

HAVRUTA

PARDES: THE SEMINAL STOP ON YOUR JEWISH JOURNEY, P.2





Welcome from Jerusalem

For over 40 years, Pardes has occupied a unique niche in the Jewish world: We are in Jerusalem, but largely serve the North American Jewish community. Our students mostly come from and return to North America, where they have an enormous impact on their Jewish communities as rabbis across all denominations, educators (formal and informal), Hillel campus professionals, camp professionals, foundation professionals, leaders in Jewish start-ups, leaders of independent minyanim and lay leaders. And almost all our alumni cite their Pardes experience as the seminal stop on their Jewish journeys. So we know: Pardes's principal focus is the North American Jewish world; and Pardes has been critically important and hugely successful in sustaining a robust Jewish community in North America.

Against this backdrop comes news from a recent survey by the Pew Research Center: almost a third of American Jews born after 1980 report that they are "Jews with no religion." Among those who do identify Jewishly, less than a third are raising Jewish children. Forty-two percent of self-identifying Jewish respondents believe that having a good sense of humor is more essential to their Jewish identity than traditional Jewish values.

While not everyone agrees, the study suggests that the American Jewish community might be threatened to a greater degree than any of us realized. So the work we do at Pardes is more essential than ever. We work tirelessly to engage diverse Jewish young adults and connect them with the learning, and profound contemporary relevance, of Judaism's multi-thousand-year traditions and texts. And what we do works. Just ask our 5,000 alumni and the communities they serve. We are proud to be on the front lines of the battle to strengthen and sustain the American Jewish community.

Along with my colleagues on the Pardes faculty and staff, I am privileged to be part of such sacred work. We thank you for sharing in that enterprise.

Michael Rosenzweig (ELS '07-'13) is the President and CEO of Pardes.

Program

PARDES CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATORS

We are proud that the graduates of the 13th cohort of the Pardes Educators Program - who earned their MA in Jewish Education from Hebrew College - have gone out to teach at the **Kehillah Jewish High School** in Palo Alto; the **New Community Jewish High School** in Los Angeles; the **Carmel Academy** in Greenwich, Connecticut; the **Scheck Hillel Community School** in Miami; and the **Arthur I. Meyer Jewish Academy** in West Palm Beach, Florida.

2012-13 was the inaugural year of the Pardes Experiential Educators Program which brings Jewish professionals from the field and raises their Jewish literacy and ability to integrate text in their work. Our graduates have gone back to work as the Jewish Life Program Coordinator at the **Miles Nadal JCC** in Toronto and as the Campus Professional Fellow of the **Pardes Center for Judaism and Conflict Resolution**.



Graduates & faculty of the Pardes Educators Program 2013

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

In 2013 Pardes faculty traveled throughout the world, engaging thousands in thought-provoking text study - on campuses, in communities, at conferences, in offices, coffee shops and more. In San Francisco, New York, Chicago, Montreal, London, Melbourne and elsewhere, they spent time reconnecting with alumni, building bridges with partners and planting seeds of learning that have brought new students to Jerusalem.

A major event took place in June, when nearly 100 people joined **David Bernstein**, **Yaffa Epstein**, **Michael Rosenzweig** and **Daniel Roth** in New York City to learn, nosh, reconnect and schmooze Pardes-style.

The joint Pardes Center for Jewish Educators and Pardes Center for Judaism and Conflict Resolution middle-school program, *The Rodef Shalom: Transforming School Conflicts through Rabbinic Texts*, is now in its second year, with eight schools participating across North America.

PARDES YEAR PROGRAM

Two new professional development initiatives have begun this year for the Pardes faculty: peer classroom observations and teacher learning groups. "There is just too much collective wisdom here, both in subject matter content, as well as in pedagogy, to keep it to ourselves," said Pardes **Dean David Bernstein**.

Faculty will now be learning from each other in a more conscious way than before. There are two teacher learning groups, organized by **Meir Schweiger** and **Levi Cooper**. Peer classroom observations are being coordinated by Dean Bernstein, who reported that while it was voluntary, every teacher is taking the opportunity to observe, and to be observed.

VISITING GROUPS

Over the last 12 months, over 900 people from 27 short-term programs in Israel, including Birthright trips, university groups and synagogue missions, have spent between two hours and a week in our beit midrash getting a taste of Pardes. **Binghamton, Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon** students spent five days at Pardes following their Birthright trip. They had the opportunity to explore Jerusalem more introspectively and learn texts focusing on relationships, an issue of great relevance to their everyday lives. Shabbat was a highlight. Each student got the chance to forge their own 25 hours while interacting with the group as a whole. Pardes hopes that study and celebration here will become an integral part of selected Birthright trips.



George Washington University Hillel visits Pardes

PARDES EXECUTIVE LEARNING SEMINAR

The growth of the Pardes Executive Learning Seminar has outpaced all other programs in recent years and is now offered in both the winter and summer. This past summer 65 students took part in the Seminar focused on the Rambam. "The success of the Seminar reinforces our belief that Pardes is truly a home for students of all ages," remarked CEO **Michael Rosenzweig**. "Most established professionals and community leaders don't have the luxury to take a year to study Jewish texts, but they can take five days."

