian city, with its separate forms of life, its own religious, administrative, judicial, and charitable institutions” (Dubnow, 1914). In many respects in those foundational years core Jewish values and surrounding communities’ approach to Jews converged to develop the unique nature and role of modern Jewish Philanthropy, and provided the base for its 20th century developments.

The 20th century will go down in Jewish history as the century of philanthropy. Not only because of its achievements in rebuilding the Jewish communities throughout the world after the Holocaust, but also for expanding the notion of collective responsibility beyond the local to the global Jewish community. The 20th century saw the realization of Jewish collective aspirations and Jewish philanthropy rose to the challenge of building modern regional (Federations), national (UJA) and global (JAFI, Keren Hayesod, JDC, etc.) frameworks. Those frameworks, structured as collective endeavors, attempted to integrate Peoplehood on both local and global levels, simultaneously investing in local communities and the global agenda, which focused primarily on the building and support of the State of Israel for most of the second half of the 20th century.

Towards the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, the Jewish philanthropy landscape has changed. We have witnessed a rise in individual philanthropy and a decline in collective giving, accompanied by a diversification of the giving. Part

of it can be explained through broader changes in the philanthropic world, and yet it also begs the question of the role of current and future Jewish philanthropy vis a vis the collective Jewish enterprise and civilization. In other words, if in the 20th century Jewish philanthropy reflected mostly Jewish collectivity, what will be its role in the increasingly individualistic/localized 21st century?

Before we turn to address this question, it is important to say a few things about the relationship between Peoplehood and philanthropy, and frame some of the concepts. **We use the concept of Jewish Peoplehood here as a form of shared consciousness that constitutes Jewish collective enterprise. In other words, it is a worldview that provides a shared rationale, meaning and core values of Judaism that animate collective enterprise – of what Jews do as a group. In that context philanthropy plays a dual role: it is an expression of Peoplehood as well as its engine. On one hand, almost by design, being engaged in Jewish philanthropy is an expression of Jewish Peoplehood. On the other, philanthropy drives the nature of Jewish collective enterprise as it defines and reinterprets its current meaning and that of Peoplehood.**

The Jewish world is moving into a new paradigm of Peoplehood. The guiding paradigm of the second half of the 20th century, focusing collectively on building local communities and the Jewish State, has been weakened. There are serious debates on the **what** of peoplehood: i.e. a covenant of fate vs. a covenant of destiny. Not less important are the disagreement on the **how**: On collective action and legacy organizations vs. individual philanthropy and alternative modes of engagement and affiliation. Jews are not just asking how to improve the system but are questioning its rationale and purpose. The time has come to develop a new and engaging paradigm of Jewish collectivity that will provide meaning and purpose for both local and global Jewish enterprise.

When we published the first issue on Peoplehood and Philanthropy, a decade ago, the conversation was at its infancy and the core challenge was to raise awareness to Peoplehood and engage young people in the conversation. It seemed that if we just did the same things in better ways we may win the day. And yet so much has transpired in this landscape over the last decade. Challenges to legacy organizations have increased significantly. Jewish individualism, is stronger than ever. Relying on Israel to pull us together has become difficult. In short, what is required are not specific improvements but rather a paradigm change. How can Jewish philanthropy lead the charge?

Last month, Ha'aretz columnist Yair Assulin (past contributor to the Peoplehood Papers) published a column titled: "This is How Revolutions Happen". He writes: "Philanthropic money or impact investments that seek to influence the Israeli conversation and Israeli

behavior... need to be invested before anything else in the building of new Israeli narratives, in value clarification, in the creation of stories and ideas, in the analysis of reality, in Israeli consciousness". The key to change according to Assulin is "to analyze honestly and truthfully the present and interpret courageously the future, and not to be afraid of complexities and to dare challenging the present and us. This is the only way to bring about a revolution... only in this way society protects itself and grows".

