

Women in the Workforce ... *Vataas b'Chefetz Kapeha* The Best of Times, The Worst of Times

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We all look forward to summer vacation. Ahhhh. To relax poolside, to tackle those albums and create memories, to spend quality time with our families instead of rushing from responsibility to responsibility, to visit unusual places, to explore new hobbies. The opportunities and the potential feel as endless as a summer sea vista.

(I hardly want to mention the flip side, so I will include it in parentheses: The afternoons that never end when the kids are bored, hot and cranky, the off-kilter schedules that create nonstop breakfasts until 4 p.m., the rained-out trips that leave us disappointed and eager to get back to the routine school schedule.)

How do we capitalize on all that is wonderful about summer and mitigate, as much as is possible, the difficulties, to create wonderful memories for all?

One of the key solutions, I believe, hides in plain sight – and this time women who work through the summer (another major stressor for many!) may just be at an advantage. Let me explain.

Stress and the “side effects” it brings are often created when the divide between what I expect and what I can achieve is too great. Its close cousin, challenge, is welcomed and touted as the great motivator. What is stress? How is it different from challenge? And what does it have to do with summer vacation?

Challenge, whether it means completing a difficult hike, submitting to an unpleasant but life-saving medical procedure, accomplishing a complex task, or digging deep inside ourselves to forgive, is the opportunity to grow, to stretch beyond our known capabilities and explore the next level of achievement. Stress is often caused by the same scenarios, and when people are faced with difficult tasks, they often experience stress.

Challenges energize and inspire us. Challenges conquered reward us with a sense of accomplishment more valuable than many other experiences. Challenges overcome change us forever for the better. We are different people afterward

and feel invigorated and strengthened by the experience. Stress depletes. It tires us out before we even get started. It leaves us feeling drained. It often results in us feeling used, defeated, frustrated, empty and impatient.

The key to understanding the difference between challenge and stress is the recognition that challenges incorporate a balance between the unknown and the difficulty that lies ahead, with an understanding of the tools and support system available and a belief in one's ability to achieve that goal. Stress is created by the opposite, the feeling that the challenge that lies ahead is impossibly difficult, that one is alone with no support, and that one lacks the tools and the ability to achieve the goal.

Academic literature shows that students faced with challenging learning goals who had strong support achieved learning and success. Students faced with challenging learning goals without support experienced both failure and stress, causing them not only to miss the learning opportunity but also to refrain from learning challenges in the future.

At work, HR professionals agree that unchallenged employees are unmotivated employees, often damaging to company culture, customer experience and company earnings. However, stressed employees are also unmotivated employees, often damaging to company culture, customer experience and company earnings. Creating achievable goals and offering support are critical if one wants employees who are challenged but not stressed.

When managers tailor the employee experience and the work environment to include the right measure of challenge and the tools and systems to support employee achievement, employees are pleased and excited with challenges, motivated and engaged.

As we face the summer vacation, especially if we must meet other responsibilities at the same time (such as elder care, work responsibilities, etc.), we have much to gain from adapting work and human resource management tools to our summer vacation tasks and goals,

ensuring that summer is a challenge and not a stress.

Take the time to map **realistic goals** for the summer. **Be specific.** For example: instead of wishing/hoping/dreaming to take your kids out every single day, plan for one larger family trip a week or a month. This will give you time to plan and prepare. The days before the trip can include activities that keep the kids busy while building excitement toward the trip, such as preparing cookies to snack on, drawing a map of the intended location and outlining a scrapbook that will be filled with pictures taken during the trip, thinking up and preparing materials for games for the road, etc.

Another example would be to plan to organize the photos from the last year and one year of your childhood. True, you always meant to organize the photos sitting in your mother's attic since she was small, but that is probably too much to take on in one summer. By identifying a specific time frame in your past that you will focus on, you can create an attainable challenge and also set the stage for completing more parts of the task during future vacations. Ask your manager to leave one hour early on some days to allow you to get to a museum before closing. It will be easier for them to acquiesce if your request is realistic and specific.

