

CHOVERET #3  
DECEMBER

# ***BEING A HERO!***



**BNEI AKIVA**  
OF THE US & CANADA






Dear Madrichim,

This month we are celebrating Chanukah :-)  
Chanukah represents many ideas - one of them being heroism and bravery. This will be our topic for this month.  
We will look at what makes a hero? Who our heroes are?  
And what we can do to be heroes ourselves?

As always, this choveret is just a basis for you to work off of, to use the ideas, adapt them, and make them relevant to your snifim.

Behatzlacha!  
Batsheva



## **BEING A HERO**

### **PEULA #1**

**In this peula we will address the following questions:**

- **Who are our heroes?**
- **What makes someone a hero?**
- **What qualities do heroes have in common?**
- **At what point does a person become a hero?**

We all grow up on stories of heroes – superheroes, princes and princesses, soldiers, etc. However, have we ever taken the time to think about what makes a hero? Think about the people you think are heroes – they can be people you know personally or people you know about. What makes them heroes? Do they share some qualities / attributes?

We may think it has to do with them being strong, or brave. And while those qualities are important, they are not enough to make a hero. Zimbardo and Franco are two researches who asked this very question. They came up with two qualities that they believe every hero has:

1. They live life by their values.
2. They are willing to fight for those values, even if that puts them at risk.

Another study was done on the topic, and saw that there are another two essential qualities that a hero must have:

1. A hero shows concern for others and their wellbeing.
2. Heroes have the ability to understand other perspectives.

We can see from here that being a hero is less about what you do – and more about who you are. Heroes are people who have a strong sense of values, they notice the people around them and are compassionate to them, and they are willing to work and fight for what they believe. When a person has these qualities – heroic acts come naturally. We often think of heroes because of the moments in which they act in a heroic way – but it's all the moments in between, that makes them able to have those heroic moments.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Who are the people we see as heroes?
- What makes these people heroes?
- Is heroism a momentary thing, or is it a way of life?
- What qualities do heroes have?
- Do we know people who have these qualities?  
Are they heroes?

#### **EXTRA RESOURCES FOR MADRICHIM**



**BNEI AKIVA**  
OF THE UNITED STATES & CANADA



## BEING A HERO

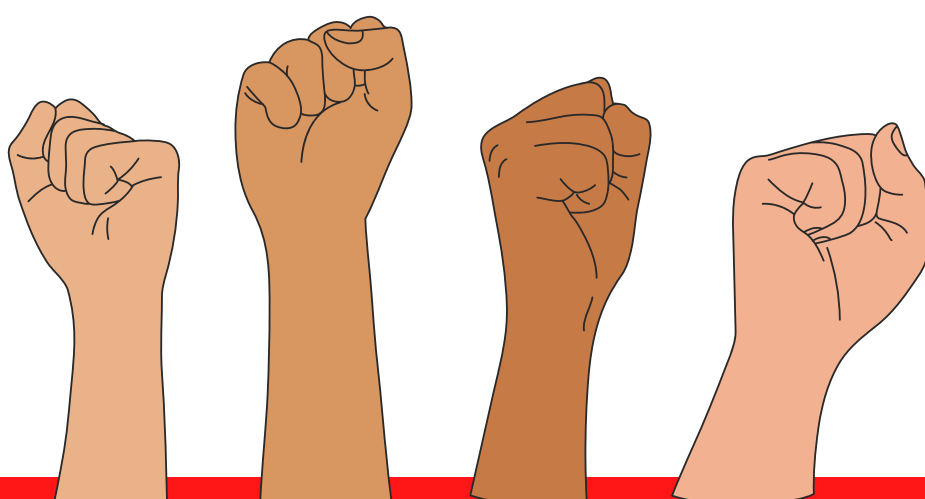
### PEULA #1

#### **Ideas for Discussion Triggers:**

- Print out a bunch of pictures of people who could be considered heroes. Ask the Chanichim to choose one they feel is a hero. Go around the room and have the chanichim explain their choice.
- Bring a bunch of quotes about heroes. Ask the chanichim to choose one they agree / disagree with and explain why.

