



BNEI AKIVA
OF THE US AND CANADA

CHOVERET CHINUCH

Chodesh Kislev

Noseh: Gevura



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Chodesh Tov!

We're happy to introduce you to the Choveret Chinuch for Chodesh Kislev! As the days get shorter and the nights get longer, there is a very special event in the Jewish calendar that helps brighten up our long cold nights and fill them with warmth- Chanukah! The story of Chanukah, especially commemorating the war of Chanukah has timeless lessons. This month we chose to focus on the noseh of Gevura- strength. The Maccabees and the Jewish army were *Giborim*- strong people who were able to save the Jewish state from total destruction. This idea resonates with the modern Religious-Zionists who look up to the Giborim of the Modern State of Israel- Chalutzim, Prime Ministers, soldiers, and even just the average Jew who help make the State what it is today. In these peulot we hope to expose our chanichim to many different types of gevura to show that everyone can be a Gibor/et!

It is important that you and your madrichim own these peulot as your own.

What we gave you is just the skeleton, if you do exactly what this page says- you will not run a successful snif! Read the peulot, make edits, and add your own stories or favorite games! Mix and match- these peulot have many parts, you can take parts of a peula and move them to another or create new ones. At the end of this choveret you can find extra stories and ideas to add as you like. Feel free to run ideas by any of us!

Bivrakat Chevrei Torah v'Avodah,

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Choveret Chinuch Kislev 5778

Peula #1 “Skill Sets”

Written by Talya Saban, Hanhala Artzit

Goal: To teach the Chanichim about the “skill set” of a Gibor/et. A Gibor/et is not just strong, strength without other characteristics would not make a person a Gibor/et.

Tip: Establish before Snif what type of hero you want to portray; whether that be a hero in the Parasha, in Israeli history, their own hero’s, etc. Once you determine that, alter the closing ideas for the games so that they follow through with your overall theme.

Game #1: Tug of War

- Split the chanichim into two even teams (if you have a small amount of chanichim have 1 vs 1 rounds and if you have a large group, do round of 3-4 kids on each side)
- Tie a small knot in the middle of the rope (before Shabbat) so that when the chanichim are playing you know which team won
- Play 3-4 rounds of this game (depending on how long your games are)

Closing Idea:

A Gibor/et is someone who may not have started the strongest but is always working on getting stronger so that he’s ready for any situation, no matter what it is

Game #2: Sergeant ____ Says

- Use your name for the title
- Play a normal game of Simon says but try to keep the actions more exercise oriented (i.e. run back and forth, do 5 push ups, jump up and down, etc.)
- Play the game fast and get intense about it

Closing Idea: A Gibor/et is someone who needs to learn how to not only listen to instructions but follow them too.

Game #3: Sardines (backwards hide and seek)

- 1 person hides and everyone else goes off and finds them (the seekers can break off into 2-3 people group to search for the hider)

- when someone finds them they join them in the hiding spot, the last one to find them is the next hider
- Make sure to determine borders in your Snif area so that they can only hide/ look there
- Have one madrich with the hiding kid and one madrich with the groups that are searching

Closing Idea:

A Gibor/et needs to be able to think quickly and strategically. They always need to keep their skills on point so that they can handle any task someone throws at them. (I.e. A soldier in the army sometimes needs to search for people in the dark, without anyone, etc. Bring different examples depending on your Gibor/et)

Conversation points:

Try and open up the kids to different types of gevura.

- Which of these games tested for strength?
- Why would someone need these different types of skills?
- What types jobs require these different types of strengths?
- Could someone be a good soldier/firefighter/madrich- if they were only strong and didn't listen to instructions or think of their feet?

Supplies:

Rope or Old Sheet for tug of war

Torah Idea: “Mi LaHashem Eli”, Yehuda Maccabee inspired others to join his battle and was a successful leader.

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Peula #2 “Teamwork”

Written by Talya Saban, Hanhala Artzit

Goal: To have the chanichim understand the importance of teamwork and why it makes a group of people into giborim.

Tip: Establish before Snif what type of hero you want to portray; whether that be a hero in the Parasha, in Israeli history, their own hero's, etc. Once you determine that, alter the closing ideas for the games so that they follow through with your overall theme.

Game #1: 3 Legged Race

- Have 2 people pair up and have a 3 legged race
- Have 3-4 races depending on timing

Facilitate a conversation-

- What's hard about a three legged race?
- What's the most important thing in this kind of activity?
- How can you work well as a team (talking to each other, respect etc.)?