Asked why 50% of the participants this summer were returnees, Michael responded, "They come for the same reason I came back year after year before I became CEO – because Pardes delivers the highest quality Jewish studies programming around, and does it with passion and openness. It's a delight."

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

5773 was another fabulous year for the Community Education (CE) Program. With our usual array of **morning classes**, **Tour with Text** and **evening lectures**, this year saw an 80% rise in our student numbers. One course that was immensely popular was a new course in **Israeli literature** with **Rachel Korazim**.

5774 sees CE expanding into several new areas: Regular **evening classes**, a **Lunch & Learn** Parashat Hashavua class and a second year of **Tour with Text** based on Mishnaic texts and themes.

PARDES CENTER FOR JUDAISM & CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Want a taste of studying and practicing Jewish models of conflict resolution, or offer a taste to those in your personal or professional community? Sign up now for this year's **9 Adar Jewish Day of Constructive Conflict** on February 9, 2014. Help us reach our goal of 3,000 participants and facilitators around the world studying and practicing Jewish models of constructive conflict in our personal, professional and communal lives, on and around this special day. Visit **9adar.org** for more information.

SUMMER PROGRAM

For three fast-paced weeks in July, Pardes ran its renowned Summer Program for over 70 students, aged 19 to 91. Students reveled in classes from Talmud to Bible, God to Relationships, Moses to King David, Hassidut, Midrash and postmodern philosophy, in a full 9-5 study schedule. In addition we joined together as a community through trips and hikes, a beautiful Friday night meal, visits to teachers' homes, exciting guest speakers, student reading of *Eikha* (Lamentations) overlooking the Old City, a full-day Tisha B'Av program and a lively Hassidic tisch. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and we're looking forward to next year.

Alumni *catch up*



A PARDES VACATION

Aaron Edelheit (Summer '08, ELS '13) is the CEO of the American Home Real Estate Company. He and Frankie, his canine work companion, were featured on CNBC recently due to the fast pace of his company's growth. Aaron also sits on the board of directors for two charitable organizations: the Global Village Project, a school for teenage girls from war-torn countries, and the Moishe House Foundation.

His wife, Valerie (ELS '13), is a research fellow at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She translates scientific results into more "user friendly" language for policy makers and the general public. Like Aaron, she volunteers for the Global Village Project and recently tutored a 13 year-old girl who never attended school in her home country.

After attending the Pardes Executive Learning Seminar together this summer, Aaron and Valerie joined the growing number of married alumni.

"It was fantastic to spend a week...not only with my husband, Aaron, but also with 63 other like-minded individuals committed to lifelong learning," Valerie said. "I love Jewish learning, and it is rare to find a place that is both inclusive and egalitarian and also employs a rigorous teaching and learning curriculum," Aaron added.

Aaron and Valerie live in Atlanta and are expecting their first child.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Many students step outside the beit midrash while at Pardes and take the opportunity to learn a new skill. Some study traditional Jewish scribal arts. Many take ulpan. Jacob Siegel (Year '11-'12) decided to try something a little different. He trained to be a *shochet* (ritual slaughterer) and now regularly leads workshops on ethical animal slaughter and is an educator on Judaism, the environment and food justice.

"Pardes represents my struggle with justice," Jacob says. "From Meesh Hammer-Kossov's class on social justice, to Daniel Roth's work to understand Jewish extremism in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to David Levin-Kruss's beautiful tour of Hebron, showing a commitment to hearing Palestinian people and other marginalized voices."

Jacob graduated from Washington University in St. Louis before attending Pardes and has taken his passion for Judaism and justice to Yeshivat Chovevei Torah where he is a second year student. Jacob is married to Pardes alumna, Rachel (Ruhi) Rubenstein (Part Time '10) who is also pursuing rabbinical ordination at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.



SETTING THE STAGE

It's been 34 years since Debbie Denenberg (Year '79-'80) studied at Pardes, but the memories remain strong. "I cannot imagine my life without Pardes. It affected every breath of my soul...I really can't express my gratitude for the experience."

After Pardes, Debbie attended Harvard Business School and then returned home to turn around her family's small professional dinner theater in Omaha, NE. Her success caught the attention of a Harvard professor who wrote a 1984 case study about her work. The case study is still in use, although they recently changed her name to Rivka Belzer – her grandmother's name! Later Debbie herself became an adjunct professor and coach at Columbia and NYU/Stern and she is currently a management communications coach at Stanford.

Today Debbie is "deliriously happy" as a single mom raising ten-year-old twins and cites laundry as one of her largest ongoing projects. Still, she somehow finds time to remain very active in the Jewish community as a board member for The Friedel Jewish Academy.

As if business coaching, mothering and volunteering were not enough, in her "spare time," Debbie is working on two theater projects: a hip-hop dance musical which she hopes to bring off-Broadway in New York and a new children's musical, *The Doll Maker's Gift*, a survival story from the days of the pogroms.