#### **Ideas for Activities:**

- **Becoming a Hero:** Every hero needs to overcome challenges. Create an obstacle course or series of challenges that the Chanichim need to overcome. For ideas for challenges - <https://www.playpartyplan.com/minute-to-win-it-games-for-kids/>
- **Superhero Tag:** Choose a chanich/a or two to be the villain. Their goal is to identify the superhero(es). Have them go to the side and name 1-3 superheroes. The superheroes have the power to unfreeze themselves and others. The villains run around trying to tag the rest of the group, anyone who is tagged must freeze. A superhero has the ability to unfreeze themselves, and can then unfreeze others by tagging them. They have to be careful though - because if a villain spots them - they can call them out and as a superhero, and they are out of the game.
- **Hero Psychologist:** We see that a hero is someone who has strong values, and lives his life by these values - following a set of rules. We can represent that by playing the game "Psychologist". Choose one chanich/a to leave the room. The rest of the chanichim choose a rule that they will live by for the rest of the game. The chanich/a is then called back in, and asks people in the room different questions - trying to figure out the rule by how they answer. Rules can be anything from wording (example - must start each answer with the first letter of your name), to the content of the answer (ex - answer as if you are the person sitting to your right), to an action (ex - answer the question with your hands folded).
- **Optical Illusions:** bring a few optical illusions. Ask the Chanichim what they see. Show the chanichim that sometimes we can see more than one image in a picture - and different people with different perspectives can see things differently. A hero is someone who can see things from other people's perspective.





## KID HEROES? PEULA #2

**In this peula we will focus on kids like us.**

- **We will ask - is it possible for young people to be heroes?**
- **We will look at the stories of young people making a difference.**
- **We will ask ourselves, what can we do to be more heroic?**

Last week we learned that a hero is someone with a strong value system, who sees others, and will go out of their way to help them. Is that something that only adults can do? Or is it possible for young people to be heroes as well? Let's take a look at some stories of teenagers making a difference:

### Trisha Prabhu

Trisha Prabhu began fighting Cyberbullying when she was in highschool. This is what she wrote about her app ReThink:

"In 2013, I read an article about 12-year-old Rebecca Sedwick, who jumped off her town's water tower because she'd been cyberbullied. I was heartbroken, it hit me in the gut.

I've always been interested with the brain. It controls so much of what we do, and we understand so little about it. I read another article about how the teenage brain develops. Young people are more likely to act without thinking, because the part of the brain

that is supposed to control decision-making skills isn't fully developed until age 26.

I decided to explore the connection between that and bullying. I thought, 'What if I give people a few extra seconds to stop and think about the consequences of their actions? What if I give kids a rethink?' That's when the experimenting began.

Teens were shown hurtful messages and then asked to choose, "Would you post this?" or "Would you not post this?" If they said, "Sure, I'll post" we said, "Hold on! Are you sure you want to do this?" We found that over 93 percent of the time teens changed their minds. The willingness to post a message actually dropped from 71 percent to 4 percent. I knew I was onto something.

I released ReThink last August. The app recognizes hurtful words. Before allowing you to post the app will ask you to rethink – do you really want to post something that may be hurtful?

We're now working with schools, parents, students, and teachers. ReThink could become more than a solution. It could become a movement, a mind-set, a call to action."





## KID HEROES?

### PEULA #2

#### Orian Jean

Orian Jean was named TIME Magazine's 2021 Kid of The Year when he was 11 years old. He got this recognition for starting the organization Race to Kindness that works to increase kindness in the world. His work includes a campaign that donated 100,000 meals to families in need, getting 500,000 books to kids who don't have any at home, and writing a book "A Kids Book About Leadership". Here is what he had to say to TIME's:

"If you see a problem, fix it... When the pandemic began, I saw a lot of things were happening, people were losing their jobs and losing access to food and homes. I knew right then that I wanted to do something to help. My teacher suggested that I enter into a contest. And if I won the prize money that came with the contest, that means I could start a kindness initiative to help these people.



I started the race to kindness. The race to kindness is not just a series of events, but also a call to action. It's a way to get people involved in the community, and when they see something happening now they can go out and do something about it.

It really struck me just knowing that there are people out there who really do need help, and they don't have the resources to be living in a big home or with books or toys, or maybe even a meal. Something as simple as a meal could be not something that's guaranteed.

I think that kindness sometimes can just be as easy as not being mean to someone. Not talking about someone behind their back or posting that mean comment on social media. That's what kindness can be, it can just be as simple as not being cruel to someone."

