



## **FJC: Chazon (Vision) for Service-Learning**

### **Service-Learning and Learning for Service**

*This question was raised before Rabbi Tarfon and the elders: Is study greater, or good deeds? Rabbi Tarfon answered, saying: Deeds are greater. Rabbi Akiba answered, saying: Study is greater, for it leads to doing. Then they all answered and said: Study is greater, for it leads to action. - Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 40b*

*Shimon HaTzaddik was from the remnants of the Great Assembly. He used to say: On three things the world stands. On Torah, v'Avodah {On service of God}, v'Gmilut Chesedim {And on acts of human kindness}. - Pirke Avot 1:2*

*Individual and societal success depends on raising and educating children who care about others [and the environment]. But we have misled today's children to believe that success is achieved through test scores, material wealth, and personal gain. In turn, [there has been a measurable shift toward self-centeredness](#) at a time when society depends more, not less, on people who give of themselves.... Studies have linked [low empathy to increased bullying](#), narcissism, rigid belief systems, and civic apathy. As educators, we have a moral imperative to rethink how we teach kids to care in a more hurried, impersonal, data-driven world.*

*... As William Deresiewicz underscored in his recent book, [Excellent Sheep](#), the goal of education should always be 'to leverage learning as an agent of social change -- the kind of objective that makes leadership and citizenship into something more than pretty words.'" - [Marilyn Price-Mitchell PhD](#); Developmental Psychologist, Researcher, Writer*

## **WHAT**

### **I. Articulating Fundamentals**

1. As camp leaders, what are values/skills/knowledge you aim to teach overall at camp?

*Think head, heart and hands*

2. What are values/skills/knowledge a Jewish Service program can draw out?

*Think head, heart, and hands*



## II. What's in a Name? Defining Service-Learning

[From Vanderbilt's University Center for Teaching](#): "Community engagement pedagogies, often called 'service learning,' are ones that combine learning goals and community service in ways that can enhance both student growth and the common good."

[National Service Learning Clearinghouse](#): Service-learning is "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."

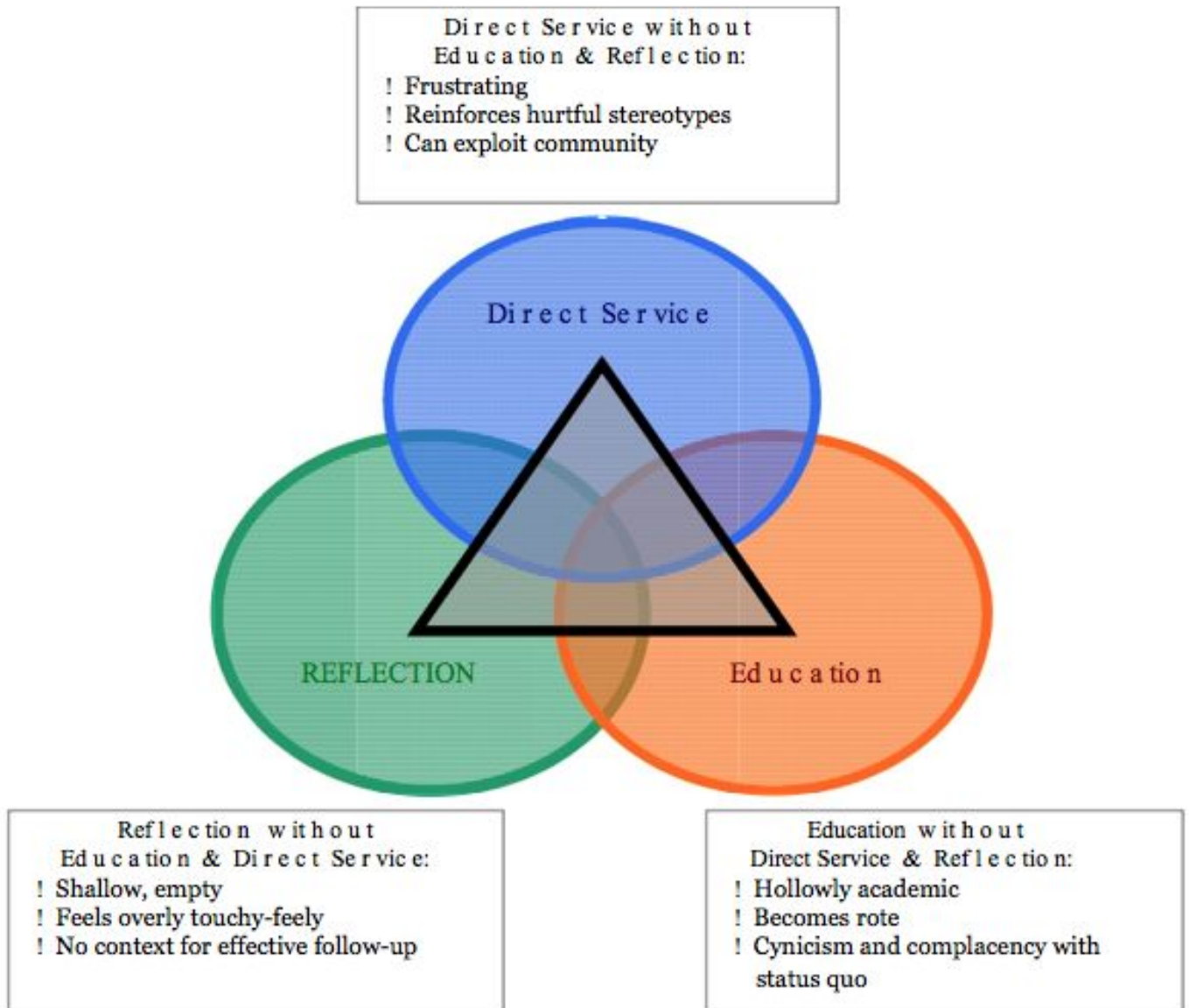
[From Vanderbilt University's Scholars](#): Service-Learning is "a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students. . . seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. In the process, students link personal and social development with academic and cognitive development. . . experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action."