RHYME AND REASON

Whether working for a Senator in Washington, DC or selling luxury goods at Manhattan's flagship Kate Spade store and whether in Slovakia, Turkey or at Burning Man, **Andrew Lustig** (Year '11-'12, Hourly '13-'14) has been creating art incessantly. Primarily focusing on Israel and the Jewish story, his spoken-word poems have become an online sensation, with hundreds of thousands views. He has facilitated workshops and served as an artist-in-residence at a variety of Jewish gatherings and delivered the graduation address for a Jewish high school last summer. The UK's UJIA commissioned Andrew to produce a piece that he presented at their annual dinner and used as a major promotional tool for Jewish life and involvement in the UK.

Andrew's work is largely inspired by the confluence of his love for Israel and Judaism alongside his dissatisfaction for much of how Judaism and Israel are marketed. He recently shared, "I am working to provide a point of accessibility to things Jewish for those who don't relate to my buddies who are standing by the A train asking guys to wrap themselves in cowhide with boxes hanging off of it. I do what I do because I connect on a fundamental level to the idea that clicking a 'like' on Facebook or being one of tens of thousands of 'views' on YouTube represents one's desire and movement towards Judaism."

Following a summer working with BCI and the One Wish Project, Andrew has returned to Israel as a Dorot Fellow where he is relishing the opportunity to be back in the Pardes beit midrash. Pardes's *These are Moments* campaign features Andrew's poem and can be viewed at www.pardes.org.il.

CAN YOU RELATE?

When **Tovah Leah Nachmani** (Year '85-'86) teaches her Relationships class at Pardes, she doesn't have to look far beyond her own extended family in order to bring in rich dilemmas to the Jewish texts she teaches.

Raised in Dayton, Ohio by parents who instilled a love for Judaism and family, Tovah Leah's year in Jerusalem as a college student shaped her bittersweet decision to leave her beloved family in order to make Israel her home. After a few lone years of soulful seeking, Tovah Leah married her soul mate, Gabi. Together they began looking to expand and deepen their Jewish roots. Tovah Leah enrolled part time at Pardes and unexpectedly discovered studying Torah to be the most formative connection to Judaism.

Remembering her days as a Pardes student, she reflected, "More times than not I returned to the classroom from the beit midrash, thinking I had understood the mishna we grappled with in havruta - only to discover that I had missed the point completely! Because of my then teacher, Meir Schweiger, even the most obscure and uninteresting topics came alive. I haven't stopped thirsting to learn Torah ever since."

Tovah Leah's educational experiences with Pardes, Livnot U'lehibanot, the Women's Beit Midrash and Ayeka, have enabled her to deepen her own Jewish identity, and in turn to facilitate intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth for others.

One highlight for her students was joining Tovah Leah and her family at the brit mila of their grandson.

"הודו לה' כי טוב... כי לעולם חסדו"
*"Praise Hashem for He is good...
 His kindness endures forever."*



THE ARCHITECT RABBI

When Michael Hattin was pulling all-nighters studying architectural design at the University of Toronto, he may not have realized that his design abilities would one day play out on a dry-erase board in Jerusalem with the tanakh as his primary tool.

While working in Manhattan as an architect, a combination of "human initiative and divine intervention" brought him to Cincinnati, Ohio to teach adult education in the Jewish community. Four years later, Israel, Yeshivat Har Etzion and smicha led Michael to teaching at numerous institutions around Israel and to writing for Yeshivat Har Etzion's Virtual Beit Midrash. He recently published *Passages* (Urim Publishers, 2012), which examines the weekly Torah portion through the lens of literary analysis and traditional commentary while also addressing the complexities of modern living. His second book on the Book of Joshua, will shortly be published.

Since coming to Pardes in 2001, Michael has taught tanakh and *halakha* while also running several summer programs and currently serves as the beit midrash Coordinator for the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators (PCJE).

Several years ago, Michael developed several tours of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem which combine history, text and archeology. These have been incorporated by a number of Pardes programs and are also open to the public.

Rejecting the Promised Land? Wealth, idealism and unity



Three faculty members chose to discuss the following text:

As the Israelites stand poised to conquer Canaan, two tribes approach Moses and request to settle on the Eastern side of the Jordan:

"The people of Reuben and the people of Gad had a great number of livestock. They said, '...let this land be given to your servants for a possession. Do not take us across the Jordan.' Moses said... 'Shall your brothers go to the war while you sit here?'"

[Numbers 32:1-6]

"They cherished their property more than they did [human] lives. They said to Moses: 'We shall build sheepfolds for our flocks and cities for our children' [Num 32:16]. Moses replied: '... you should place the main thing first: "Build cities for your children" [ibid, v. 24], and only thereafter "pens for your sheep."'"

[Numbers Rabbah 22.9]

ALEX

The Midrash points to Reuben and Gad's materialism, however what disturbs me is their deafness to the weightiness of this historic moment. The Nation of Israel is about to enter the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. How do these tribes fail to appreciate the momentous national challenge that lies ahead? On a personal note, this was an emotion that animated my *aliyah*. I felt that the modern State of Israel constitutes a brave new frontier for the Jewish people: a return to a full Judaism: land, military, national economy and judiciary. I didn't want to miss out! How did Gad and Reuben sit on the sidelines of Jewish history?

