

CHANUKA

CONNECTIONS

A WORKBOOK FOR SELF REFLECTION AND PERSONAL GROWTH

**A GIFT
FOR
YOU!**


maayan
academy

This workbook, your gift from Maayan, gives you a sample of the incredible inner work taking place at Maayan on a daily basis. We invite you to take a few quiet minutes and create meaningful connections in your own life, each night of this Chanuka.

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Maayan was established in 2021 under the guidance of **Rabbi Reuven Leuchter** from Eretz Yisrael, **Rabbi Tzvi Berkowitz** from Ner Yisrael in Baltimore, MD, and **Rabbi Uri Deutsch** of Forest Park in Lakewood, NJ.

What Is Maayan?

Maayan is a boarding school for girls who are committed to growth and introspection. Through our academic, emotional, and Torah centered program, the girls work towards building a meaningful and connected life.

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FINDING UNITY IN THE DARKNESS

In these uncertain times, we often find ourselves searching for stability and a sense of connection. Fortunately, our rich traditions and celebrations offer us a guiding light, helping us find meaning and unity even in challenging moments. This Chanukah season, Maayan Academy proudly presents our special Chanukah Workbook, designed to bring a message of hope and togetherness to your Chanukah celebrations.

Chanukah is a time when we light the menorah to dispel the darkness, symbolizing the triumph of light over adversity. But as we kindle the flames, let's also ignite the light of unity within ourselves and our closest circles. This workbook encourages us to reflect on the power of connection during these challenging times.

In a world that often feels disconnected, Maayan encourages you to embrace the light of unity this Chanukah season. As we kindle the menorah, let us also kindle the flames of connection with those

closest to us. We believe that through small acts of kindness and introspection, we can find unity in the face of adversity.

Like the Maccabees in the Chanuka story, the girls at Maayan display bravery and heroism every day. Maayan girls choose to come to a place where they can heal and face their pain. They reflect on their lives and create a new narrative for themselves by envisioning a meaningful future. Our girls are becoming the future leaders of klal yisrael, women who will guide others and bring light into the world. We are immensely proud of our girls and we want to celebrate their extraordinary process with you.

May this Chanukah Workbook be a source of inspiration, reflection, and connection during these challenging times. Together, let us bring the light of unity and hope into our lives and into the hearts of those we hold dear.

HOW CONNECTED ARE YOU?

True growth comes from within, and it starts with self awareness. As you consider the level of connection to yourself, your Creator and all the parts of your world, be open to noticing without judgment.

All of us at Maayan invite you to join us on a quiet, personal journey of inner growth. You may want to complete the questions in writing so you can come back to them and further explore the ones that resonate deeply with you. Or, you might prefer taking 20 minutes of “me” time in a quiet space to reflect internally. Either way, we hope you’ll gain insight, connection and inner light every night of Channuka.

What are YOU looking to accomplish this Chanukah?

Inside this workbook you will find:

- Daily Reflections
- Exercises
- Vision Board

PLEASE NOTE:

1. At the end of this workbook there is a Menorah. Each night the last question should be answered in a different candle. This will lead you to your “vision board,” the inner light that will inspire you to strengthen ALL your connections.
2. All exercises in this workbook suggest connections in various relationships. Of course, they can be replaced with any relationships that are relevant in your own life, at your current stage.

“

Surrounded by “sisters” gives me the opportunity to grow emotionally without being judged. From learning to communicate to figuring out what to make for my dinner night, having support and comfort makes such a difference!

SM, MAAYAN STUDENT

”

DAY 1

CONNECT WITH YOURSELF

1 REFLECTION: Often our focus is on what others think of us, or on what we think of others. Take a moment to separate yourself from all the others in your life, and look inward. As you look at the first lit candle, reflect on these questions: Do I know who I am? What are my values?

2 EXERCISE: Your values are the beliefs that define what is most important to you and who you are. See the values on the right, and check the ones that are most important to you.