**The Jewish people is going through a complex period. Questions of meaning and purpose arise - Why be Jewish? Why be a member of the Jewish community? What does being a member of the Jewish people means to me? – and they hover over our collective enterprise. Jewish philanthropy, as the engine of Jewish Peoplehood, needs to step up and address the challenge of our times. To mobilize the creative forces hidden in our people, in all of their diversity and local concerns, to envision the next phase of Judaism as a collective civic and communal enterprise.**

There is no doubt that we are heading towards a new Jewish collective paradigm. It will require adjustment to a new set of communal expectations at the local level and different notions of collectivity and connectivity on the global. If we are successful it would spell in practical terms an ensemble of changed legacy organizations and a whole set of new ones. The key to the process – of envisioning, facilitating, planning, innovating and implementing - is in the hands of Jewish philanthropy. This is a huge historical challenge. Indeed, the calling of our times – no less.

The good news is that Jewish philanthropy has been engaged in it for some time already. It just needs to realize the nature and magnitude of this undertaking, and understand that in the broader scheme of things, this can only be achieved through collaboration. That if individual philanthropy was the anti-thesis to collective philanthropy, our current challenges require a synthesis between the two. One based on dialogue, openness and cross pollination. We will be able to write the next page of Jewish civilization only if we go at it together.

**Shlomi Ravid is the executive director of the Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education and the founding editor and publisher of the Peoplehood Papers**



# Adapting Jewish Peoplehood to Jewish Equity

**Charlene Seidle**

**If Jewish peoplehood builds from the principle kol yisrael areyvim zeh lazeh, all Jews are responsible for each other, Jewish equity amplifies the ecosystem of shmita and yovel.**

We are a tradition of questioning and adaptation. In that spirit, I propose that we update and adapt the framing of Jewish peoplehood and move to a paradigm of Jewish equity. Jewish equity moves us from responsibility to responsiveness, from generosity to accountability, from service to justice. Jewish equity is the fundamental mandate of Jewish philanthropy at this moment.

The simple definition of equity as provided by Merriam-Webster is “fairness in the way people are treated”. Equity is different from diversity, which is a quantitative indicator of different types of people, and different from equality in which everyone has the same amount. Instead, equity seeks to acknowledge and meet individual needs within an overall framework of proportional access to networks, resources and capacities.

**If Jewish peoplehood builds from the principle kol yisrael areyvim zeh lazeh, all Jews are responsible for each other, Jewish equity amplifies the ecosystem of shmita and yovel which governed land ownership, resource allocation, consumption and fundamental power structures in ancient times to ensure distributed access. In the words of Adam Berman, founder of Urban Adamah: “Shmita is the most economically, environmentally and socially radical idea in the Torah, hands down.”**

Jewish philanthropy has the greatest responsibility to advance Jewish equity because our sector holds both power and resources, two tools which help reverse the systems that perpetuate inequity. Inadvertently, and generally with the best of intentions, philanthropy has sometimes hindered equity by not acknowledging implicit bias and by making assumptions about beneficiary communities without their full representation. How many of us who influence resources have experienced deep poverty? How many

of us have been fundamentally alienated from institutions of Jewish life? How many of us are Jews of Color? The list goes on and on. To be sure, we are more representative as a field than we were since the last time this journal was published, but there are still substantial advances that must be made.

I will offer four thoughts to our field on how philanthropy can promote Jewish equity drawing from the experience of the Leichtag Foundation where I serve as Executive Vice President. I want to clearly acknowledge that Leichtag still has a long way to go. Our team is not representative enough. We often make decisions about rather than with the people who will be most impacted by them. We sometimes use language that does not connote accountability to our end-users. We are a work in progress. In that way Leichtag reflects the very story and essence of our people.