NEIMA

When the tribes of Reuben and Gad make their request, Moshe criticizes them. The entire nation risked their lives to conquer the Eastern side of the Jordan; it would be unfair if the two tribes did not similarly help them conquer the Western side. Numbers Rabbah picks up on another problematic aspect of the tribes' behavior. They speak about building pens for their flocks before building cities for

their children, giving more import to their possessions than their families.

Both points are worth further consideration. Moshe touches on a very "hot" topic in Israeli society at the moment – the question of exemptions from military service. How is it fair for the majority to risk their lives, while other segments of society are exempt? Are there other legitimate ways of serving one's nation that can validate this? How do conscientious objectors compare? The Torah, in Parashat Shoftim, exempts some groups from service; how does this compare with contemporary examples?

The midrash's different criticism, the tribe's materialism, also strikes a modern chord. I too was quick to fault these tribes, but then wondered how often I am not similarly guilty. How often do we place our professions before our families? When a deadline looms, and a child asks for help with homework, to play, or even just to talk, how often do we say, "not now, I'm busy"? When is this legitimate and when are we bordering on Reuben and Gad's misplaced priorities?



MEIR

The preoccupation of Gad and Reuben with materialism raises a fundamental issue regarding the destiny of the Jewish people and their unity. In Numbers 32: 7-15, Moses articulates this concern - the demoralizing effect that this request will have on the Jewish people. Will they once again reject the land and bring about their destruction?

It is worth noting that the two tribes responded positively to Moses' rebuke. They offered to participate in the conquest and hold off on taking possession of their land until everyone else had received their portion; their behavior was a genuine expression of Jewish solidarity. Furthermore, they built a huge altar by the Jordan River to remind the tribes in Israel to not reject them by saying: "you have no portion in God." Unfortunately, there is a midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 22:7), which notes that because they separated themselves from their brothers, they were the first to be exiled (see Chronicles I: 5, 26).

In our postmodern age, we face similar issues: 1) Is Israel the focus of Jewish peoplehood? 2) Are we one people that reinforce each other, or do we invalidate each other's existence? 3) Does materialism subvert our spiritual well-being? 4) Do we think ahead to how future generations will be affected by living in assimilated surroundings? 5) Are we caught up with self-fulfillment, or do we have a vision of Jewish destiny?

ALEX

Like Gad and Reuben, we value our independence, yet make provisions to remain attached to our Jewish traditions. Somehow this backfires, as living on the periphery engenders a Judaism that is stale, lacking relevance. The midrash claims that Gad and Reuben were exiled before the other tribes. Did they assimilate? Did they lack the determination to persist in the awkwardness of upholding a different identity? Or were they simply geographically remote, and nobody wanted to defend them?

Alex Israel is Director of the Pardes Community Education Program and the Pardes Summer Program and member of the faculty. His new book 'I Kings: Torn in Two' (Maggid, 2013) is available on Amazon.

Neima Novetsky is a faculty member in the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators.

Meir Schweiger is the Spiritual Advisor, Director of the Fellows Program, Educational Director of the Pardes Executive Learning Seminar and longest-serving faculty member at Pardes.

We make our lifestyle choices for economic and other reasons, but those decisions impact our identity in far reaching ways. If we want to ensure that Judaism remains at the center-stage of our lives, there is no better way than remaining in a vibrant Jewish center.

NEIMA

Notably, neither Moshe, nor the midrash, fault the tribes for their desire to live outside of the original Promised Land. They are not viewed as rejecting the land, and, they have no desire to forsake either God or their people, and take pains to show this. Nonetheless, the very sign they set up is perceived by the people living in Israel as a sign of their separation, not their solidarity.

I don't agree that choosing to live "beyond the Jordan" needs to mean "a peripheral Judaism." There are many people who live outside of Israel and thrive in their relationship to both Hashem and Mizvot. But, if one decides to separate one's self from the larger community, it will be difficult to be a full part of that community.

MEIR

Jews can thrive spiritually outside of Israel. Unfortunately, this is grounded in a *weltanschauung* which places at its core "the self" – self-absorption, self-gratification and self-fulfillment. This crosses denominational and geographical lines; it expresses itself in the material, professional and spiritual realms. Over 40 years ago, I made *aliyah* because I felt committed to the destiny of the State of Israel, the future of the Jewish people and the most comprehensive actualization of Judaism. The tribes of Gad and Reuben rose to the challenge of shaping the destiny of the Jewish people, but then drifted away from the "Jewish" center and succumbed to their ideology of "self." How much are we prepared to transcend ourselves by embracing the existence of a Jewish state, and engaging the mind-boggling opportunity to become a 'kingdom of priests and a holy nation'?

10 Tips for Constructive Feedback from the Rambam

by Daniel Roth



Imagine you are managing a project and a team member makes a blunder at a crucial moment. Unable to contain your frustration and rage, you blow up at him in front of everyone, yelling, "I can't believe you did that! What were you thinking?! You are always making these kinds of mistakes!"