3 VISION BOARD: Go to the last page and fill in the first candle with who you imagine you would be if you were connected to yourself in a stronger way.

Check off the ones that are the most important to you.

- Wisdom
- Justice
- Emunah
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Judgment
- Limud Torah
- Perspective
- Courage
- Perseverance
- Gevurah
- Emes
- Resilience
- Humility
- Love
- Kindness
- Teamwork
- Fairness
- Leadership
- Forgiveness
- Contentment
- Gratitude
- Hope
- Compassion
- Honor
- Respect
- Shalom
- Bikur Cholim
- Tolerance
- Health
- Chessed
- Family
- Knowledge
- Responsibility
- Loyalty
- Independence
- Spirituality
- Self-improvement
- Self-reflection

1. In what ways do my values align with the life that I live? In what ways can I improve?

2. What can I do to prioritize what's important to me in real life?

3. What needs to happen so that I can give myself the time to self-reflect?

“Maayan academy was a safe space for my daughter to address her issues, learn about herself and figure out where she was going academically, spiritually and emotionally. Today, Baruch Hashem, she is happy, healthy, and frum. Maayan totally turned her around.”

MIRIAM SEGAL, BROOKLYN, NY, MAAYAN PARENT

DAY 2

CONNECT WITH YOUR SPOUSE

1 REFLECTION: What does it mean to connect with my spouse? What makes me feel cared for? We each have our own “language” for interpreting care. When we are aware of what we need and communicate that to our spouse, we create an opportunity for the relationship to develop.

2 EXERCISE: What makes you feel cared for? Identify your primary love language and the primary love language of your spouse. Explore any other love languages that you or your spouse may have that are unique to you.

3 VISION BOARD: Describe how your connection with your spouse will look when you know and respect each other's love language,

1. What are my love languages? _____

~~~~~
2. What is my spouse’s primary love language? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
~~~~~
3. What can I do to be more in tune with giving my spouse what they need in order to feel cared for? _____

THE LOVE LANGUAGES



“ I really appreciate the collaboration at Maayan. I spent years trying to juggle my daughter’s needs between school and home and her therapy and her social life, it was a huge challenge. At Maayan, I trust that the staff sees the whole picture, and they all work together to further every aspect of my daughter’s growth and personal development. ”

BYM, MAAYAN PARENT

DAY 4

CONNECT WITH YOUR FRIENDS

1 REFLECTION: As we grow and develop, our relationship with our friends change. When looking at your relationship with your friends, do you feel you have healthy boundaries? Do you know what healthy boundaries are?

2 EXERCISE: Look at the diagram below. There are three kinds of boundaries. Identify your boundary style with two of your friends.

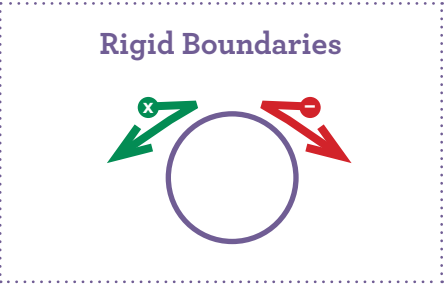
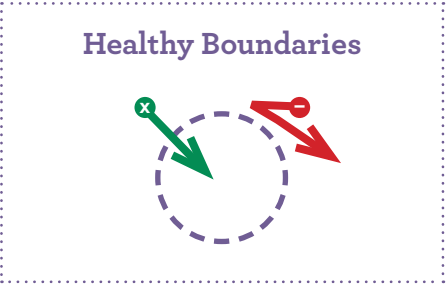
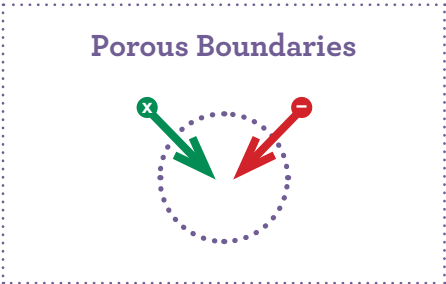
3 VISION BOARD: In the 4th candle, describe how your relationship with your friends would feel if you had healthy boundaries.