Closing Idea:

You can't do anything alone

A Gibor/et needs people to help him, can't do things alone

No good Gibor/et can do anything without the help of others

Game #2: Motion Leader/ Indian Chief

- One person leaves the room and the whole room follows one person who is doing the motions and the person who leaves has to guess who is leading the motions
- Play 3-4 rounds of this
- Switch up the people leaving and the people leading the motions

Closing Thoughts:

Your actions speak louder than words

It's not about what you say, it's about what you DO

A Gibor/et acts on what they say they're going to do; follow through with their word

Game #3: Number Shout

- Pick a number around 12-18
- Explain to your Chanichim that they need to count to the number you chose, everyone can only say one number at a time, two people can't say it at once
- If two people do say it at the same time, then the whole group has to start counting again

Conversation points:

- Was this game hard?
- Why?
- Why is teamwork hard?
- How can we make it easier?
- Why is teamwork important?

Closing Thoughts:

A Gibor/et needs to be willing to take action even if s/he's not required to

It's about being a Rosh Gadol even when it's not your job

A Gibor/et never says "that's not my job"

A Gibor/et understands the importance of teamwork

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Peula #3 “Self Control”

Written by Jen van Amerongen, Merakezet Chinuch

Goal: Chanichim understand that being a Gibor/et isn't just about being physically strong. In Judaism, self-control is what makes a person strong.

Optional opening: “The Marshmallow Test” tell the kids at the beginning of snif that they have a choice. They can either have a snack now or they can wait until the end of snif and get two snacks. At the end of snif you can give them the snacks and tell them that this also was a test of self-control!

Games/Triggers

Game #1 - Ninja

- Begin with the players standing in a circle facing one another. They should be at least two arm lengths apart.
- They bow to one another and then take a martial arts pose.
- Each player must choose to hop or strike on their move.
- A strike must be aimed at the other player’s hand. The defender is allowed to move that hand. If the attacker hits that hand, it becomes out of play. Once a player loses both hands they are eliminated.
- There can be only one champion, but then you’re free to restart the game.
- The key is to make sure they DO NOT move unless it is their turn.
- Video: <https://youtu.be/w9kn7I32IBE>

After the game facilitate a conversation about self-control. Ask the kids questions about the game:

- Who had a hard time waiting their turn to go?
- Why was it so hard?
- How can you work on being more patient and being able to control yourself?
- Why do you think it’s important to wait your turn?
- Would the game work if nobody waited their turn?

Game #2 - I Love You Baby But I Just Can't Smile

- Have the kids stand/sit in a circle.
- One child is picked to go around and try to get the kids to smile/laugh. They go up to someone in the circle and say the phrase "If you love me baby, smile." It might make the kids giggle because it's silly/uncomfortable.
- The kid in the circle has to respond without laughing or smiling, "I love you baby, but I just can't smile."
- If they laugh or smile the child in the middle wins and someone else is picked to go up.

After the game facilitate a conversation about self-control. Ask the kids questions about the game:

- Did you find it hard not to laugh?
- Can you think of some times in life when we shouldn't laugh?
- Eating is fun, like laughing is fun, but there is a time to eat and a time to stop eating. When is it time to stop eating?
- Chasing around and being silly is fun, but there is a time and a place for silliness.
- When is okay to be silly?
- When is it not okay to be silly?
- How can you have self-control in these situations?

Story: Michael Levin

Michael Levin was an American born teenager, and even though he did not grow up in a very affiliated Jewish home, he decided that he needed to join the Israeli Army. Michael worked really hard to join even though he did not know much about being a soldier and was not very physically strong. Despite all odds, Michael fought, and exercised self-control and willpower to get himself into the army. Michael was killed in the Lebanon war on August 1st, 2006 and his story has inspired thousands of Americans to enlist as lone soldiers.

Selections from stories about Michael Levin:

"In terms of Michael's activating his love of Israel, he arrived as a new immigrant at 118 pounds, with mild asthma, sore knees, very little conversational Hebrew - Yet Michael had the heart of a lion - Through sheer determination, he transformed his dreams into Reality When he would see dignitaries like Shimon Peres - Michael would go right up to them, shake hands, introduce himself and say without

hesitation - "My name is Michael Levin. Please remember that name. I will make my mark in Israeli Society" Hearing of this boldness, Michael's Dad asked --- "Michael, how can say such a thing? Dad - "Trust me on this one" Michael was determined to be a member of an elite army unit. He arrived at the special induction center. He was told that interviews were granted only by those presenting coveted printed invitations- Undaunted, Michael surveyed the building, climbed a dumpster, opened a 2nd floor window and broke in. He arrived unannounced at the interview room, to the surprise of a duly impressed IDF officer – "If you are so very determined to be given a try-out, who am I to say NO?". With countless hours of practice, Michael became a remarkable sharp-shooter. He built up incredible physical stamina..."