If this scenario seems even slightly familiar to you (whether as a project manager, team member, parent, child, teacher, student, counselor or camper) it may be time to get some free consultation from Rabbi Dr. Moshe ben Maimon (the Rambam) on how to better offer constructive feedback, or as it is known in rabbinic literature, *tokhahah*.

The Rambam (Hilchot Deot 6:6) writes:

"When a man commits a transgression against a fellow person, he should not hate the offender and keep silent...rather, there is a mitzvah incumbent upon him to inform him and say to him, 'Why did you do such and such to me?' and, 'For what reason did you commit a transgression against me in regard to the specified matter?'"

From here we learn a few important tips for offering constructive feedback:

1. Don't keep your frustration in and not say anything; too often it will only foster more hatred and destructive behavior.
2. Honestly ask to understand *their* perspective as to why they may have done or not done what is bothering you.
3. Be as specific as possible about what is bothering you, avoiding generalizations.

The Rambam then continues (Hilchot Deot 6:7):

"He who reproves his friend...is required to reprove him [in private] between the other person and himself, to speak gently and in a soft manner, and to make known to him that you are speaking to him only for his benefit..."

Here the Rambam adds more advice:

4. Speak to the person in private, not in front of peers or others.
5. Speak gently and in a soft manner. This is best achieved when you speak from your point of view, not presenting the events as hard evidence against them, thereby leaving room for them to hear you and share their perspective.
6. Try to explain that you are bringing the issue up in order to help them (and you) learn and grow from the experience and not for the sake of hurting them.

Contemporary conflict resolution specialists add their own tips, such as:

7. Prepare your comments in advance so you can be clear about what you want to say and how you want to say it.
8. Limit your focus to no more than two issues. Beyond that, it may create defensiveness and the cessation of the learning process.
9. Share with them positive points of their performance, thereby stressing that the feedback you are offering is within a larger context.
10. Discuss specific suggestions for how the situation can be best improved or avoided in the future.

After this consultation with the Rambam, think about how the conversation could be different. When done correctly, providing constructive feedback can be straightforward and helpful rather than difficult and hurtful. It should lead to growth and increase real peace between you, as Resh Lakish said, *"Tokhahah brings to peace...any peace without tokhahah is not peace"* (Genesis Rabbah 54:3).

Daniel Roth is the Director of the Pardes Center for Judaism and Conflict Resolution. For more information and further reading see <http://pcjcr.pardes.org>. Special thanks to Rabbi Dr. Chaim Kaminsky, PCJCR Senior Research Scholar for his research on this topic.

Say Hello, Say Goodbye by Derek Kwait



At the closing lunch of the year in May 2013, Pardes students continued the tradition of sharing some parting words with the rest of the community. This is what Derek Kwait said:

Hello, my name's Derek. I'm from Pittsburgh. I'm a Fellow at Pardes, which means I'm in my second year, so if you have any questions about Pardes or Jerusalem, I'll be happy to try to answer them.

Oh wait, wrong speech.

That's the speech I wish I was giving. It's so much easier to say hi to a stranger than to say goodbye to a loved one. And for me, Pardes is very much a loved one.

When I thought to start my speech this way, it occurred to me that when you study a text and when you meet Pardes-kinds of people, every meeting is really a new introduction. It never ceases to amaze me how each time you go back to a text or a person or anything holy, it's like meeting them all over again, because each time they surprise you with new insights, nuances and innovations.

There's a great quote from Andrew Lustig, my fellow student, who said, "When you enter a new experience, 50% of it will work out as planned, and the other 50%, the parts that transform you, that change your life the most, will be the parts you never saw coming." I came to Pardes two years ago expecting to learn a lot of texts and make new friends, but I never saw coming how much it would transform me. The mere fact that I'm standing here in front of you today not clutching something in my hand with every word I need to say on it shows how far I've come. My whole life, I've always felt like there's this person inside me struggling to get out. Now, here, I feel like I've finally been able to live as this part-novelist, part-stand-up comedian, part-*talmid chacham* that's always been inside me.

Since they'll always be so inextricably intertwined for me, I can't end the year without also ending *Moed Katan*. And I thank my teachers Meesh, Leah and Hayim, without whom a page of Talmud wouldn't mean anything to me.

"Rav Levi said, 'All that go from the synagogue to the beit midrash and from the beit midrash to the synagogue merit to receive the face of the *Shechina* (Divine Presence), as it says, "They will go from strength to strength and see the Lord God in Zion."'"

Whether you're like me and leaving this beit midrash to go back to the shuls in America, or whether you're staying here or going to another beit midrash, may you go from strength to strength, taking some of that Divine Presence we've received in Zion and bring it back with us.



"Rav Ashi said in the name of Rav, 'There is no rest for Torah scholars, even in the World to Come, as it says, "They will go from strength to strength and see the Lord God in Zion."'"

There is no rest for Torah scholars because if you're ever too comfortable, it means you're not growing. So may none of us ever get rest, that we keep growing and moving from strength to strength, taking the Torah, the Divinity we've encountered in the texts as much as in each other in Zion and bring it back to wherever we're going, and that we only have introductions to great texts and people that are forever new.