a. People with **porous boundaries** are too involved and enmeshed with others, tend to over-share their personal information, be highly dependent on others (and their opinions) and have a strong need to people-please.

b. People with **healthy boundaries** have balance and respect for themselves and others. They are able to set limits in relationships, be independent while at the same time give from a place of sincerity, not from a need to please other people.

c. People with **rigid boundaries** keep others at a distance. They often struggle with feeling close to others, struggle to open up to people and are often overly private and protective of their personal information. They tend to have a hard time giving to others for fear of being take advantage of.

Draw a circle in these boxes of your boundary style with your each of your parents.



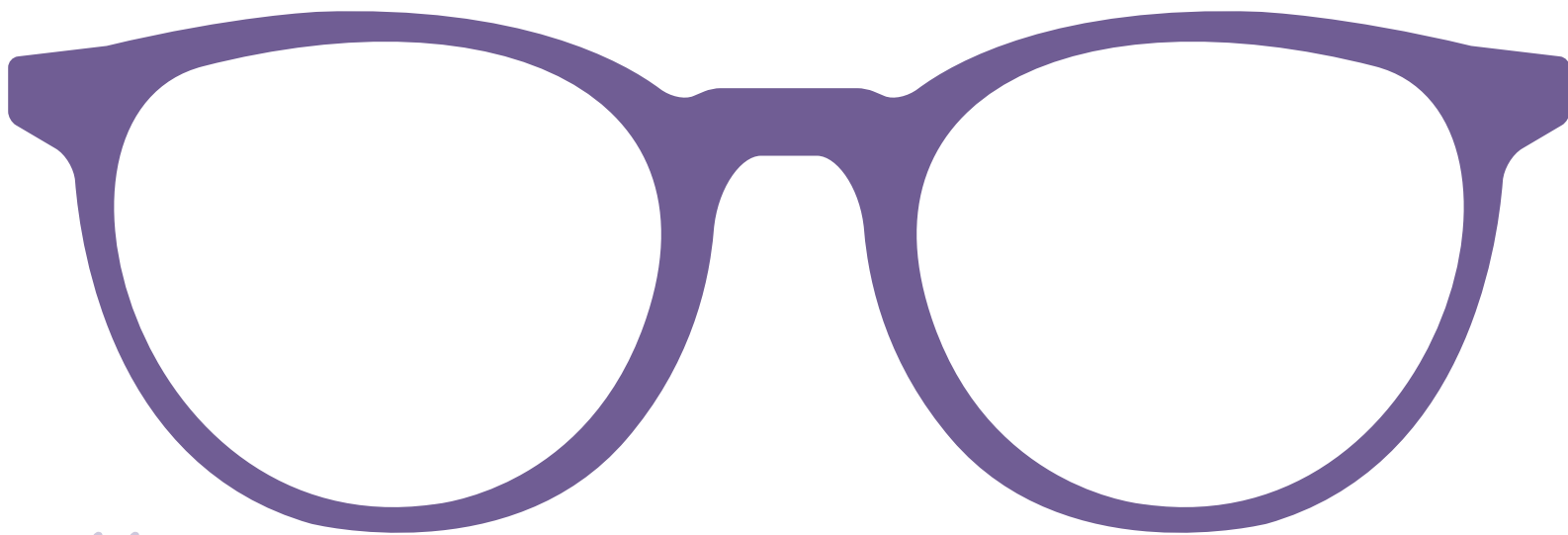
DAY 5

CONNECTING WITH YOUR PARENTS THROUGH PERSPECTIVE

1 REFLECTION: Seeing things through another’s point of view builds connection. It gives them the opportunity to feel heard and understood. Actively seeking to understand your parents’ perspective can bring mutual understanding and deepen your relationship.