These teenagers may not be saving people from burning buildings, but they are living by their values, and helping others. Perhaps this is enough to be a hero, and if so...  
Maybe we too can be heroes!



## KID HEROES? PEULA #2

### Discussion Questions:

- Based on the principals we learned last week, do we know any people who are heroes?
- Can teenagers be heroes? How?
- After reading / sharing about Trisha / Orian - are these people heroes? Why?
- What can we do to be a little more heroic?

Note: This question does not need to be theoretical! You can brainstorm ideas for a Snif project that helps others - becoming local community heroes.

### Activity Ideas:

- **Hero Awards:** The chanichim are now the committee for heroes awards. Present the teenagers in our stories and ask the committee to discuss if they should get an award. Have someone speak in favor and someone against. Run a discussion and then vote.
- **Re-Think (for older groups):** This app is all about stopping and reassessing. Play a game of Improv Freeze - two chanichim start acting out a scenario. At a certain point the madrich/a will yell “freeze!” and they have to freeze in the position they are. One (or both) of the chanichim will be switched out by a new chanich/a who will have to “reassess” the situation - and start a brand new scenario from that same position.
- **Re-Think (for younger groups):** This app is all about stopping and reassessing. Play a game of Freeze Tag.
- **Race to Kindness:** Run your own Race for Kindness - do a Relay Race - Passing the “Kindness” from one chanich/a to the next.





## CHAYALIM / BNOT SHERUT BODEDIM PEULA #3

In this peula we will focus on the heroes from our communities who moved to Israel and are making a difference there.

- We will learn about chayalim bodedim / bnot sherut bodedot.
- We will hear about their experiences serving the State of Israel.
- We will try and understand why they make this inspiring decision.
- We will celebrate and honor these heroes.

Last week we saw how even young people can be heroes if they look out for others and live according to their values. There are a group of young people from our very own communities and snifim who are examples of such heroes.

Young people who leave their homes and families and move to Israel where they serve in the IDF or

in National Service. They are called Lone Soldiers or Lone Bnot Sheirut.



These are true examples of heroes. They grew up on ideas of Zionism and love of the Jewish People, and chose to live by those values - even though it is not easy and requires a lot of personal sacrifice. They pick up their lives, move to a new country, and dedicate their time for the Jewish People and the Land of Israel.

Note to Madrichim: This week is a perfect opportunity to highlight and celebrate the young olim from your communities! If you know of Chayalim Bodedim / Bnot Sheirut Bodedot - reach out to them and share their stories. Here are a few questions you can ask them:

- Why did you choose to move to Israel?
- Why is it important for you to serve in the IDF / Sherut Leumi?
- What are some of the challenges you face? How do you overcome them?
- What are some of the good parts of your service?
- How is it serving / living with Israelis?
- What do you miss the most about the US?
- What do you love most about Israel?
- Do you have an adoptive family? Where do you live?
- What message do you have for the chanichim back in your snif?

**EXTRA RESOURCES  
FOR MADRICHIM**



## **CHAYALIM / BNOT SHERUT BODEDIM PEULA #3**

If you can't find any local Chayalim Bodedim / Bnot Sherut, here are some ideas you can share:

### **What it Means to be a Lone Soldier (Israel Forever Blog)**

A lot of people might know what is a lone soldier is - we can use Wikipedia's description, or I can be typical and write about how it's a bunch of teenagers following the same dreams my ancestors in the villages of Belorussia had, the dreams of the victims of the Holocaust and the current dreams of Jews in France but simply knowing a definition is not enough.

Being a Lone Soldier means getting on the bus, in full uniform, and not knowing how to say the name of city you live in properly.

It means coming home not to my mother's delicious cooking or my father's scolding, or hugs from my siblings, but rather to bills, roommates who slowly become family, random lone soldier buddies who decided to crash on the couch, an empty fridge and the occasional leftover food from the last Shabbat that you were home.

It means having random people invite you over for Shabbat with smiles on their faces, genuinely taking offense when you say no, proving to you that Israeli society not only loves Lone Soldiers, but also puts in a sincere effort to take care of them.

It means having your friends from back home look at you differently. Some understand and some don't. Although in spite of the fact that you are doing something absolutely insane, they all respect you for it. It means receiving many letters of support and love from amazing and inspiring kids across the globe.