Derek Kwait (Year '11-'12, Fellow '12-'13) lives in New York City and is the Editor-in-Chief of *New Voices Magazine* and Executive Director of the Jewish Student Press Service.



Pardes: Expanding the *havruta* model to strategic partnerships

By Yaffa Epstein

Even before 'collaboration' and 'partnership' were buzzwords in the non-profit

world, Pardes championed cooperation and the pooling of talent and resources. One of Pardes's key methodologies is *havruta* (paired) learning. The focus here is on the value that two heads are better than one, and the fact that one can often learn more with another person than one can on his or her own.

Over the last few years, Pardes has undergone an intense strategic planning process to ensure our continued strength and success. In its strategic plan, Pardes's board, faculty, alumni and students identified eleven aims for Pardes over the next five years, including:

- *To become the major quality institute in Israel for recruiting, training, developing and supporting Jewish educational and communal professionals*
- *To make a transformational impact on Jewish communities of North America through the Pardes model of Jewish learning and the engagement of Pardes alumni*

A major step in implementing these aims has been to collaborate with Pardes's partners in the Jewish world and to initiate new partnerships with a variety of local and national institutions, bringing the Pardes approach to learning to the widest possible audience, thereby maximizing our recruiting and fundraising efforts.

To date, Pardes has built and strengthened partnerships with a number of organizations working with young Jewish adults in North America: *Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life*, *Moishe House*, *Limmud International*, *BirthingrightNEXT* and *Kevah*. The nature of each of these relationships varies depending on the needs of each organization. Whether it has been creating a tailored curriculum, offering significant tuition discounts or providing a faculty presence on campus, at a Limmud event, or at a Moishe House retreat, Pardes has consistently worked with each of our partners to provide world-class, deep and engaging Jewish content.

Spotlight on Pardes's Jewish Professional Development Track at Hillel Institute, Summer 2013

One example of this kind of collaboration has been a joint project with Hillel. Over the last 15 years Hillel and Pardes have enjoyed a long-standing partnership, and Pardes has provided high-level Jewish learning and enrichment to hundreds of Hillel professionals, student leaders and other students involved with Hillel.

In March 2013 Hillel issued a tender outlining an ambitious plan to provide training to Hillel professionals who work most closely with students, helping them to feel confident, comfortable and knowledgeable enough to bring Jewish content and ideas into these important, often life-changing conversations and experiences.

Pardes submitted a proposal for three 90-minute sessions to be implemented at Hillel's annual professional gathering, Hillel Institute, in St. Louis in July 2013. These sessions, designed by Pardes faculty, utilized the three-pronged Pardes educational methodology of empowerment, *havruta* learning and intense immersion in Jewish content. Our plan outlined how young Jewish professionals, with limited text background, could begin to feel comfortable and confident utilizing the vastness of Jewish content in their work.

The curriculum focused on the issue of responsibility, and specifically the area of parent and child relationships. We explored questions like "how do I balance my own needs with what my parents want," and "what if my parents have different religious beliefs than I do" from a Jewish perspective. Pardes's curriculum used classic Jewish texts to answer the real life questions that Hillel's Jewish professionals face on a daily basis in their work on campus.

Pardes's proposal was selected, and we began working closely with Hillel's Vice President of Global Jewish Experience, Abi Dauber-Sterne, and Director of Learning for Jewish Experience, **Rachel Gildiner (Summer '07)**, to develop the Jewish Professional Development track.

A key element of the plan was that the curriculum would be facilitated and taught by leading Hillel professionals, many of whom are experienced Jewish educators, including some Pardes alumni. This was a fantastic opportunity for Pardes to crystalize and promote its unique educational methodology and to train outstanding Hillel professionals to use it.

After its initial crafting, the curriculum was reviewed by the Jewish Professional Development Track planning team, a diverse group of Hillel professionals at various levels within the organization. After their input, Pardes faculty ran a two-part web-based training for the facilitators. One of the most exciting parts of the process was when the Hillel educators were empowered to bring their own voices and ideas to the conversation, making the curriculum their own. The process of review and facilitation training was inspiring, truly embodying the Pardes values of empowerment and *havruta*, and ultimately created a richer and more beautiful final product.

