



The Hardest Word

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

When I was a Pre-K teacher, there was a book that was sent to us from PJ Library. The title, *The Hardest Word: A Yom Kippur Story*.

“The Ziz, a wonderful bird who lived long ago, is so big and clumsy that he can't keep from bumping into things. When a tree he knocks over destroys the children's garden, he seeks G-d's help to fix things. "Bring me the hardest word," G-d instructs him, and the Ziz flies off to search. He brings back words like rhinoceros, rock, and Rumpelstiltskin, but none is acceptable, until he makes an important discovery.”

This is a light-hearted story with a specific purpose, teaching children how to say “I am sorry.” This concept of making amends, developmentally, doesn't come naturally until the age of 4 or later, typically. With everything that is considered developmental, there is, of course, a range.

But really, does this ability to take responsibility for one's actions, to make amends for a mistake or even a slight to another, come any easier to an adult?

5 Ways to Take Responsibility For Your Actions & Why it Matters!

In the blog *Tracking Happiness*, by Jessie Faber, tackles this question. There are three key points that she offers as a guide for why this is such an important ability to have.

Taking Responsibility Involves Acknowledging and Positively Altering Controllable Life Aspects

I think that a big part of that statement should focus on controllable life aspects. Because, let's face it, there are many things that we just can't control. Let's focus on where we do have control. How we can listen to another person's needs and desires. How we respond to another person's statements or beliefs. How we can learn facts about a situation and maybe have our perspective changed because of the **facts** that are presented.



Accepting Responsibility Enhances Mental Health and Strengthens Relationships

Taking ownership has positive effects on you! When you look at a situation and realize, hey, maybe I have this all wrong. Maybe I have to go back and get the facts, it becomes possible to take responsibility. There is so much information out there and while the Internet can be an amazing tool, one has to filter what they read and embrace. So take a step back and take the time to read through the posts and articles. You just might realize that it is time to adjust your perspective so you get, “just the facts, ma’am.”

Implementing Strategies Like Avoiding Blame and Practicing Self-Compassion Facilitates Responsibility-Taking

And of course, don't be too hard on yourself. Look at the situation and your reaction to it. And give yourself grace. We all make mistakes. It is important that you learn from the mistakes and take responsibility so it doesn't happen again.

Which Makes Me Wonder

Will the pro-Palestinian protestors take this to heart? Will they go back to the drawing board, read the **facts** and realize that it isn't the Israelis they should be protesting against? The people responsible for the poor living conditions of the Gaza residents are the Hamas leadership, those that follow Hamas, the many other terrorist organizations and the Arab countries who are funding Hamas, who are in control in Gaza.

The people responsible for the lack of opportunity for women and children are the Hamas leadership, those that follow Hamas, the many other terrorist organizations and the Arab countries who are funding Hamas who believe that Sharia law should be in place. The people responsible for the lack of food, clean water and fuel is Hamas, the Hamas leadership, the many terrorist organizations in control in Gaza and the Arab countries who are funding all of this.



But it isn't the Israeli government. It isn't the hostages who are still being held (As I write this, it is day 109 - Jan. 23). It isn't the young girls and young boys being held hostage and being brutalized. It isn't baby Kfir. It isn't the parents, the wives, the husbands of the hostages. And it isn't the Israelis. It is time to shout from the rooftops: Send them home NOW!

Shabbat Shalom.