It means becoming part of a family that's not your own. Only a lone soldier can understand the happiness of bumping into another fellow lone soldier, be it on an army base, at a party, or simply waiting in line to pay the water bill. You are instantly connected.

I feel it's only appropriate to finish off this blog post with this message to past, present, and future lone soldiers that people around the world can appreciate this message as well:

Serving in the Israeli Defense Forces as a Lone Soldier means you are part of something extremely important for the Jewish people as a whole, you are helping protect everything we believe in for the next generation to come. It is an experience of a lifetime, one that you will be talking about from the day you put up your first IDF uniform picture on Instagram, to the day you are a senior citizen.

It will be a crazy journey, full of ups and downs, including sometimes doubting your choice to do it in the first place. These doubts will nevertheless be washed away as you don your uniform with pride.

Being a Lone Soldier is not being the next Jewish Rambo. Joining the IDF is not a game and should never be considered as one. It is a very serious choice made by individuals whose ideals are the same as those of our Zionist pioneers who marched into Israel after the Holocaust looking to make a safe homeland for their people, our people.



## CHAYALIM / BNOT SHERUT BODEDIM PEULA #3

### Discussion Questions:

- Do you know any lone soldiers / bnot sherut?
- What do you think about these young men/women?
- What do you think are some challenges they face?
- Why do you think they choose to move to Israel and serve?
- Do you think this makes them heroes?
- What message would you like to send to these young people?

### Ideas for Activities:

- **Chayal Boded Shoots and Ladders:** Create a lifesize Shoots and Ladders game representing the service of a Chayal Boded. The shoots can represent different challenges they may face (examples - not having a family in Israel, nowhere to go on the weekends, etc) and the ladders represent things that can help them overcome challenges (adoptive host-families, free trip back to visit their family, etc).
- **Support Group Circle:** One thing that helps Chayalim Bodedim is being a part of a community of other Olim who all support one another! This activity shows how when we work together and support one another we can stop our friends from falling. Bring a large rope, have the chanichim stand in a circle holding the rope. Tell the chanichim to all pull the rope as tight as they can. Working together the entire group must sit down and then stand back up, using the rope as support. If one side pulls too hard / not hard enough - others may fall so you must be careful to support one another. For an extra challenge, if the group succeeds - try doing it with just one hand. (Video clip of the activity - <https://youtu.be/HNSsYqtWrTo>)
- **A Strong Network:** It is important for a Chayal Boded to have a strong network. We saw how the Israeli government, people, and organizations come together and make sure the Lone Soldiers get the support they need. Have the chanichim stand in a circle. One chanich/a will stand in the middle holding a broom - this broom represents the Chayal Boded. When the game begins this chanich/a will call out a name of another chanich/a - they will then let go of the broom and stand back in the circle. The chanich/a whose name was called must run to the center and catch the broom before it falls.





## CHANUKAH PARTY!!

### PEULA #4

We spent the last month learning about heroes in honor of Chanukah, and now it's finally time for the holiday itself! Here are some ideas for how to celebrate Chanukah in your snif!

- **Sufganiya Wars:** Cake Wars but with Sufganiyot. Bring different fillings / decorations for sufganiyot (donuts). See who can make the best / most creative sufganiya.
- **Jug of Oil Scavenger Hunt:** When the Maccabees liberated the Beit HaMikdash they didn't have pure olive oil to light the menorah with. However, after a long search they finally found one small jug. Set up a scavenger hunt - have teams race to find the oil.
- **Mystery Maccabee:** Have each chanich/a draw the name of a different chanich/a. They have to bring that chanich/a a Chanukah gift.
- **Chanukah Carnival:** set up a carnival with Chanukah themed games (put out the candles using water guns, find the Chanukah Gelt in the hey stack, eat a sufganiya without using your hands, pin the shamash on the menorah, etc).
- **Dreidel Tournament:** Bring a bunch of dreidels and chanukah gelt. See who the master dreidel player is.
- **Capture the Mikdash:** Divide the chanichim into the "Greeks" and the "Maccabbes" play a game of Capture the Mikdash Flag.
- **Celebrating our Heroes:** last week we learned about the Chayalim Bodedim and Bnot Sheirut Bodedot. Host a bake sale or clothing swap. All money made can be donated to support these Chayalim/Bnot Sheirut.