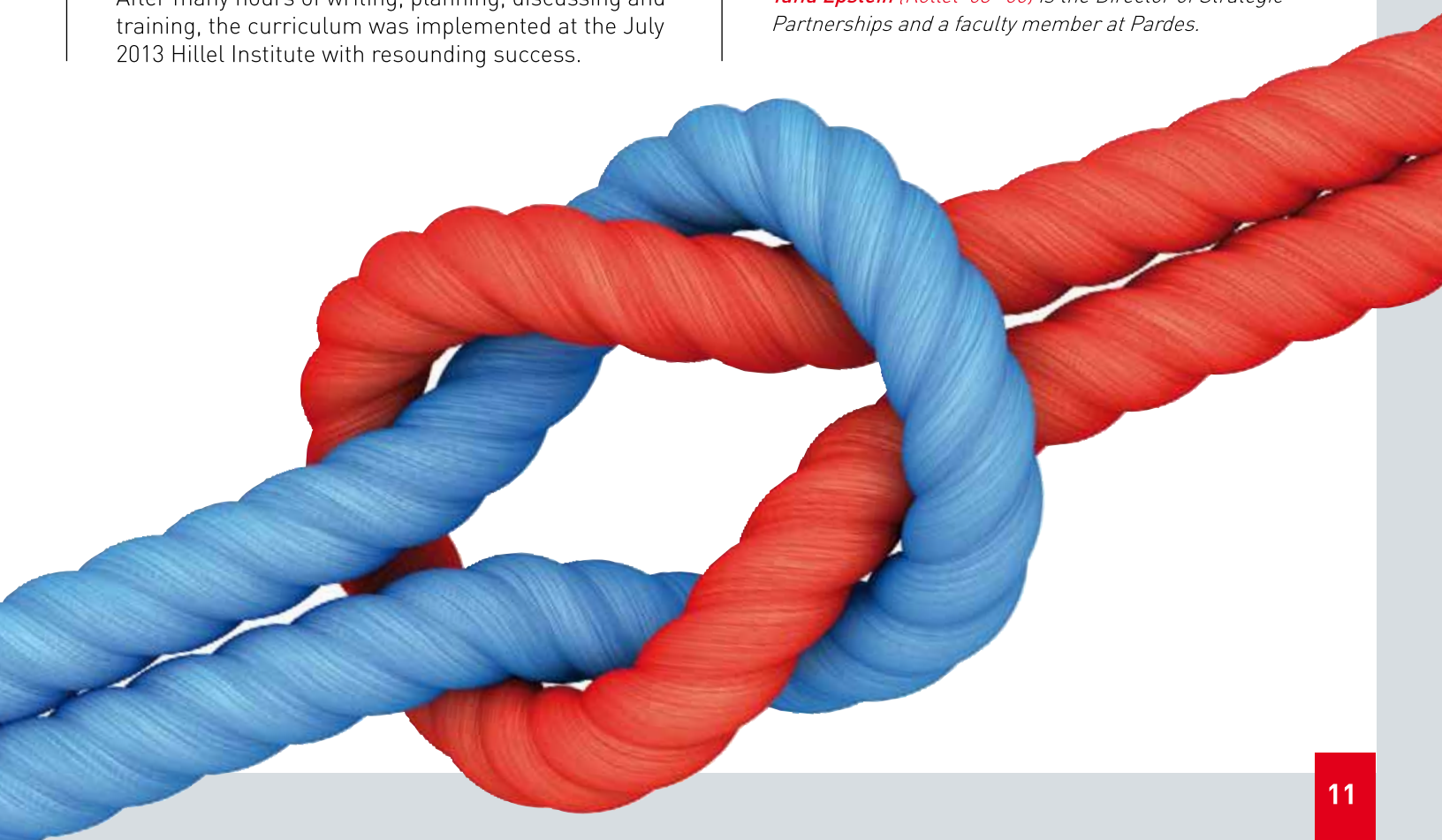
After many hours of writing, planning, discussing and training, the curriculum was implemented at the July 2013 Hillel Institute with resounding success.

The sessions were attended by over 75 professionals at various levels within Hillel, ranging from new professionals to Israel Fellows to campus rabbis. While each session was different, there was an underlying structure and core educational message that Jewish content was accessible to all and critical to our work as Jewish professionals.

Rachel Gildiner commented, "Pardes was an incredible partner in the creation of this exciting and ambitious pilot curriculum. They came with a clear and compelling educational vision for how to explore the human concept of responsibility through Jewish text, but were open to the feedback, suggestions and points of view of Hillel professionals. Pardes's experience and deep understanding of Hillel professionals' work and the students they engage was an invaluable asset."

This is just one example of how close engagement and strategic thinking, in essence a *havruta*, with our key partners in the field can help Pardes bring its unique educational methodology to different organizations and communities, and to Jewish professionals working most closely with our target audience. As we continue to strengthen these relationships, we hope to increase exposure to Pardes, and the one-of-a-kind Torah we can bring to the Jewish world.

Yaffa Epstein (Kollel '03-'06) is the Director of Strategic Partnerships and a faculty member at Pardes.



Thank you

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For more information
 contact jamie@pardes.org.

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For more information about leaving a future gift to Pardes contact Joshua Chadajo: +1 212 447 4333 or joshua@pardes.org.

Longtime friend and benefactor, **Raymond Kaplan z"l** (1918-2013), passed away this spring, but his memory will live on at Pardes. Raymond left a generous legacy gift that enables more students to enjoy the Pardes experience.

Both Ray and his wife, **Betty z"l** (1915-2009), were strong supporters and leaders of Pardes. Ray and Betty came to live in Jerusalem full-time in 1980 but had fallen in love with Israel on their first trip in 1960. After this trip it was a matter of 'when,' not 'if.' They became involved in important charity projects, loved studying and were 'high' on Israel and the Jewish people. Ray and Betty's daughter, Audrey Kaplan Scher is a Pardes board member in Israel and remains a steadfast supporter.