Plan ahead: You want to learn how to swim this summer? If you wait until your two-week vacation starts in mid-August to work out the details, chances are you won't find an available instructor.

You always wanted to garden with your kids? Research, ahead of time, which plants grow best during this season, what materials you need, and map the blocks of time you will dedicate to the project, indicating which responsibilities the kids can handle on their own.

Planning suppers and “feeding your freezer” or setting up the slow cooker before you leave on a big trip allows your family to come home to a delicious supper without running yourself ragged at the end of a long day, and without expecting toddlers or teens to wait patiently when tired and hungry.

Build support: It is important that

the family unit support the summer plans. Your family members can commit to different parts of household maintenance, perhaps running errands they usually don't have time for, even taking on tasks that they would not normally be responsible for. (Many a teen loves exploring the kitchen and creating interesting dinners during the summer, to multiple advantage: great morning activity, important skills learned, Mommy free to go out in the afternoon if dinner is ready).

When everyone understands what needs to happen to clear the time and energy for fun, they, too, join the challenge of getting ready and sharing the burden, making the goal possible.

Incorporating skills we already implement at work to our summer plans will, *b'ezras Hashem*, allow us to capitalize on the challenge that is our summer schedules and avoid the stress. Working or not, the summer challenge holds the potential for growth, enrichment and expanded vistas. Wishing you the best of it all!

P.S. Same skills, same approach, once practiced, will smooth your back-to-school and pre-Yom Tov preparations as well!



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We want to hear from you! This discourse is for and about you, me, all of us. Please send your comments and thoughts to hamodia@temech.org

DAY TO DAY

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reservoir. On its walls, near the entrance, we identified engravings of human figures ... and a vegetal motif that were probably carved by passersby in a later period.”

The water system exposed is nearly 60 feet (18 m) long and reaches a depth of over 12 feet (3.6 m). The excavations reveal that the reservoir was built beneath a large structure with walls that are all nearly 150 feet (45 m) long. Some of the potsherds found on the floors of the rooms probably belonged to vessels used to draw water from the reservoir. According to the archaeologists' estimates, the structure and the reservoir were built about 2,700 years ago. Though the building was abandoned during the Persian period, the reservoir was still in use until modern times.

In recent years, a number of other

farmsteads thought to have been built at the end of the *Bayis Rishon* period have been discovered near Rosh Haayin.

The establishment of farmhouses in this area is interesting, given the fact that many regions within the decimated Kingdom of Israel remained desolate. Some scholars believe that the establishment of the farmsteads was motivated by the empire's wish to settle the area, which lay on an international route and near the western border of the Assyrian empire.

“The structure exposed in this excavation is different from most of the previously discovered farmsteads,” Itach said. “Its orderly plan, vast area, strong walls, and the impressive water reservoir hewn beneath it suggest that the site was administrative in nature and it may well have controlled the surrounding farmsteads.”

High-school students majoring in the Education Ministry's Land of Israel and

Archaeology track participated in the Rosh Haayin excavations as part of a new educational program designed to connect students with the past and train the archaeologists of tomorrow.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Construction and Housing and the Rosh Haayin Municipality, the IAA has plans for the site to remain an open area accessible to the public adjacent to a new residential neighborhood initiated by the Ministry of Construction and Housing.

Additional Rav Kav Machines To Be Installed

New Rav Kav machines will be installed around Yerushalayim, following pressure from MK Rabbi Yisrael Eichler, chairman of the Special Committee for Public Petitions for Transportation in Yerushalayim.

The new machines will allow passengers to charge their Rav Kav cards and to check how much credit their cards have before getting on a bus or light rail train.

The director of the Yerushalayim Transportation Plan said that 33 additional machines would be placed at strategic locations around Yerushalayim and near the most crowded bus and train stops.

“The ability to charge Rav Kav cards will significantly improve the efficiency of transportation in the city and dramatically decrease the precious time each driver spends dealing with passengers' payment,” Rabbi Eichler said. “It's also safer and more convenient.”

“I hope similar machines will soon be placed in other areas of Israel, and that we will be able to improve Israel's public transportation system and help the public.”