"Typically, the enlistment process isn't particularly illuminating when it comes to the strength of someone's will—it's supposed to be the boring part. Not so with Michael. The legend goes that in the course of his enlistment, the gears of bureaucracy had gummed up, and Michael was waiting for weeks on several key documents that would allow him to enter basic training. Finally, he decided to go down to the admissions building, where he promptly was turned away from the front door due to his not having those papers. Michael, undeterred, walked in an alley next to the building, pushed a Dumpster up against the wall, climbed into a second story window, found the appropriate office, and got his enlistment sorted out. He was going to be a paratrooper, and one measly "no" wasn't going to stop him.

When he was first starting to parachute out of planes, Michael, a little on the short side and weighing in at around 120 pounds, had to strap extra weight to himself in order to stabilize his descent (at Ramah, he'd been affectionately nicknamed "Termite"). All of the other men in his unit speak of him in mythical terms, admiring him for his humor, his devotion, and—a very Israeli-specific quality to admire—his refusal to complain. He quickly rose to become a first sergeant, with designs on becoming a career officer."

Torah Idea:

The Mishna in Pirkei Avot 4:1 asks- Who is a Gibor? What makes a person strong? You might think that it's someone super physically strong! But it answers, someone who can control themselves is a gibor. Being physically strong can be good but what really shows a person's strength is how s/he can control her/himself!

Conversation idea:

- Hold up pictures of “Giborim” (some examples on next page) - sports players, hercules, bodybuilders etc. Ask: ‘Are these people strong?’ Then hold up pictures of people standing up to bullies, people who stay quiet in class, people who try to be healthy by exercising and not eating junk, people who don’t speak Lashon Hara- what about them?
- What Mitzvot help us practice self control? (Ex: Kashrut, can’t eat whatever we want. Lashon Hara. Keeping Shabbos.)

Example Pictures:



HELP STOP BULLYING BY SPEAKING OUT!



“Chupar” Print out, a nice take home for the kids to take home to remind them of what we learned-

איזהו גבור? הכובש את יצרו

Who is strong?

The person who can control themselves

אבות ד:א

Pirkei Avot 4:1

איזהו גבור? הכובש את יצרו

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Pirkei Avot 4:1

Extra Material!

Story of Yaakov wrestling the Angel

Source: <http://torahtots.com/parsha/breishis/vayish2.htm>

Yaakov wasn't strong but he tried to fight the angel anyway. In the end he didn't even have to fully defeat him- he controlled himself and let him go!

Yaakov moves his family and possessions back across the Yabok river where they will be safe. By evening he realizes he has left a couple of jars and knick-knacks at the old camp site. Being a true *tzadik*, even the smallest jars and possessions are important to him. So he goes back to retrieve them.

On the other side, a strange man attacks him. All night they wrestle, locked arm in arm. Both men possess incredible strength. Neither can knock the other down. As the first rays of the sun appear on the horizon, in desperation, the stranger dislocates Yaakov's hip. Now Yaakov is left limping, but still he will not loosen his grip on the stranger. Now the stranger begins to panic! He begs Yaakov to let go. But before Yaakov will release him, he wants to know why, and who this stranger is.

The stranger reveals himself as a *Malach* (Angel). Not just any *Malach*... He is Esav's *Malach* (guardian angel), on a mission to teach Yaakov a lesson about messing with Esav. Instead, it is *Hashem* who teaches both the *Malach* and Yaakov a lesson. That lesson is that *Hashem* will always protect Yaakov against his enemies.

Yaakov insists that the *Malach* bless him. Indeed, the *Malach* gives him a mega-*bracha*. First, it acknowledges Yaakov's right to Yitzchak's *brachot*. Second, the *Malach* declares that "from now on you (Yaakov) will be known as Yisroel," declaring that Yaakov fought with a *Malach* and won. Now Yaakov could be sure that he would be successful in his imminent confrontation with Esav.

Because the *Malach* hit Yaakov's hip joint, the *Torah* prohibits a Jew from eating the *Gid Ha-Nashe* - the Sciatic nerve on the hip joint of an animal - to this very day.

Stories about Michael Levin

<http://www.aish.com/h/imd/48922547.html>

<http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/210497/remembering-michael-levin-the-22-year-old-american-lone-soldier-who-was-killed-ten-years-ago-in-lebanon>

Chalutzim and Teamwork

Share stories about the Chalutzim, people who had to work together (teamwork!) to make Israel flourish.

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-kibbutz-movement/>

You can sing Eretz Yisrael Sheli, and explain the words, use hand motions- we have to work together to make something great.

<http://www.hebrewsongs.com/?song=eretzisraelsheli>

Stories about the War of Chanukah

<http://www.torahtots.com/holidays/chanuka/chanstr.htm>

The whole idea of the war is about gevura, not just physical strength- working as a team, the small and weak Jews who went up against the strong powerful Greeks.

Want to edit these peulot online?

Open the file on googledocs, <https://tinyurl.com/choveretkislev> click **'file'**, click **'make a copy'** and voila- you have your own Choveret to edit!