



How to Go the Extra Mile

Read through these three scenarios to see how you might elevate a common act of goodness into an act of *chesed*.

1. You see a food drive outside your local grocery store...

so you pick up an extra can of soup while shopping and donate it as you leave the store.

Or you could go the extra mile and...

- Ask if there is a certain item or good that would be most helpful to the drive.
- Ask if there are volunteering opportunities (and showing up) at the local food pantry or soup kitchen.
- Deliver groceries to those unable to leave their homes.

2. You have a friend who is going through a hard time...

so you text them to ask how they're holding up, and they say, "Not so well, but it could be worse."

Or you could go the extra mile and...

- Ask to set up a Zoom, phone call, or tea/coffee with them to provide a listening ear.
- Send flowers to their home or a homemade card.
- Create a playlist for them that brightens their mood and reminds them why you appreciate them as a friend.

3. An elderly person enters your subway train, struggling under the weight of their many groceries...

so you give up your seat for the person.

Or you could go the extra mile and...

- Hold the subway door open for them when it's time for them to exit.
- Offer to help that person carry their groceries up the subway stairs or safely exit the station.

Express:

- What's the commonality between the three scenarios?
- What's at stake in taking that extra step? What is the fear that might hold you back?
- What possible ways of navigating the situation were missing in each scenario?

Now it's your turn: How do you flip these scenarios into acts of *chesed*? Fill in the missing blanks and compare your responses to those learning with you.

As you walk down the street, you see a person holding a sign that says they are experiencing homelessness...

so you _____

Or you could go the extra mile and...

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You pay a shiva call

so you _____

Or you could go the extra mile and...

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Someone new just moved into the house next door

so you _____

Or you could go the extra mile and...

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-
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5 Tips

To Turn an Everyday Act into a Chesed Act

1



Pay attention & remain present.

Take the time to look around and see what people need. Once you have taken that time, stay present with them.

2



Move from a place of sympathy to empathy.

It isn't about feeling bad for someone, but it is about seeing or asking about their needs and responding to them.

3



Go out on a limb.

Chesed has stakes - when you offer your help, you run the risk of rejection. Remember that the act of compassion is for the other person, not yourself - if chesed isn't wanted, that's okay.

4



Preserve the dignity of others.

All people are worthy of honor and respect. Chesed is about uplifting the other.

5



See the holiness in others.

Jewish tradition teaches that we are all created in the image of God and worth of lovingkindness.