2 EXERCISE: Think of a time that you and a parent had a conflict. Describe how you view the situation from your point of view. Then go to the other side of the glasses and write how you imagine they see the situation. Before describing their perspective really take a minute to put yourself in their shoes- include everything about them- the kind of day they had, if they’ve had this type of situation happen before etc.

3 VISION BOARD: In the 5th candle describe how your relationship with your parents would be different if you were able to see things from their point of view. What kind of child would you be? How would your connections be different?



“

Walking into the Maayan dorms feels like coming home to family. I know when I spend time with the girls, whether it's dinner in the dorms or running a quick errand, I come away inspired. Each time I am there I receive gifts of clarity: of what it means to never give up on yourself, to fight for your Yiddishkeit and to love every single Jew because each one of us is a whole world. And these gifts feel like something I can't live without.

CHANA VOROTINOV, DORM COUNSELOR

”

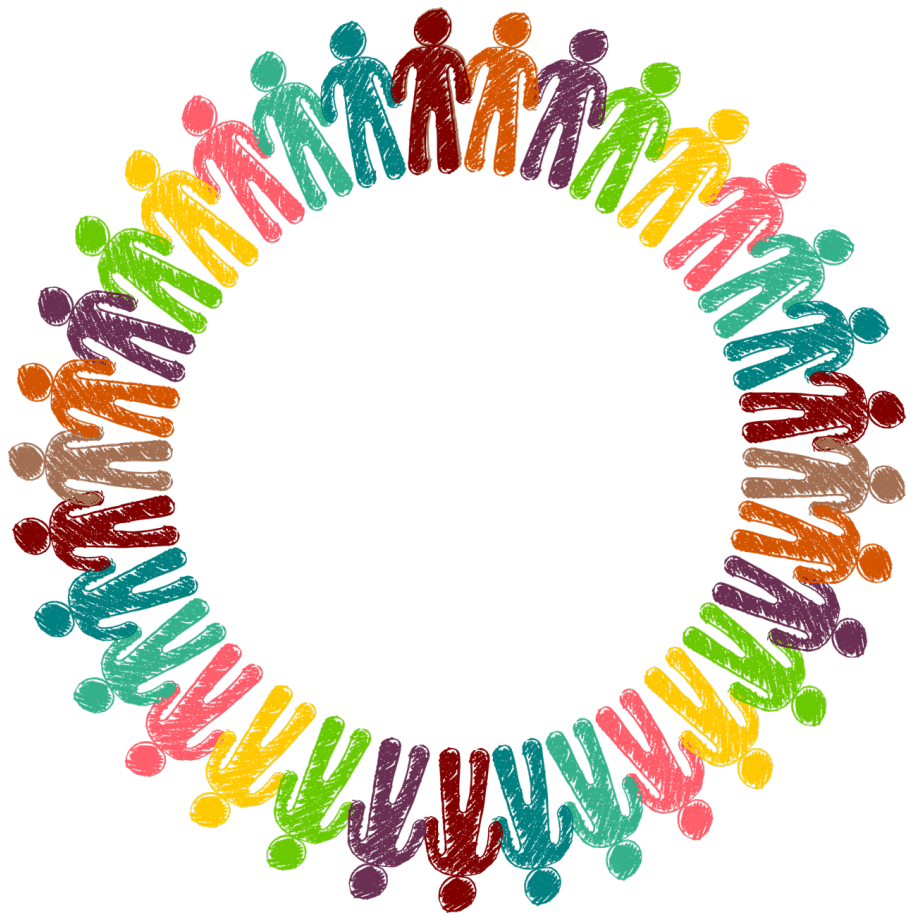
DAY 6

CONNECT WITH KLAL YISROEL

1 REFLECTION: What is my impact on Klal Yisroel? Take a moment to reflect on the impact you have on other Jews, whether it's your family, neighbor, friend or coworker.

2 EXERCISE: Look at the chain of people holding hands in this picture. Recognize the impact that we all have on each other. Describe the impact you see that you have on others. For example: Giving, caring, passionate.