We also mourn the loss of **Jan Tuttleman z"l** (1956-2012), a brilliant scientist and community leader. She made her home in San Diego, where her warmth, brilliance, beauty and eloquence made her a natural choice for Chair of the Board of the Jewish Federation of San Diego County, and founding Chair of the Jewish Women's Foundation of San Diego. After studying with Rabbi Landes in the Wexner Program, she became an attached and devoted friend and donor. Thanks to her generosity her impact on Pardes lives on. We wish her family every comfort.



Pardes would like to acknowledge and thank **Masa Israel Journey** for its ongoing partnership and support, including scholarships and grants that assisted more than 30% of Pardes Year Program students during the past year. This support provided key assistance that enabled Jewish young adults to deeply engage with Jewish texts and explore Israel within Pardes's unique, diverse and supportive community.

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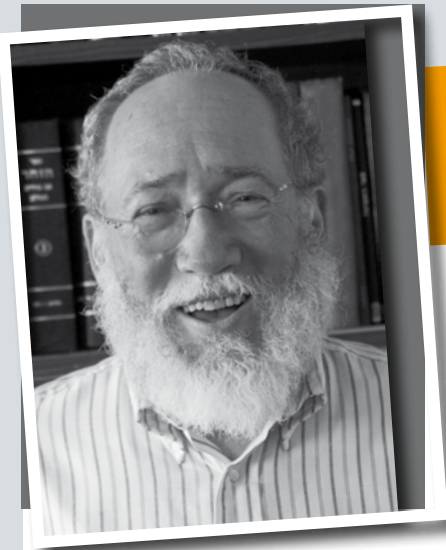
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The Last Word by Daniel Landes



The young man sitting opposite me on the number 21 bus was wearing a red T-shirt with a purple logo reading “who are you going to trust?” It was a slow ride and so I

asked him to answer the question. Well, it turns out that he was an undergraduate history major at Tel Aviv University and he had a lot to say. In a stimulating and laugh-filled conversation, our answer came out like this: in pre-modern times you trusted authority; modernity put supreme trust in the self as the ultimate arbiter and indeed creator of value; post-modernity meant (à la Rorty) to trust nobody and everybody in their place with a real sense of irony and contingency (it might indeed be true).

Where did all that leave me, Ayal wanted to know. I replied, “If you can ride this line to Pierre Koenig we can get off and look at a text in the Pardes beit midrash.” The beauty of Jerusalem is that you have people who take you up on your offer.

Twenty minutes later we were pondering a paragraph in *Orot HaTorah* (Lights of the Torah) written by Rav Kook, the transcendent master, the first Chief Rabbi of the Jewish People in Eretz Yisrael (d. 1935) who took such questions seriously. He wrote (my translation):

The straight man must believe in his life. That is, he should believe in the life of his self and that the feelings which precede in a direct fashion from the core of his soul are good and straight and that they lead him in a straight path. The Torah must be a light unto his feet; with it he shall see the place where error lies, for at times the soul wanders into a pathless void. But the steady stance must be that of soulful trust (bitachon nafshi). The Israelite is obligated to believe that a divine soul lodges within him, that his own essence is one letter from within the Torah.

Rav Kook looked like a pre-modern Jew from his beaver cap *streimel* down to his Edwardian-style frock coat, with a wide beard and the *tzitzit* fringes out. He was creative in all areas of traditional Jewish study but was intrigued by the modern-spirited Zionism. He liked the idea that one should take responsibility for one’s actions and values and all that is reflected in the paragraph. He saw certain traditions as *authoritative* but he shuddered when it was *authoritarian*. Tradition can close people down and make them suspect their own healthy instincts. Rav Kook hated that. He saw the Torah and the soul as having a common source in God’s divinity and that community could make for a dynamic personal command of national spirituality.

Tradition can close people down and make them suspect their own healthy instincts.

But Rav Kook knew that the soul’s path was truer to itself when invention was coupled with discovery. The time-tested ways of the Torah can save us from “the pathless void” that are modernity at its most hideous, nihilistic moments and post-modernity when it is silly about the lives we need to live to be meaningful and caring. *Bitachon nafshi*, soulful trust, is the key, Ayal said softly.

We looked at our watches. We were both late and both bolted to the door. As Ayal ran out he grabbed a kippah lying on our table (he wasn’t wearing one on the bus or in the beit midrash). Last word Ayal: Bring my kippah back and with or without it, let’s finish the next paragraph!

The Summer 2014 Pardes Executive Learning Seminar in Jerusalem (June 29 – July 3, 2014) will explore the life and works of Rav Kook. For more information see www.pardes.org.il/executive.

Daniel Landes is the Director of Pardes.

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8, 15, 22, 29 Marc Brettler
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February

9 PCJCR Jewish Day of
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12, 19, 26 Gila Fine
evening lecture series 

March

5, 12, 19, 26 Yael Ziegler
evening lecture series 

23-25 PCJE Spring Forward
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April

28 Pardes Community
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June

3 Tikun Leil Shavuot 

29 - July 3 Pardes Executive
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6 - 24 Pardes Summer
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25 - Aug 1 PCJE Summer
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