1. *Individual Journey*: A decade ago, when Leichtag began funding in Jerusalem, we encountered skepticism and even resistance from funders and experts alike. Many thought the choice was foolish and naive, that Jerusalem was already too far gone. Reflecting on the feedback we received, instead of hiring staff or consultants in Israel in this critical initial stage, we instead turned straight to the grassroots, those who were already making an intentional decision to pursue their lives and progress in Jerusalem. We gathered a brain trust of social entrepreneurs from all sectors of the city who essentially served not just as advisors but as Program Officers, providing direction on credible projects, needs and initial grantmaking. In this way, we avoided a singular voice or filter that, however well-meaning, could not deeply understand the individual journeys and experiences that must inform change making in such a complex, diverse city.

Those with stories should speak for themselves. And when those stories are coupled with resources, more equitable systems emerge. Research also shows that including a critical mass of underrepresented groups in decision-making processes reduces implicit bias.

2. *Tzimtzum space*: The notion of *tzimtzum* is a profound ingredient for Jewish equity. In Kabbalistic teachings, the act of creation was accomplished through a contraction called *tzimtzum* where G-d withdrew in order to create the space and room for this world. In both San Diego and Jerusalem, the two localities where Leichtag focuses its efforts, *tzimtzum* co-working spaces known as the Hive and Restreet respectively allow for creatives from all different disciplines and organizations to interact with each other, dream up new ideas, learn together, and allocate resources together.

Those who use the Hive and Restreet have become co-creators of the space. They provide substantial input to our overall strategies and to the mission, use and planning of our 68-acre property Leichtag Commons.

3. *Operationalizing equity*: Equity may be a buzzword in the field now, but our Jewish traditions and set of laws have provided much for us to draw from for generations. Concepts inherent to our Torah like justice for the vulnerable, amplifying minority voices, disagreement and diversity, questioning objectivity and more can be analyzed in modern contexts. They can also become much more than words in an ancient book. We can implement these principles of equity through immersive experience and intentional inclusion of new rituals into organizational culture and Jewish communal norms. They inform how we relate to land, to what we own, inequality in our community, the nature of work and rest in our lives, our relationship to debt. These issues are as relevant to our lives in 2020 as they were in the year 20 providing rich substantive guides for community building and outreach. They are relevant in the workplace too. At Leichtag, a task force of staff members representing multiple levels and life experiences convened to develop our equity guidelines. They also prepared a set of working principles that govern many elements of daily interactions and decision-making processes. Each of these principles is connected to a Jewish tradition, sometimes updated or modernized.

It's important to acknowledge that not all our Jewish practices promote equity. In fact, some may actively seem to perpetuate inequity. Talking about those systemic inequities openly, and letting the voices and directions of those among us who have been most hurt by them lead in correction are the first steps to repair.

4. *Partner and scale*: Leichtag is proud to be a founding member of both the Jews of Color Field Building Initiative and the Safety Respect Equity Coalition. These two important consortiums and others are actively working to institutionalize better practices around equity into the Jewish communal ethos. Only by working with others who share our goals will we be successful in achieving Jewish equity. Our partners help push us in new directions and leverage the effectiveness of individual efforts.

There may be differences in our backgrounds, our worldviews, and our interpretations of reality. We cannot let these differences interfere with the way we see each other but rather see them in ways we can help one another. By listening to, acknowledging and embracing individual journeys. By challenging and questioning and resisting our biases. By seeing the potential in each person to give to our Jewish community and receive from our Jewish community. This is Jewish equity.

The Mishna in Sanhedrin says: "One person was created as the common ancestor of all people, for the sake of the peace of the human race, so that one should not be able to say to a neighbor 'my ancestor was better than yours'." Let's name our power as funders, share it, know and check bias and ultimately advance a Jewish community that will never say to each other "I am better than you". A Jewish community of equity.