3 VISION BOARD: How would my connection and openness to other Jews be different if I thought more about the impact I have on them?



DAY 7

CONNECTING WITH OUR HERITAGE

1 REFLECTION: Our heritage is rich. It includes everyone who brought us to this point. The influence of our heritage lives on forever. Reflect on the people in your family's history, the ones you knew and the ones you didn't. Reflect on the generations of Yidden who survived in order for our nation to exist- the stories you connect to about Holocaust survivors or even as far back as the Avos. Take a moment to zoom out and look back at the generations that came before you.

2 EXERCISE: Under the roots of the tree, list people from your family history and Jewish lineage and what they stood for. For example: "My grandmother; Perseverance"

3 VISION BOARD: Go to the 7th candle on your Menorah and write some of the strengths and character traits that you want to pass on to future generations.



“Maayan has given me the ability to look outside of myself, and see the bigger picture. This helps me develop healthier habits.”
LR, MAAYAN STUDENT”

DAY 8

CONNECT WITH HASHEM

1 REFLECTION: Connecting with Hashem is our ultimate goal. All the thoughts that we had over this Chanuka led us to this point, the ability to see Hashem in our lives. Ask yourself: Do I feel Hashem's presence in my life? Do I take the time to notice Him and what He does for me? Do I feel secure in His hands?

2 EXERCISE: In the hand below, list all the things in your life that you recognize to be "Yad Hashem". Attempt to analyze even those things that were difficult for you. Look deep inside and see if you can find the Yad Hashem even in the darkest of places. Chanuka is a time to find light in darkness- finding Hashem in galus.

3 VISION BOARD: On the very last candle describe who you feel you would be if you connected to Hashem in a real way and are able to see Him in your life on a daily, minute to minute basis.



“ At Maayan Shabbatons I enjoy meeting and learning from all kinds of people. I love seeing how people make Shabbos so meaningful for themselves and trying those ideas out for myself. I also like to watch out for ideas to incorporate in my own future home.

LG, MAAYAN STUDENT ”



BE A PART OF IT!

This workbook is a small sample of the life-changing work that's happening at Maayan. To be a part of it, send your tax-deductible donation in the enclosed envelope, or donate online. Your donation will go towards your choice of one of the following programs:

TUITION

The academic program at Maayan prepares students to earn a high school diploma. This opens up opportunities for their futures, enabling them to contribute to the world in a meaningful way. From the learning process itself, they internalize the values of accountability and responsibility.

DORMING

The dormitory is where Maayan girls gain experience in healthy living habits and

relationships. In the family-type setting they provide each other support while learning to practice healthy boundaries.

SHABBATONS

Maayan Shabbatons take place in various outside communities, including Atlanta, Detroit, Miami and Dallas. This gives the girls opportunities to connect with all different types of Jews from a wide variety of backgrounds. They gain new perspectives and their experience of Yiddishkeit is enriched.

ELECTIVES

At Maayan we have expressive electives and empowerment electives. Music, art and creative writing promote self expression, while horseback riding and martial arts give Maayan girls a sense of empowerment.

I WANT TO BE A PART OF IT!

PLEASE USE MY DONATION FOR....(CHECK AS MANY AS YOU LIKE)

- Tuition
 Dorms
 Shabbatons
 Electives
 Other

Notes _____

Feedback on the book _____

“ Maayan Academy gave me a sense of self and the strength to become the person I want to be. Maayan Academy gave me the tools to help me through life and the support to become a healthy adult.

TS, MAAYAN ALUMNUS

“ Maayan is not a school that aims to help Klal Yisroel. It's not a school that dreams of helping Klal Yisroel or even tries to help Klal Yisroel. Maayan is a school that is CHANGING Klal Yisroel every second of every day. It's a place where growth is not a mindset , it's a lifestyle - it's tangible, real, and enthusiastic. It's an absolute zechus to be a teacher here and a zechus for anyone who is fortunate enough to be involved in any way!

