

נדיבות צדק *Nedivut Tzedek* / GENEROUS JUSTICE

A New Jewish Peer Support Network for Just Giving

When you open your wallet or check your account balance, do you see choices of generosity and justice to be made? Welcome to *Nedivut Tzedek* / **Generous Justice**, a new Jewish network of supportive learning circles for the upcoming sabbatical year and beyond.

Nedivut Tzedek / **Generous Justice Circles:**

- ❖ **RECLAIM** the timeless Jewish ethical imperatives of *heshbon* — spiritual and financial accountability — that are rooted in sabbatical cycles of *sh'mitah* / release
- ❖ **CREATE** a process of learning together that builds community, while fostering respect for each individual participant
- ❖ **VENTURE** beyond conventional questions about the money of “other people,” and discover new community questions that support daily personal action
- ❖ **ACCEPT** the challenges of personal freedom and privilege that money provides, without becoming overwhelmed by all-or-nothing thinking
- ❖ **SEEK** out the dialogue between generations that is essential for learning the lessons of history
- ❖ **SHARE** stories and songs about personal money that develop a group culture of hope, and that evolve our broader culture of money forward
- ❖ **FOCUS** on stories — the “texts” of our lives as well as the texts on the study page — rather than on abstract theories not tested by personal experience
- ❖ **SUPPORT** participants in overcoming barriers to financial clarity and empowerment, and allow time and space for each other’s stories to suggest new money possibilities
- ❖ **DISCOVER** and practice the tools of participant action research, rather than looking for outside “experts” to supply the answers
- ❖ **EAT, LAUGH, and CELEBRATE** together!

One of the reasons that justice seems so elusive in practice is because we tend to define it so narrowly, as something external over which other people have control. Yet our Jewish values of *heshbon* / accountability uphold the core premise that we vote with our personal money choices, on a daily basis, for the state of our world — as well as for the quality of our own lives.

Recent decades have given rise to a number of diverse initiatives that focus on giving as a percentage of income and/or assets. Yet there has been no organized Jewish presence among these initiatives to date, even though percentage giving first entered our civilization as the Jewish imperative of tithing — which, in turn, grew out of the rhythms of the sabbatical year. ►►

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***Nedivut Tzedek* / Generous Justice** is a program of integration, an initiative to renew our Jewish culture of “spiritual finance” as rooted in the flow and circulation of wealth. It offers authentic, time-tested resources and support for bringing our money into harmony with our highest values — no matter what we earn.

While learning from and honoring *tzedakah* collectives and other giving circles that engage in pooled donations, we seek a broader constituency for **Generous Justice**. Our circles will provide support for each participant to expand her or his *personal* giving capacities — without dictating the specific terms or proportions of that expansion.

This new peer learning network will be grassrooted throughout the coming Jewish year of *sh'mitah* / release, and formally launched with a retreat-based leadership training at the 2015 Summer Institute of the National Havurah (Fellowship) Committee (NHC).

The multigenerational, participatory and egalitarian NHC is uniquely positioned to host our training, as a network of diverse individuals and communities dedicated to Jewish living and learning, community building, and *tikkun olam* / repairing the world. For more than 30 years, the NHC has empowered Jews across North America to envision a joyful, grassroots Judaism, and has provided the tools for Jewish life that create vibrant Jewish communities.

Significant training time will be devoted to storytelling, modeling leadership and practicing supportive facilitation (a) to identify and address the personal and cultural challenges of clarity about our own finances, and (b) to foster acceptance of our actual positions in the global economic / environmental hierarchy.

Outside of the training contact hours, participants will be able to take advantage of additional Institute course and workshop offerings, prayer services, spirited conversation, late-night jam sessions, singing, dancing, swimming, meditation, and hiking—all in the company of more than 300 people from a wide range of backgrounds. Each year participants leave the Institute reinvigorated and excited to return to their home communities to share new ideas and experiences.

Generous Justice participants will commit to work within their local communities through their own family and personal networks, as well as through service and advocacy organizations, independent study / prayer groups, synagogues and schools. A resource manual will be made available beyond the 2015 Institute training to extend the reach of **Generous Justice** to additional communities of concern.

WAYS OF PEACE Community Resources has been awarded an NHC Innovation Fund seed grant to launch ***Nedivut Tzedek* / Generous Justice**. We are now identifying additional partners outside the NHC for recruitment, funding and collaboration in this (re)new(ed) Jewish social justice movement.

For more information about individual and institutional partnerships and to receive updates, please contact project director Rabbi Regina Sandler-Phillips (rabbiregina@waysofpeace.org).