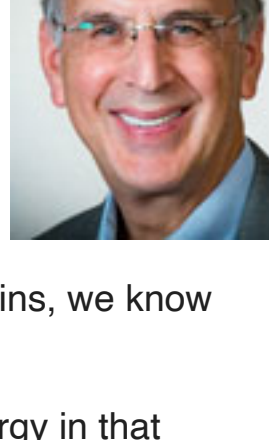


## Kenissa Konnections

December 2020

### Message from Rabbi Sid

One of the great joys of our national *Kenissa* gatherings was bringing together creative individuals who were pioneering new forms of Jewish life and community all over North America and having them discover that they were not alone. Innovators often work at the margins of a community; it is among the many things that distinguish innovators from the mainstream. Even as the work can feel lonely at the margins, we know that change in society almost always gets catalyzed from the margins. *Kenissa* gatherings always generated a unique energy in that innovators were meeting and connecting with other innovators; even as their methods might have been different, there was electricity in the air, knowing that new forms of Jewish life and community were being seeded. We are hoping this newsletter will continue that process for folks in the *Kenissa* Network. Drop me a note ([rabbisid@hazon.org](mailto:rabbisid@hazon.org)) about developments with your respective organizations and we will find ways to share it.



### A Chanukah Present for You

*Kenissa* is partnering with [Days of Gratitude](#), a six-month journey to notice and give gratitude for the unnoticed blessings in our lives.

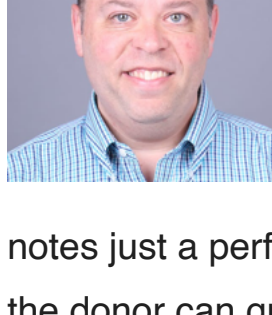
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### Celebrating *Kenissa* Network Members

We always celebrate when some of our Network members get some public recognition. Such was the case in a [recent article](#) in JTA about the Jewish Co-housing movement. We were pleased to see four *Kenissa* members mentioned: Roger Studley of Urban Moshav in Berkeley, CA; Jakir Manela of Pearlstone Retreat Center in Reisterstown, MD; Sephirah Stacey Oshkello of Living Tree Alliance in VT; and Aharon Ariel Lavi who runs the Hakhel initiative from Israel. Thusfar, only Living Tree Alliance has actual residents but all the communities mentioned are well on their way to making this vision a reality. At a time when there is heightened awareness about lifestyles that are environmentally sustainable and supportive of the development of strong personal connections between residents, we should cheer on those who are committed to this residential model of intentional community.

## Build and Raise

Building relationships to help raise more money



What role does gratitude play in building relationships with your donors? Are your

donation thank you notes just a perfunctory, stale letter so that the donor can grab their tax deduction? Or is it a heartfelt, personalized, impactful, emotional outpouring of gratitude so that supporters feel appreciated?

According to fundraising researcher Dr. Adrian Sargeant, the thank you is the single most important piece of communication that your donors get. [They have a higher recall of it than the appeal that generated the gift.](#)

We spend a LOT of time putting together our appeals. But it's the thank you letter that's going to help you strengthen the bond, retain your donors and see a higher lifetime value of donations.



Some ideas for saying 'toda' in a manner that's remarkable and memorable:

[READ MORE](#)

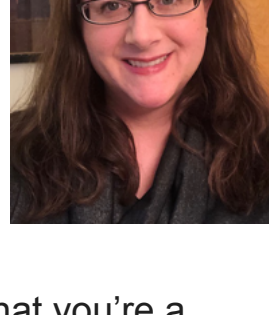
[Ephraim Gopin](#) is the founder of [1832 Communications](#), an agency which helps nonprofits build relationships and raise more money by connecting their fundraising and [marketing strategies](#). You can subscribe to [Ephraim's free daily e-newsletter](#) which includes relevant content for any NPO role you fill.

## Braver Leadership

Lead wiser,  
Lead braver

In a Harvard Business Review [article](#) by Andy Molinsky, "Everyone Suffers from Impostor Syndrome, Here's How

to Handle It", we learn about the common fear "that you're a poser, that you're not worthy, that you couldn't possibly be qualified to do whatever you're aiming to do." Even experienced leaders likely asked themselves at some point in 2020 whether they were really qualified to lead their organizations through a global pandemic. Impostor Syndrome may initially present as a personal problem, suggesting a lack of self-confidence or low self-esteem. However, if "everyone" suffers from a version of it, as Molinsky's title suggests, Impostor Syndrome actually seems more likely to be rooted in feelings of anxiety that many people experience.