SHOSHANA RIETTI, LIMUDEI KODESH TEACHER AT MAAYAN

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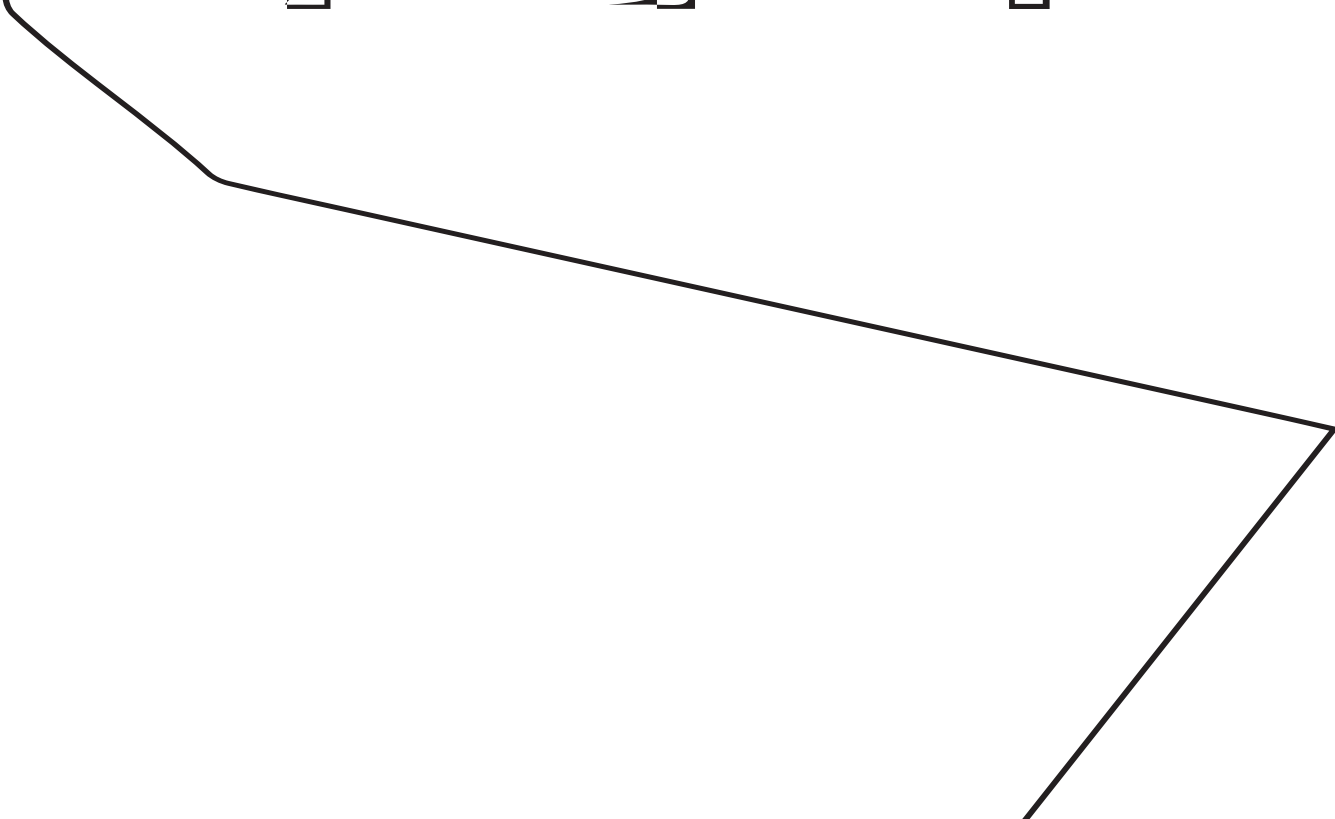
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Written by the staff at Maayan as a reflection of the inner work our students focus on in addition to the academic program. We invite you to participate in our important work by sponsoring a day of personal growth at Maayan and signing up for inspirational emails at maayan-academy.org

To learn more about Maayan please visit the website at maayan-academy.org
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