**Charlene Seidle is the Executive Vice President of the Leichtag Foundation, a private, independent foundation with offices in Encinitas, California and Jerusalem**



# Jewish Peoplehood and Jewish Philanthropy: Opportunities for New Partnerships

**Jeffrey Solomon and Alon Friedman**

**... this focus on Peoplehood will bring together the private philanthropic world with the considerable resources of the communal world as their missions and objectives overlap.**

## **1. The Philanthropy Shift:**

### **From “One People - Global” to “Many Communities - Local”**

Among the many headlines in Jewish philanthropy over the past two decades is a major transition from communal philanthropy, and, perhaps, the largest and most sophisticated voluntary educational and welfare network, to a broad range of initiatives and incubators started and funded by private philanthropy, both in North America and Israel. Think about Birthright Israel, PJ Library, Moishe House, Honeymoon Israel, Sepharia, Open Table, the renaissance of Hillel, Jewish camping, and countless other examples that impact the lives of hundreds of thousands of Jews, and the unique role that private philanthropy is playing in their formation and expansion.

Contrast this with the shrinking support from Federations and other central bodies to their beneficiaries. While many of these beneficiaries, including such precious global assets such as the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, were accustomed to the overwhelming share of their budgets coming from Federation allocations, they and virtually every Jewish Family Service, JCC, Home for the Aged are competing for private philanthropic support. While some will argue that the increased “market” nature of this philanthropy leads to more demanding and better outcomes, others note that the marketplace is the least appropriate place to determine communal priorities.

In the 1970’s the key theme of communal campaigns was “We are One;” the simple notion was that we are a unified people and untoward actions in the former Soviet Union required a response in the United States; risks to Israelis required Australians to

use philanthropy to help plug holes; antisemitism in France was a problem for all of us. The limitations of space preclude a full analysis of the reasons this communal culture did not survive. Suffice it to say, we have moved from *“Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Lazeh”* (All Jews are responsible, one for another) to *“Im Ein Ani Li Mi Li”* (if I am not for myself, who will be for me), a sense of selfishness that tends to be hyperlocal. We have so often heard that there is no longer a need to focus philanthropy for the benefit of Israel, because of its economic miracle. Again, allocations over time tell a dramatic story of social change within the Jewish community.

## **2. Sharing a Past is Not Enough. Do We Know Each Other in the Present? Are We Securing a Common Future?**

While American philanthropy to Israel continues at a pace of \$2 billion annually, it disguises a far more basic issue. What responsibility do we have to one another? Do I as a Diaspora Jew have any right to opine on policies and practices in Israel? If Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, with each Jew having a stake therein, how do we manifest that? What Israeli school child is taught about Jewish communities outside of Israel? Why have American philanthropists underwritten 250 university faculty in the field of Israel studies, while in Israel, there are only two faculty devoted to Jewish Peoplehood or Diaspora Jewish Studies? Why do 50% of Israeli High School students visit Auschwitz, and never stop en-route to visit a living Jewish community?

During the past several years, we have witnessed much conversation about the increasing rift of Israel and the Jewish world. While the data is not definitive about this assertion, actions such as passage of the Nation State Law and some harsh and unprecedented criticism of Israel by the major Jewish movements in the US are but two examples of increasing alienation. Ironically, many of the initiatives noted above are aimed at the symptoms of this rift.

The authors approach this issue from a different perspective. We are products of our identities and cultures. Growing up in Modiin is different than growing up in Los Angeles. If we wish to bridge these cultural differences and socialize our children to see the Jewish people as their extended family, we need to work at this in a far more serious and strategic way than we have in the past.

## **3. Peoplehood Based Philanthropy: Knowing → Caring → Committed**

Enter *“Enter: The Jewish Peoplehood Alliance”*, an initiative in which a group of Israelis and North Americans are defining a data driven set of strategies for a generation-long effort to build on the concept of Peoplehood and cross border efforts to build a more global identity.

