
principles of community-building and Jewish education fly in the face of key Jewish values of role-modeling and social justice. Finally, there is the situation we all confront when a client or friend or relative informs us that he or she has fallen in love with a non-Jew--do we say "Mazel tov" or decry the *shande* or hastily make a referral to our local community's Project on Inter-marriage? Once again, the democratic principles of free-choice and the Jewish value of community building have come head-to-head. How we respond in this situation depends, in part, on which ethical precept or commandment we hold in higher esteem in each particular situation, based on our own personal values and Jewish world-view.

The Dilemma of Limits

Jeffrey Solomon urges us, correctly, to "Seek Excellence in all our Work in the Community" (V). But to what extent? In the era of limited resources and Managed Health Care, where virtually all external forces press us towards shorter-term models of intervention, how and when do we justify additional resources to one client or constituency group, knowing that this will mean that another will receive little or no service at all? With waiting lists at most JFS agencies for counseling, residential services, or in-home supports, at what point do we cut off assistance to the clients we are serving in order to serve those--equally needy or more so--that we are not? In part, this boils down to what standards we are willing to accept--and pay for--in determining our community institutions' Quality of Service. Here, it is not the definition of excellence or quality which determines our quandary, as much the Darwinian choices that confront the balance between what we *want* to do (and may be required to do, according to the government Licensing and Accreditation standards to which our agencies must adhere) and the limits of our community resources, where demand invariably exceeds the level of help we can give.

The Dilemma of Application

Finally, we must deal with the question of, to whom does this ethical framework apply? This may seem obvious at first, until one considers that--in the era of the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission--most Jewish communal agencies employ both Jewish and non-Jewish workers, in some cases serving both a Jewish and non-Jewish clientele. While we might argue that the answer to this dilemma lies in the formation of an organization culture, contemporary issues of diversity-in-the-workplace make the formation of a *Jewish* organizational culture far

more difficult (though in some ways more exciting) than a few years ago.

The consequence of these dilemmas is not to abandon the notion of an ethical framework, but to call for its expansion. Jeffrey Solomon provides us with an important starting-point. Ethical issues must be addressed in graduate programs of Jewish communal service and, more importantly, within the in-service training programs of our organizations. Recognizing the inevitable conflicts and questions that arise, at my agency we have gone one step further, to form an in-house Ethics Committee (I believe the first in a Jewish social service agency) where real-life cases are brought, debated, and outcomes proffered.

Like Hillel said, "The rest is commentary." □

Values as commandment

Norman Linzer

Jewish communal service is a very diverse field. It consists of a multitude of agencies that include federations, community centers, family services, community relations, camping, homes for the aged and Jewish educational institutions. Over the years, a number of attempts at unity have been made. The most notable has been the effort to professionalize Jewish communal service and to designate agency professionals as Jewish communal workers. These efforts have not succeeded because there is no common body of knowledge and theory--the unifying element in defining professional status--that encompasses all fields and all professionals.

An ethical code is another criterion for professional status. Although a code of ethics exists for the Conference of Jewish Communal Service, it is not as detailed as Solomon's ethical framework.

The ethical "Ten Commandments" come at a propitious time in Jewish communal life. Against the backdrop of an erosion of Jewish identity and behavior, and a high rate of assimilation and intermarriage, we are bid to become more Jewish. It is not to be a voluntary action on our part, but in response to commands. Ethical

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commandments--*mitzvot bein adam la-chavero*--elevate interpersonal relationships to a state of holiness--*kedusha*, and are anathema to the modern liberal consciousness of autonomy and freedom. These commandments are not only expressions of social justice and liberal traditions, but the essence of religious obligations in social life.

The Professional is Built on the Personal

Becoming more Jewish means learning where Jewish values come from and practicing them in our personal lives and professional roles. Though the focus of this document is on the professional role, the personal domain needs to be addressed. Professionals who are "professional Jews" in their workplace are not as effective as those who integrate their personal Jewish identities and behaviors with their professional roles. The whole person is needed to act on behalf of the Jewish community.

One of the challenges of devising an ethical Ten Commandments is to reach every Jew on the pluralistic spectrum. Solomon's effort succeeds because the realm of interpersonal relationships appeals to Jews who are ideologically diverse. The commandments appear to be based on several assumptions: working for the Jewish community is not just a job but a vital source of connection to a larger whole that sustains and enriches the individual's own identity; every professional is committed to the furtherance and perpetuation of Jewish life here and in Israel; Jewish life can be enhanced if Jews commit themselves to do so; each Jew's contribution to Jewish life enriches the culture and vitality of the community.

If these assumptions are correct, then the ethical Ten Commandments should find receptive ears among lay leaders and professional staff of Jewish communal agencies. This is because ethics are based on values which are preferences held with affective regard. Ethics is the action component of values. This means that if Jews subscribe to the values implicit in these commandments, they are ethically bound to practice them. What follows are critical comments on the relevance of a number of commandments to modern Jews and Jewish communal service.

Reflections on the Commandments

I. It is not clear what is meant by "beginning" with the foundation of Torah, *Avodah* and *Gemilut Chassadim*, and what these terms mean. Is Solomon exhorting Jews to adopt this three-legged stool in their daily lives or to adapt it in their work? If the former, then individuals should establish times for Torah study, perform community service and acts of kindness in their private lives. If

the latter, as values in one's work, they should be implemented in various forms and settings.

