

NFTY-NE December Institute 5770  
Aaron Gurvis  
Peulah IV

### **Making Aliyah - The Michael Levin Memorial Center**

#### **Goals:**

1. PP's will have a better understanding of the process of making *Aliyah* and the reasons that people choose this path.
2. PP's will understand how the Michael Levin Memorial Center can improve the process of making *Aliyah*.
3. PP's will leave with a desire to learn more about Israel.

#### **Objectives:**

1. PP's will simulate the process Aliyah, particularly the need for them to prove their Jewish lineage, and participating in *Gadna*.
2. PP's will learn, through discussion and experience, what the Michael Levin Memorial Center does.
3. PP's will learn about Israeli law, society, and culture.

#### **Timed Procedure:**

1. Trigger Skit/Break into Groups.....	4 min
2. Name Game at First Station.....	5 min
3. Discussion.....	5 min
4. Station 1 (Right of Return).....	15 min
Rotate.....	5 min
5. Station 2 ( <i>Gadna</i> ).....	15 min
Rotate.....	5 min
6. Station 3 (Who is a Jew).....	15 min
7. Station 4 (Family).....	10 min
8. Discussion (MLMC).....	15 min
Rotate.....	5 min
9. Regroup/Closing.....	6 min
<b>TOTAL TIME.....</b>	<b>105 min</b>

#### **Locations:**

Good Weather: Manor House, Universal Lawn, Chadar Ochel  
Indoor Weather: Manor House, Chadar Ochel, *Beit-Am*

#### **Materials:**

- Citizenship Forms – 1/PP
- Family Scenarios handout– 1/PP
- 2 Stamps (accepted/denied)(if possible)
- Pens/Pencils – 1/PP
- uniforms for Gadna GLs, Immigration officials
- megaphone

**People:**

- 14 Group Leaders (Personnel & Faculty)
- 1 Program Leader
- Faculty

**Background Information:**

This program is meant to begin on a serious note with the first discussion. PP's should have fun at the stations but not so much that the meaning of the program is lost. The program is trying to show the PP's what it means to make *Aliyah* physically and emotionally.

**Lineage Station:** GL will review citizenship forms and decide whether to allow citizenship to certain PP's. Do not be nice. PP's that are denied citizenship will go to Manor House for a discussion first, and PP's will all go to the *Beit-Am* for *Gadna*.

**Who is a Jew Station:** PP's will address what it means to be Jewish and how they feel about being told whether or not they are Jewish.

**Gadna Station:** PP's should have fun, but GL should be exceptionally mean. You are a drill sergeant.

**Family Station:** PP's will have to make a choice between a wedding or seeing a dying family member. Sad and serious station.

**Information about Michael Levin** – he died the day before Tisha B'av – if anyone asks, Tisha B'av or the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av is the day on the Hebrew calendar that Jews commemorate the destruction of the first and second temples as well as other tragedies in Jewish history, all that took place on that date.

**Detailed Procedure:**

**1. Opening / Break Into Groups [Chadar Ochel] .....4 Minutes**

*[Participants will be coming from Chugim to the Chadar Ochel. We will have tables set up in advance with their group numbers and ask participants to sit at the table of their assigned group for Peulah VII as they walk in the room]*

**PL:** Before we start this program, I have one request for all of you. In order to prepare yourself for what you are about to experience, we are going to do a quick little exercise. First I'd like everyone to close his or her eyes. Now take a minute and think about something that means so much to you that you would do anything for it. I know it's not an easy question, but just take a few moments to think about it, and then we'll begin.

*[Group Leaders should take their groups to their assigned locations]*

**2. Name Games .....5 Minutes**

**GL:** Hey guys! We're going to start with a name game. I want you to tell us your name, TYG, and one thing you know about Israel.

(Hi I'm Aharon from ISRALY and I know that *shwarma b' laffa* at Moshiko is exactly thirty sheckels.)

**3. Opening Discussion 5 Minutes**

**GL:** I hope you all had enough time to think back there about what really matters to you. Does anyone feel comfortable sharing what they thought about?

(Responses will vary.)

(I would do anything for **Israel**)

**GL:** For now I'd like us to focus on Israel. There are many ways for a person to help Israel, whether it means making sacrifices or not. Does anyone know some ways that a person from another country can fully devote themselves to Israel?