As Molinsky notes, maintaining a learning mindset is one way to ease the anxiety associated with feeling

like an impostor. Instead of focusing on the mistakes you make along your way, as though collecting evidence for a case against your current skillset, focus your energy on learning from your mistakes and improving your skillset for your organization's benefit. The learning mindset contextualizes mistakes as a normal part of the learning process, while the alternative can lead to a paralyzing fear of failure, compromising outcomes.

[READ MORE](#)

Please [click here](#) to take a 1-minute survey so that we can provide the *Kenissa* community with useful programs and articles.

[Arinne Braverman](#) is a *Kenissa Network* member, *Jewish Organizing Initiative* alumna, and currently serves as the Executive Director of *Returning the Sparks* and President of [From Strength to Strength](#).

You are invited to join with other *Kenissa* Network members to discuss the recent Braver Leadership column. The session will be facilitated by Arinne Braverman, Executive Director of *Returning the Sparks* and President of [From Strength to Strength](#).

Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 12:30 PM Eastern Time

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89933148661>

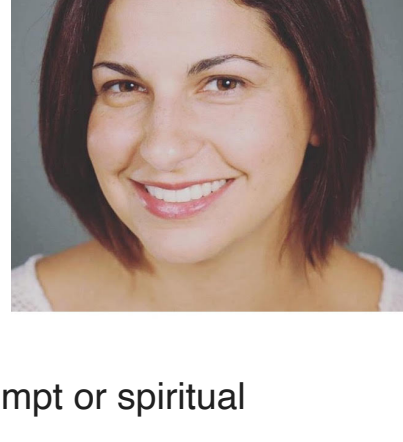
## Jewish Megatrends and Responses

*Editor's Note: Every Kenissa Network member was asked to respond to Rabbi Sid's lead essay in [Jewish Megatrends](#) on the future of the Jewish community. We'll be featuring one of those essays in each issue.*

### A More Personal and Intimate Approach to Jewish Practice

Rabbi Sarah Tasman

Imagine a cozy, candle lit room, with a group of participants seated on yoga mats, blankets and meditation cushions in a circle. On the floor in the center of the room is a beautiful wall hanging that has been spread out with a circle of candles in the center, along with flowers and other seasonal and ritual objects as well as art supplies of various kinds. The lights are turned down low so that the faces of each person are illuminated by the soft glow of the candles and so that each person can more easily check in and go inward during meditation. Each person lights a candle at the beginning of the gathering to introduce themselves and to answer a meaningful prompt or spiritual icebreaker. We flow into meditation and sometimes gentle movement, teachings on the month and the season, followed by a creative exercise that allows space for personal reflection and growth, a practice both individual and communal at the same time.



At the end of the gathering, the participants share in partners or with the group, and each offers a closing intention. I invite them to silently offer gratitude to themselves for taking this time for themselves, nurturing their spiritual practice and learning, and to silently acknowledge the others in the room, offering gratitude to each other for this community. I close by announcing the date and name of the upcoming new moon and invite everyone to join in offering wishes and hopes for the month in a form of spiritual mad libs/fill in the blank/ spontaneous communal prayer. Each person blows out their candle, sending their intentions and blessings into the universe.

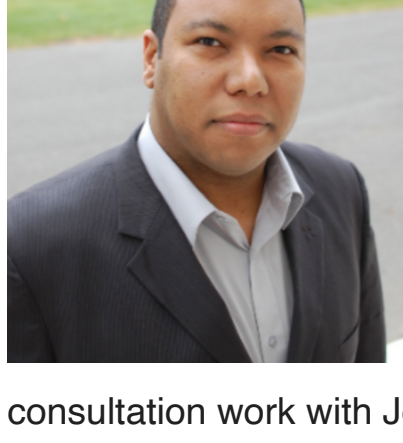
[READ MORE](#)

## How We Built This

*Editor's Note: Every Kenissa Network member was asked to explain how they launched their new enterprise, a feature we call "How We Built This". We'll feature one organization in each issue.*



**Jared Jackson, Jews in ALL Hues-Philadelphia, PA**



Jews in ALL Hues (JIAH) is an education and advocacy organization that supports multiple-heritage Jews and Jews of Color. Our goal is to build a future for the Jewish people where intersectional diversity and dignity are normative.

Our leadership is based on three specific things:

1. *Hachnasat Orchim*: The Jewish value of welcoming others, is central to JIAH's workshops, training and professional consultation work with Jewish leaders and communities. In our work to create inclusive spaces for multi-heritage Jews, our training sessions provide the tools that enable Jewish leaders and communities to understand the best ways to practice the value of *Hachnasat Orchim*— welcoming Jews of all backgrounds. JIAH helps Jewish communities recognize the ways that they can bring Jews of all hues into an inclusive and warm environment.

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