II. Building community is a preferred outcome of the professional's work. It occurs in myriad ways but it may get lost in the details. This commandment exhorts professionals not to lose sight of the ultimate purpose of their efforts, even though change is incremental. Professionals will be more conscious of this goal if they are personally involved in community building in their respective communities.

III. Building a homeland in Israel is a strange phrase. Most modern Jews do not view Israel as their home; America is their home and Israel is where a significant number of Jews live. To be sure, there is concern for Israel's security and vitality, and its role in strengthening American Jewish identity, but there is no significant *aliyah* to one's "home". Instead, Solomon should leave out "homeland", and stress the importance of supporting and building Israel as a Jewish state, an ancient land that has witnessed the ingathering of the exiles in our time, and is defending its right to exist and thrive.

IV. Respecting the ideological and behavioral diversity of Jews in a democratic, pluralistic society is a worthy ethical command. There is too much distrust, anger and verbal abuse of Jews who differ. Each Jew is entitled to believe and practice Judaism in his/her own way, and to respect the right of others to do so in their way. Mutual acceptance is demonstrated in the way professionals work with people with whom they differ.

IX, X. Professionals in Jewish communal service have a responsibility *lilmod ul'lamed*--to learn and to teach, formally in classes and informally by example. They need to serve as role models of Jewishly educated and committed persons who live total Jewish lives in the face of rampant assimilation, and who care about the continuity of this ancient people. The obligation to study Torah and to live Jewishly obtains at home and on the job. In many agencies, Judaic study classes are held for staff and lay people to delve into the treasures of Jewish tradition. Maintaining an ethical demeanor, acting with sensitivity to others' needs, giving *tzedakah*, and watching what one says are some of the main features of modeling Jewish living.

Solomon deserves a *yasher koach*--thank you--for stimulating us to think about the awesome responsibilities

... if Jews subscribe to the values implicit in these commandments, they are ethically bound to practice them.

of working on behalf of the Jewish community. There is no time to rest, as there is so much work to be done. These commandments lend themselves to study, amplification and revision. Let the process begin. The Jewish community will be richer for it. □

The fertility of uncertainty

Joseph Kohane

I am not an ethicist, but my every Jewish communal bone tells me that it is *not* concern about ethics in the Jewish communal field that we require at this time. In fact, now may be the absolutely *wrong* moment to expend energy on this. Even at the best of times, any such endeavor may result in noble but rather self-evident formulations such as "Thou shall seek excellence in all of your work in the community", and "Thou shall act with respect for thy colleagues".

If it is "light" that we are seeking to illumine our way in this period of uncertainty and dire predictions about the fate of the Jewish people, then I would affirm that it is precisely in the realm of the indeterminate, in "darkness" that we must linger, now more than ever.

The Jewish people is coming to terms with the traumas of the past century and a half. We know them well (we would like to believe that we know them all): modern science, mass immigration, democracy, secularism, the Holocaust, the State of Israel, etc. At this juncture, coherence is not what we should want for and from our Jewish communal workers. On the contrary, we should seek individuals who feel more at home in the world of the unknown, who can find inspiration and opportunity in the energy that has been released by the spiritual and communal fragmentation that characterizes contemporary Jewish life. We must look for Jewish professionals, for example, who do not easily trust solutions that advocate more of the same: *more* trips to Israel, *more* Jewish education, *more* Hebrew spoken, *more* religious observance.

Expand the Medium

The answer, after all, may not lie in offering *more*. If we do offer more, everything depends on how we offer it.

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Perhaps we ought to assume that some of the change that has occurred is fundamental to how Jews relate to Judaism. On a very important level we may not be able to go home anymore! Today we are dealing with a Jewish *majority* which does not know, or cannot accept, the underlying assumptions that gave a sense of urgency and ultimate importance to being Jewish. Beliefs that have been held by the masses of Jews for millennia are suspect, and are subjected to perpetual temporizing and rationalization. We are aggadic Jews *even* when we opt for halachic lifestyles.

On the college level (my area of expertise), for example, if we truly are concerned about reaching beyond the 10%-20% of young Jews who are familiar with Jewish traditions, then it cannot be business as usual. Even with our most traditional programs, such as *erev* Shabbat, for example, we must take many more risks. We must bring back to it a sense of pleasure; that special pleasure, that is both sensuous and spiritual, of the tribe assembling to experience joy, camaraderie, sheer fun; where our young people are entertained, amused, challenged. Most importantly, it must be done in a manner that is accessible, direct and already essentially familiar, in a way to which students can spontaneously relate. I mean music, dancing, singing, jugglers, stand-up comedy, as well as Torah-talk, conversation and discussion, etc. Interactive stuff!

No "One-Size-Fits-All" Judaism

That all this happens on Friday night after services (not all may wish to attend), with candles, kiddush and challah is significant. Embarrassment at not knowing and simple absence of any positive associations may render a strictly traditional Shabbat irrelevant or foreign to most. Persuasion through cognitive means will not mean much to students.

Certainly, it will not be one program that will resonate for all. Instead, on campus, we strive to broaden our student constituency by building a Jewish community that is as exciting and dynamic as any. We want Jewish youth to come to us for positive reasons, not out of guilt or sentimentality. At the Ohio State University Hillel, we program "against type". We try to defy damaging preconceptions. Our mix of traditional Jewish fare and the unexpected is driven by our respect and appreciation

We must look for Jewish professionals who do not advocate more of the same ...