Imagine a Jewish world in which we create a common idea of core curriculum and knowledge so that an Israeli 18-year-old has a common set of understandings with an 18-year-old South African. Imagine a “reverse Taglit” where Israeli young adults get

to experience Jewish communal life in North American cities and develop the same meaningful *Mifgash* relationships that are the most popular attribute of Birthright Israel. Imagine young Israelis who experienced the many models of *Schlihut* standing up in the Knesset to lobby for or against bills that impact upon Jews outside of Israel, because they see them as part of their family.

Imagine questions on the standard Israeli high school examinations about Communities outside of Israel. Imagine Israeli and North American young adults undertaking serious *Tikkun Olam* efforts in the developing world on behalf of the Jewish people. Imagine young American Jews who are as familiar with, and proud of the Israeli Declaration of Independence as they are of the American Declaration of Independence.

There is so much potential to turn this challenge into an opportunity. Philanthropy has built an ecosystem that deals with the negative consequences of the absence of Peoplehood notions. Instead of fixing the failures, it can now build a platform to work with the brilliant resources that touch on these issues. Whether national institutions, research think tanks, program operators or foundations, existing organizations can be optimized for this effort. **“Enter” hopes to build on developing strategy, amplifying this work, coordinating efforts, evaluating outcomes and finding additional resources that result in the progress needed.** Most relevant, this focus on Peoplehood will bring together the private philanthropic world with the considerable resources of the communal world as their missions and objectives overlap.

The idea of Jewish Peoplehood needs to move beyond a small group of academics and practitioners who devote their daily lives to many of its manifestations. The philanthropic changes we are witnessing throughout the Jewish world represents the opportunity to dramatically move this issue to the center of contemporary Jewish life throughout the world. The ability to blend private philanthropy with communal resources is an opportunity waiting for the right issue at the right time. Concerns about symptoms of a rift becomes the right issue. Now, is the right time.

**Dr. Jeffrey Solomon serves as a senior adviser to Chasbro Investments, the family office of Charles Bronfman. He served as the CEO of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies for the past 23 years. Prior to that he was the Senior Vice President and COO for UJA Federation of New York. Author of two books and more than a hundred articles, he sits on the boards of four major American foundations.**

**Alon Friedman is the founding executive director of “Enter: The Jewish Peoplehood Alliance”, a new coalition initiated by Charles Bronfman and Jeff Solomon that aims to strengthen relations and mutual commitment between Israel and Jewish communities around the world. Alon previously served as director general of Hillel Israel, associate director of “Masa Israel Journey” and a central Shaliach (emissary) on campuses throughout north America.**



## Today's Challenges Demand a More Collaborative Jewish Philanthropy

**Tad Taube and Shana Penn**

**No individual philanthropist or philanthropy can help everyone, but together we can build the costly infrastructure of ideas, people and resources that our imaginations can envision and our world requires.**

Collaborative philanthropy is today a popular subject of articles and speeches, which we have advocated for years. Tad's business background in real estate, where collaboration is the prerequisite to success, taught him the skills of organizing people, ideas and funding. Only with the right people and resources working together can we build our dreams and our successes.

Today it is important that we dream big. We are living in a period of unprecedented change, when new possibilities are all around us and, at the same time, traditions and values that have underpinned our lives are in jeopardy. Big dreams, however, are often elusive. They can require years to bring to fruition. They need professionals, equipment space, and funding.

To some degree we all walk together. Similar ideas can germinate from a variety of sources, all at the same time. Suddenly, we all seem to be concerned with an issue, idea or cause that a decade earlier may have not even been a part of the public discourse. Then in a moment of synchronicity, the gestalt shifts. Philanthropists have a special role at these moments.

That does not mean abandoning long-held perspectives and commitments. We consider ourselves responsible for supporting the resolution of problems and issues that require decades or lifetimes to resolve. In an era of opportunity, we are the community's idea-investors.

**Today's accelerating pace of new demands amid ongoing challenges makes this a prime time for collaboration among funders. When we collaborate, we can better recognize how to align resources to bring new ideas to fruition.**

Choosing to live a life of Jewish values means choosing a rich tapestry of old and new.