(Join the IDF)

(Visit Israel)

(**Make Aliyah**)

**GL:** Can someone tell me what it means to make *Aliyah*?

**(Making *Aliyah* is when you move to Israel, and people often join the Israeli army when they make *Aliyah*. *Aliyah* means to go up.)**

**GL:** Israel has established something called the Right of Return which allows any Jew to move to Israel and obtain citizenship. It is true that many people who make *Aliyah* also join *Tzahal*, the Israeli Defense Force. In order for it to really be *Aliyah*, you must be intending to stay in Israel, you can't just make *Aliyah* for a little bit and then go back home, that's a trip, a visit, not *Aliyah*. That's a really big decision to make, and people make it for many different reasons. You don't need to say anything out loud, but I want all of you to take a minute, close your eyes, and think about what you have in your life for which you would be willing to make that kind of decision. Think about what means so much to you that you would give up everything you know for it. Imagine what it would be like to make that decision, and what it would be like to follow through with it. Take your time, and when you're done you can open your eyes.

**GL:** What we are going to do now is a simulation of some of the steps a person needs to take in order to make *Aliyah* and join the Israeli army. As you go through this simulation, I want you to keep thinking about how serious of a choice this is, and why a person might choose this path.

#### **4. Station 1: Right of Return**

**15 Minutes [Chadar Ochel]**

**GL:** Everyone take a form. These are your forms on which you will apply for citizenship through the Right of Return. You must have proof of Jewish lineage in order to be approved. Once you have all finished your forms, they will be reviewed by a panel of Rabbis who will decide whether or not you truly are a Jew. You will have a maximum of thirty seconds to argue your case if you are denied citizenship.

***[Pass out Citizenship Forms and allow time for PP's to complete them.]***

***[Bring your group to the Chadar Ochel to go through Immigration. Faculty will sit in a row on the stage and choose several forms to review. Single out these PP's and give them your decisions. Be harsh, be mean, some PP's should be denied citizenship.]***

**Rotate**

**5 minutes**

**5. Station 2: Gadna**

**15 Minutes [Beit-Am]**

**[EVERYONE WILL GATHER AS A GROUP FIRST AND THEN BREAK INTO SMALL GROUPS.]**

**PL:** *Shalom. Baruchim habaim l'tzahal. B'tzahal anachnu lo mdabrim anglit. Atem tzrichim lilmod ivrit.* That means, "Hello, welcome to the IDF. In the IDF we do not speak English, so you all need to learn Hebrew." Normally in *Gadna* you would not hear a word of English from us, your *mifakdim*, your commanders. *Gadna* is a hands-on simulation of the conditioning for the Israeli Defense Force. In Hebrew, the IDF is known as *Tzahal*, which stands for *Tzva Haganah L'yisrael*, or the army for the defense of Israel. We are one of the most advanced and well organized armies in the world, and one of the only countries that has a mandatory draft. We are proud to welcome you to our ranks.

**PL:** Before we start your training, there are a few things you need to learn. First of all, when I or any other commander addresses you, you will all respond "*cain hamifaked*" for yes, or "*lo hamifaked*" for no. Do you understand?

(Yes)

(*Cain ha mifaked*)

**PL:** I CAN'T HEAR YOU!!!

(*CAIN HA MIFAKED!!!!*)

**PL:** Now we are going to separate into our *tzevvetot*, our teams.

**[PP's separate into 7 tzevvetot – PL will count off 10 people to go with each GL]**

**GL:** Before we start our drills, it is important that you get acquainted with your *tzevvet*, your team, and certain commands we will be using. Understood?

(*Cain ha mifaked*)

**GL:** For starters, *cain* means yes, *lo* means no. I am your *mifaked*, your commander. As we do each drill you will learn the particular commands for that exercise. These drills will be led by *ha samelet* who is in charge of drilling and discipline for all of these *tzevvetot*. If *ha samelet* gives you an order you better follow it immediately, or the punishments will be harsh. Any questions?

(*Lo hamifaked*)

**GL:** Good, now we can begin your training. I hope you are all ready to feel the burn!

*[PP's will now regroup and PL will be playing the part of the samelet. PL will run some drills. The point of these exercises is to show PP's that Gadna and the IDF are emotionally, physically, and intellectually demanding. When PL is running the drills continue to be strict. If you feel like you are being mean, you are doing the right thing. Have no mercy.]*

**GL:** Please head over to Manor House now for the next step in your journey.

**Rotate**

**5 minutes**

**6. Station 3: Who is a Jew?**

**15 minutes**

**GL:** Now that you have all experienced a taste of the army, we are going to talk a little bit about how you got there. Before your training you all applied for citizenship, and were granted that citizenship because you are Jewish. Let's talk for a minute about what that means.