### Words we use in the Jewish sphere to capture these ideals through Jewish frames:

- [Tikkun Olam](#): *Repair the World* – Originally relates to the spiritual brokenness of the world, but has come to refer to physical and social brokenness in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- **Mitzvot**: Often translated as *Good Deeds* but actually means *Commandments from God*. Its use speaks to the tensions of our Eastern-Jewish roots as a communalistic society versus modern/western individualistic societies. Thoughts on the word from the [Reform](#) Movement and from the [Conservative](#) movement.
- [Tzedakah](#): Often translated as *Charity* and boiled down to Rambam's 8 levels, but actually meaning the responsibility of the privileged for equitable distribution of and use of resources, which are ultimately God's, not ours.
- **Avodah**: Meaning *Service, Work and Worship*. Ancient Jewish worship was not prayer –but sacrifice – and bringing sacrifice took months of farming because you had to grow it first. What does it mean for us when communal work is worship, and worship is work?

**How would you define service-learning for Jewish Camp? What terms, Hebrew or otherwise, would you think about using? Not using?**

### III. Components of Meaningful and Effective Service-Learning Projects & Programs





**IV. Principles of Ethical and effective service-learning: For Jewish Camp**

<i>Project Design</i>	<i>Learning Design</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build long-term relationships with partners and work with them to make sure that the projects matter while maintaining an awareness of the power imbalances that can make these partnerships lopsided.</li> <li>● Collaborative design: Include staff voice, camper voice, and community voice.</li> <li>● Consider time: For impact, a week &gt; day, a summer &gt; week, and a year-round connection to the organization, project, or issue through ongoing camp programs &gt; than a summer.</li> <li>● Consider training needs. Projects which require training and/or link to learned skills –physical or interpersonal (ie: trail building or buddying with an autistic camper) which youth can put into real practice have greater impact for youth and greater benefit to community/camp partners- and require commitment to train.</li> <li>● Build in opportunities for hearing stories from and/or about marginalized or oppressed people, communities, or places. Design with people should include opportunities for empathy. Design with environment should include opportunities for awe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create an atmosphere of “productive discomfort.”</li> <li>● Just being around <i>the other</i> can reinforce harmful stereotypes. Actively engage with diversity.</li> <li>● All projects link to learning activities around Jewish values, and social issues so volunteers have a context and a <i>why</i> for their service.</li> <li>● Examine the systemic context that gives rise to the need for service in the first place and consider taking action to address that deeper level - for a deeper <i>why</i>, to dismantle harmful stereotypes, and to start to answer <i>what next?</i></li> <li>● Reflection is incorporated using various modalities of experiential education and considers the intersection of the experience with the values, and team building and leadership skills you are already teaching, with the social issues you’ve learned about.</li> <li>● For older campers: Skip the predictable Jewish texts; introduce new and thorny ones instead (see also “productive discomfort”).</li> </ul>

**Global Considerations**

- Commit time to preparation in the off-season.
- Staff skill-sets and time are, in the end, what ensure a project effective and meaningful. Thoughtfully consider staff time, knowledge, and skills for: project planning, devising and leading education activities around complex social issues, supervising volunteer work with various levels of safety concerns, and guiding engaging reflections. Provide resources and training.
- Evaluate your programs regularly to ensure that you’re meeting each of these goals, as well as the goals of your participants and partners.



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## V. Pause! From Definitions to Principles: Reflection Questions

- Did you know there was a field of service-learning?
- Have you defined service or service-learning for yourself? As a camp?
- What stands out to you in these guidelines?
- What ethical risk(s) is each of the guidelines addressing?
- Of the guidelines, which one(s) do(es) your camp already use in planning service programs?
- Values-matching: Choose 3 guidelines and think of a Jewish value, or teaching which it embodies.



## ***SO WHAT?***

### **VI. The Rewards of Service-Learning Education**

***Chazon: Now AND Later, what kind of outcomes do you imagine for...***

**Your campers:**

**Your camp:**

**Jewish Community:**

**Global society:**



**AJSS**

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