



## Message From Cantor Joshua Shron

I've given up social media for the New Year and am trying to make friends outside Facebook while applying the same principles. Every day, I walk down the street and tell passersby what I've eaten, how I feel, what I did the night before, and what I will do tomorrow. Then I give them pictures of my family, my dog, and me gardening. I also listen to their conversations and tell them I love them. And it works. I already have three people following me—two police officers and a psychiatrist.

— *Submission to Reader's Digest*

Yup, I'm a techie. From the latest gadgets to the latest news about Google, I soak it all in. I teach Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons via Skype, spend a bit too much time scrolling through Facebook posts, and feel naked without my smartphone. I love where technology has taken us, and I'm truly excited by what the future has in store. There is such a vast amount of knowledge on the internet, and our computers, iPads, smartphones and gadgets have become an integral part of our lives.

However, there's no denying that the electronic age is, at the same time, removing us from personal relationships. One might keep up with what's going on in other people's lives, but in my humble opinion, a genuine relationship can only be real when people interact face-to-face. Unless people spend time together, there will always be something lacking in the relationship.

A perfect example is online dating, where a computer will match you up with another person. On paper you may seem perfect for each other, and the online correspondence can go very well... but only after you meet and interact in person, look into each other's eyes, see the person smile and walk together hand-in-hand, can you truly know if that other person is right for you.

As usual, Judaism was way ahead of the times when it developed the concept of a synagogue. It is the perfect solution! Longtime members will certainly recall that it was not too long ago when Jewish life revolved around the synagogue. Families came together, young and old, to pray and learn, to socialize and form friendships, to celebrate and even mourn together. And, if you were fortunate, it was the place to find your soulmate.

The synagogue model is perfect. It addresses our most basic of needs - offering camaraderie, spiritual nourishment, community, and yes, even food! However, now that many Jewish people prefer to communicate via text, email, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, they tragically do not feel the need to strengthen their Jewish bonds by joining together in *shul*, as Jewish people have done for thousands of years. This is how we have kept our Jewish identity alive against all odds.

Stop by any Saturday morning. One only has to attend our weekly Shabbat services to witness the friendships created by our regulars. We all look forward to seeing each other, and we genuinely care for one another. As a synagogue, we need to get back to Jewish basics by joining our families together as often as possible, to re-create our sense of community by attending Shabbat and holiday services, and by supporting our programs and events.

Want to know what time services begin? Check our web site. Want to develop and maintain *meaningful* relationships with real human beings? Stop by 49-10 Little Neck Parkway, and stay a while. Together we'll transform our synagogue back into a true *Beit Keneset*, a house of togetherness.



### Teen Conversations with The Cantor at L'Dor V'Dor

Tuesdays, 2/9 & 2/23  
At 8:00 p.m.