**GL:** Does anyone here know a person who is a Jew by choice?

(Responses will vary)

**GL:** In Judaism we do not make it easy to convert. There is a lot of hard work involved, including studying, counseling, and for men a bris, though these days there are ways of getting around that. Why do you think Judaism is structured this way? Other religions make it much easier to convert, but in Judaism it appears almost as if we're turning people away.

(We want to make sure people actually want to be Jewish)

(Being a Jew is not easy)

(Being Jewish is a privilege, and if it is easy to obtain a conversion, it won't have as much meaning)

**GL:** So overall what do you think should determine whether a person is Jewish or not?

(Their belief)

(What they consider themselves)

**GL:** This discussion has shown the immigration officers that you are worthy to serve in the Israeli Defense Forces.

**GL:** Now we are going to talk about another aspect of making *Aliyah*.

#### **7. Station 4: Family**

**10 minutes**

**GL:** For many people, one of the hardest parts about making *Aliyah* is being so far away from their homes, their friends, and their families. Even at times when you really feel you need to be with your families or friends back at home, circumstances will not always allow it. Now I am going to read you a scenario, and I want you to keep in mind that this is the kind of thing that can and does happen to people after making *Aliyah*.

[Read **Handout 2**]

**GL:** How does this make you feel?

(Responses will vary)

**GL:** How would that feel to actually be in that position? What would you do?

(it would be hard)

(I wouldn't be able to do anything)

**GL:** I know situations like this are not easy, but they are a part of the reality of making *Aliyah*, and for many people this is the reason they choose not to move to Israel, because it is simply too far. Moving away is difficult, especially when it is permanent, and when you add the army to the equation, it becomes a different story entirely.

## 8. Discussion: Michael Levin Memorial Center

15 minutes

**GL:** Keeping in mind that what you've just experienced was only a simulation of what it's really like to make *Aliyah*, do you think it's an easy process?

(*Lo ha mifaked!*)

(No, it is actually very difficult)

**GL:** Which part of making *Aliyah* do you think you would find to be the most difficult?

(Responses will vary)

**GL:** With all of these obstacles that people have to deal with when making *Aliyah*, can you think of any reasons why they might find it even more difficult than you did today?

(For them it is real)

**(They have to do it alone.)**

**GL:** Exactly. With all of these reasons not to make *Aliyah*, why do you think people still do it? These days not as many people move to Israel as did during the periods of mass *Aliyah* after Israel was first established, but the numbers are actually back on the rise.

(People really care)

(Some things are worth fighting for)

**GL:** Making *Aliyah*, especially when a person also joins the army, can be even more difficult when done alone. These people are known as "lone soldiers", and there are many organizations in Israel that are in place to help lone soldiers. This year NFTY-Northeast has voted to create a partnership with one of these organizations, The Michael Levin Memorial Center. Michael Levin was an American Jew who made *Aliyah* a year after graduating high school. Soon after moving to Israel, he was drafted into the IDF. On Tuesday, August 1, the day before *Tisha B'Av*, First Sgt. Michael Levin died in combat on the outskirts of *Al-Tishibe* at the age of 21, fighting for the country he loved.

Regroup

5 minutes

## 9. Wrap-Up

6 minutes

**PL:** I hope you all learned a little bit about *Aliyah* from this program. It was not my intention to scare you, or to turn you away from the idea of possibly making *Aliyah*. What I hope you did all understand from this program is that making *Aliyah* is a really big choice. It means changing everything in your life, and very often it means changing everything by yourself. Making *Aliyah* is very different from visiting Israel or going on any other program, no matter how long it may be, because when you make *Aliyah* you lose the safety net those programs provide for you. You don't live in a bubble with your friends; you are completely immersed in Israeli society, whether you are ready or not. That being said, making *Aliyah* is not impossible, and many people do make *Aliyah* successfully every single year. Organizations like the Michael Levin Memorial Center make that possible by providing support for these people. Thank you for participating, and I hope you all learned something!

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name, First Name

City of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_



## Application for New Immigrant/Oleh Status

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Jewish Agency for Israel - Aliyah Processing Application

# 1 Applicant Information

Instructions: "Section A" is to be filled out by the Head of Household and "Section B" is to be filled out by the spouse (if applicable).