The Bay Area is a mature philanthropic environment. Hospitals, universities, cultural organizations, and social services have been established and supported by private donors for more than a century. It is also an environment where recent spectacular-sized fortunes dot the rosters of philanthropic foundations, in a climate of new issues and social problems that demand attention.

Our challenge is to find balance between welcoming the future while addressing the past. We should listen to new ideas and share what excites us and what we believe can make the world better. But we must also remember what long-term problems our world has not yet solved.

**No individual philanthropist or philanthropy can help everyone, but together we can build the costly infrastructure of ideas, people and resources that our imaginations can envision and our world requires.**

Collaboration has opened new and expansive ways of learning, leading us to support and innovate a diverse range of community and civic institutions. Through our work, we seek to retain the traditional core of Jewish philanthropy in not only invigorating and strengthening Jewish life but also in advancing our Jewish culture, education, and physical well-being. Choosing to live a life of Jewish values means choosing a rich tapestry of old and new. Choices of projects and institutions to sustain and advance are based on our vision of how best to secure the Jewish future that we believe reflects the mosaic of our heritage.

For more than ten years, our foundation has focused our Jewish grant-making through the lens of Jewish peoplehood, whose principles were first articulated by Mordecai Kaplan, the 20th-century Jewish thinker. Kaplan understood our heritage as an historically evolving cultural experience that touches the lives of individuals and opens Judaism to everyone who seeks to engage with it. Since 2009, Taube Philanthropies' Jewish Peoplehood Initiative, begun in collaboration with the Koret Foundation, has supported Bay Area programs such as at our six JCCs that accept and celebrate the variety of ways that individuals identify as Jews. Traditional foods and music, a shared literature, congenial politics, and social relationships bind people together and accommodate differences in theological perspectives, religious practice, and spiritual experiences.

The projects we support at Taube Philanthropies are investments in the future. In contrast with commercial ventures, our standard of value is positive change, not profit in the San Francisco Bay Area, where we live, in Poland, where we have our historical roots, and in Israel, our spiritual home.

**Tad Taube is a Bay Area businessman, chairman of Taube Philanthropies, president emeritus of the Koret Foundation and honorary consul for the Republic of Poland in the San Francisco Bay Area.**

**Shana Penn is the executive director of Taube Philanthropies.**



**The Peoplehood Papers** provide a platform for Jews to discuss their common agenda and key issues related to their collective identity. The journal appears three times a year, with each issue addressing a specific theme. The editors invite you to share your thoughts on the ideas and discussions in the Papers, as well as all matters pertinent to Jewish Peoplehood: [publications@jpeoplehood.org](mailto:publications@jpeoplehood.org).

Past issues can be accessed at [www.jpeoplehood.org/library](http://www.jpeoplehood.org/library)

**The Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education (CJPE)** is a "one stop" resource center for institutions and individuals seeking to build collective Jewish life, with a focus on Jewish Peoplehood and Israel education. It provides professional and leadership training, content and programmatic development or general Peoplehood conceptual and educational consulting. [www.jpeoplehood.org](http://www.jpeoplehood.org)

**Taube Philanthropies** was established in 1981 by its founder and chairman, Tad Taube. Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, the foundation makes philanthropic investments in civic, and cultural life in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities in the Bay Area, Poland, and Israel. Its grant making programs support institution-building, heritage preservation, arts, culture, and education, and promotion of Jewish Peoplehood. Taube Philanthropies is committed to collaborative grant making for greater charitable impact and actively partners with numerous philanthropic organizations and individuals. [taubephilanthropies.org](http://taubephilanthropies.org)

**JFN** works with Jewish funders, at the individual and collective levels, to improve the quality of their giving and maximize their impact as they make the change they want to see in the world. JFN leverages the power and the creativity of networks to produce change in the Jewish world.



המרכז לחינוך לעמיות יהודית  
The Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education

