

WE CAN'T DO THIS ALONE

How acts of solidarity matter



1. MERAV'S STOREFRONT



On October 7th, Merav, her partner Yaya, and Yaya's two sons were taken hostage by Hamas terrorists.

You can read Merav's story [here](#).



Merav was the proud owner of a clothing store in Gedera. Now, the storefront is covered with heartfelt messages that read, "Merav, come home" and "The Ginger of Gedera, Merav, is Kidnapped."



◆ Merav, unfortunately, cannot see these letters. So why were they written, and who do you think they were intended for?



These letters serve as a powerful demonstration of solidarity, even though they may not directly impact the situation. Nevertheless, they are a heartfelt gesture of support.

Now, let's consider these storefront letters and respond to the following prompts:

- ◆ In what way does writing a letter to Merav, as an act of solidarity, help the person writing the letter?
- ◆ In what way does writing the letter help Merav's community?
- ◆ In what way does writing the letter help the Jewish people?
- ◆ Might writing the letter help Merav and the other hostages? If so – how?

2. EXTENDING A HAND

The Talmud in Tractate Brachot 5b tells us:

Rabbi Yoḥanan fell ill.

Rabbi Ḥanina entered to visit him,

and said to him: Is your suffering dear to you?

Rabbi Yoḥanan said to him: I welcome neither this suffering nor its reward.

Rabbi Ḥanina said to him: Give me your hand.

He gave him his hand, and Rabbi Ḥanina stood him up and restored him to health.

The Talmud asks: Why did Rabbi Yoḥanan wait for Rabbi Ḥanina to restore him to health? If he was able to heal his student, let Rabbi Yoḥanan stand himself up.

The Talmud answers, they say: A prisoner cannot free himself from prison, but depends on others to release him from his shackles.

רבי יוחנן חלש.

על לגביה רבי חנינא.

אמר ליה: חביבין עליך יסורין?

אמר ליה: לא הן ולא שכרן.

אמר ליה: הב לי ידך.

יבה ליה ידיה, ואוקמיה

אמאי, לוקים רבי יוחנן לנפשיה?

אמרי: אין חבוש מתיר עצמו מבית האסורים.

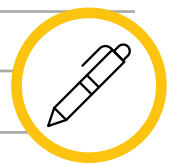


Physically, emotionally, and spiritually, prisoners cannot liberate themselves from the confines of their captivity. They require the compassionate reach of others to extend a hand and facilitate their release.

We may not have the physical means to free Merav and the other hostages, relying instead on the capabilities of our armed forces. However, through acts of solidarity, we can still extend our hands and contribute to our collective healing as a community and as a people.

3. A WALL OF SOLIDARITY

Ask your students to write a letter to Merav in the space below. Imagining it is Merav's storefront, hang the letters up on a wall.



Now encourage your students to read their letters aloud, and consider:

- ◆ If Merav, her family or friends, were to see this wall, what emotions might they stir within them?
- ◆ What other avenues exist for extending your hand in acts of solidarity, and how might these actions contribute to the citizens of Israel and Jews around the globe?