## A: Applicant Information

Legal Name (exactly as it appears on your passport) Last First Middle Maiden

Preferred First Name Occupation Gender  Male  Female

Date of Birth MM/DD/YYYY Marital Status  Married  Single  Divorced  Widowed  Separated  Engaged Jewish Affiliation  Conservative  Orthodox  Reform  Reconstructionist  Unaffiliated  Other

**Important:** Please submit a photocopy of your civil marriage, divorce or spouse's death certificate, if applicable

Country of Birth If Israel, at what age did you leave Israel?

Are you an Israeli citizen?  Yes  No If yes, what is your Mispar Zehut (Israeli ID #)?

If you are an Israeli citizen, when did you last reside in Israel? MM/YYYY through MM/YYYY

Country of Citizenship Please list all countries to which you hold citizenship Are either of your parents Israeli citizens?  Father  Mother  Neither

**Important:** If one or both of your parents held Israeli citizenship at the time of your birth, you are considered by the State of Israel to be an Israeli citizen and must obtain an Israeli passport and submit a copy of it to Nefesh B'Nefesh in addition to your US/Canadian passport.

Mother's Name: Date of Birth: MM/DD/YYYY Father's Name: Date of Birth: MM/DD/YYYY

<b>Contact Information</b>			
Home Phone	Work Phone	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Current Address			
Address			
City	State/Province	Postal Code	Country <input type="radio"/> USA <input type="radio"/> Canada

## B: Spouse or Fiance' Information (if applicable)

Legal Name (exactly as it appears on your passport) Last First Middle Maiden

Preferred First Name Occupation Gender  Male  Female Date of Birth MM/DD/YYYY

Country of Birth If Israel, at what age did you leave Israel?

Are you an Israeli citizen?  Yes  No If yes, what is your Mispar Zehut (Israeli ID #)?

If you are an Israeli citizen, when did you last reside in Israel? MM/YYYY through MM/YYYY

Country of Citizenship Please list all countries to which you hold citizenship Are either of your parents Israeli citizens?  Father  Mother  Neither

**Important:** If one or both of your parents held Israeli citizenship at the time of your birth, you are considered by the State of Israel to be an Israeli citizen and must obtain an Israeli passport and submit a copy of it to Nefesh B'Nefesh in addition to your US/Canadian passport.

Mother's Name: Date of Birth: MM/DD/YYYY Father's Name: Date of Birth: MM/DD/YYYY

## 2 Aliyah Plans

**A: Aliyah File** *If you have opened an Aliyah file with the Jewish Agency, please contact our office for further clarification before completing the rest of the application. 1-866-4-ALIYAH*

Shaliach's name (If applicable) .....

Five-Digit Tik Number (If applicable) .....

What is the status of your Tik Aliyah?  Awaiting Approval  Approved for Aliyah  Rejected  Not Yet Open

If you will be making Aliyah via Misrad Hapnim (Israeli Ministry of Interior), please check here:

### B: Aliyah Planning

When are you planning to make Aliyah?  January 2009  February 2009  March 2009  April 2009  May 2009  
 June 2009  July 2009  August 2009  September 2009

Have you made a pilot trip? (A pilot trip is a fact-finding pre-Aliyah trip with the aim of researching communities, school options and job networking. Ideally the pilot trip should take place several months prior to Aliyah.)  Yes  No

If yes, when? ..... If no, when are you going on a pilot trip? .....

To which city, kibbutz, moshav or yishuv are you planning to move? .....

Have you made living arrangements yet?  Yes  No

If yes, please provide details and address: .....

Are you interested in the Go North Program?  Yes  No

## 3 Personal Profile

*Instructions: "Section A" is to be filled out by the Head of Household and "Section B" is to be filled out by the spouse (if applicable).*

### A: Applicant

Name .....

List any Jewish groups, camps, and/or organizations you have been affiliated with: .....

### Previous Experience in Israel

*Please provide details and dates of your prior experience(s) in Israel on the lines below.*

Have you ever held an A1 Visa (Temporary Resident)?  Yes  No If yes, FROM ..... TO .....  
MM/DD/YYYY MM/DD/YYYY

If so, what is your 9-digit Israeli ID Number? .....

Have you ever served in the IDF or any other armed forces?  None  IDF  Machal  Other - please specify: .....

**Important:** If you are an Israeli citizen or previously held temporary resident status and your marital status has changed since you last resided in Israel, you will need to submit all relevant documents of your status changes (marriage, divorce, etc.) with apostille certification.

If you served in Machal, what is your 9-digit Israeli ID Number? ..... FROM ..... TO .....  
MM/DD/YYYY MM/DD/YYYY

Are you planning to serve in the Israeli Defense Force after your Aliyah?  Yes  No

If you will be joining Garin Tzabar, please check here:

Nefesh B'Nefesh - Aliyah Services & Aliyah Processing Application

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## 4 References

Please provide us with the names and contact information of people (non-relatives), in both North America and in Israel, who have known you for more than 2 years and who we can call upon as references for you. At least one reference must be a community leader.

Reference 1	Name	Address	Phone number	Reference Description
Reference 2	Name	Address	Phone number	Reference Description

If you are retired and have children in Israel, please list:

Name	Address	Phone number
Name	Address	Phone number

## 5 Supporting Statement (Required)

Instructions: on a separate piece of paper, please provide any pertinent information that you believe will enhance your candidacy. Please describe yourself and be sure to highlight your reasons for making Aliyah as well as your post-Aliyah plans.

## 6 Signature

I/We hereby certify that all answers which I/We have provided in this application are truthful and correct.

Applicant \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Have you included...

- Photo of all family members making Aliyah
- Application Fee
- One letter of recommendation
- Supporting Statement
- Original application, including all supplementary documentation
- Three identical, official passport photos of each Applicant over 16. Please write name of Applicant on back of each photo
- One photocopy of each Applicant's passport
- Copy of certificate of civil marriage, divorce, or death, apostille certification, as applicable
- Copy of each Applicant's birth certificate
- Copy of a letter from your Rabbi, or conversion certificate, as applicable
- One Entry/Exit Form for each adult in your family making Aliyah
- One Health Declaration for each family member making Aliyah
- Waiver of Confidentiality

### Mail your completed application to:

**In North America:**  
**Nefesh B'Nefesh**  
**Attn: Application Department**  
**42 East 69th Street**  
**New York, NY 10021**

or

**In Israel:**  
**Nefesh B'Nefesh**  
**Attn: Application Department**  
**5 Nachum Hefzadi**  
**Jerusalem, 95484 Israel**

List the three main reasons for your interest in making Aliyah:

- 1. ....
- 2. ....
- 3. ....

What do you see as your two biggest challenges once living in Israel?

- 1. ....
- 2. ....

How would you address those challenges?

- 1. ....
- 2. ....

Have you converted to Judaism?  Yes  No If so, what was the date of your conversion? MM/DD/YYYY

Has anyone in your family converted to Judaism? Please specify:  Spouse  Mother  Father  Daughter  Son  None

If so, please indicate the dates of conversion & to whom they apply: MM/DD/YYYY

**NOTE:** Please submit a copy of all certificates of conversion with application

Have you ever been convicted of a felony?  Yes  No If yes, please explain:

Are you currently involved in any legal proceedings?  Yes  No If yes, please explain:

List any stressful events you have experienced over the past two years:

- .....
- .....
- .....

## Handout 2

### Aliyah Family Scenario:

Six months ago you officially made *Aliyah*. Since you are an only child this was very hard on your parents, especially your mother who is worried about your safety. The process was not easy, but it went smoothly. You immediately joined the army, and several months later you were done with your training and ready to fight for your country. Two weeks ago your *tzevet* was called into duty in *Sderot*, a red zone city on the border with Gaza. *Sderot* is a city that is hit multiples times every single day by small bombs. You are in constant danger, but as of now nobody has been hurt. In six weeks you are taking a leave of absence, during which you will be traveling back to the United States to attend your brother's wedding. He's asked you to be the best man, and you're very excited. This morning you received a telegram from your mother.

My Child,

We all miss you at home. You are always on our minds and we pray for you every night. I love you and miss you every day, and I wish that was why I was writing, but unfortunately I have some very difficult news for you. Last night your grandfather was in an accident. Since he was already not a healthy man, he is not doing to well. The doctor's say that he does not have much longer, maybe two weeks, but probably less. I know that you've always looked up to him, so if you want to come home, your father and I would be happy to pay your airfare. I know this isn't easy news, but I also know that it would mean a lot to your grandfather if you came to see him one last time. I love you and miss you so much!

Love,  
Mom

After receiving this telegram you put in an official request to your commander to be immediately relieved of duty so that you can go home and see your grandfather. Your commander tells you right away that you can go, but has to make one condition. You can leave to see your grandfather, but you cannot leave again so soon for your brother's wedding. So now you have to make a choice. Do you leave to see grandpa one last time? Or do you stand with your brother on the happiest day of his life?