

Program Title: The Man who Cured Polio: A Jewish Hero

Category: Jewish Learning

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Touchstone Text:

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Genesis 4:9

Goals:

- To see how it would be like to live with Poliomyelitis.
- To understand that many of our parents and grandparents suffered the scare of the disease.
- To see that without this vaccination we might all have polio.
- To discover ways Judaism influences our everyday life, like Jonas did.
- To appreciate Jonas' humble behavior and try to mimic this in our own lives.

Objectives:

- PP's will learn that polio affected our country not long ago, and they could have had it.
- PP's will realize that Jewish activities can blend with not specifically Jewish things.
- PP's discuss whether they do things for humankind, or solely for themselves.

Timed Procedure:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Look ma no legs! | 6 min |
| 2. Divide up into groups..... | 2 min |
| 3. Name game..... | 4 min |
| 4. Explain opening..... | 6 min |
| 5. Timeline..... | 15 min |
| 6. Hand out "vaccines" and sugar cubes..... | 7 min |
| 7. Salk and his Judaism..... | 6 min |
| 8. When Judaism Influences You..... | 25 min |
| 9. Re-Group..... | 2 min |
| 10. Wrap up skit..... | 2 min |

Total Time: 75min

Materials:

- 1 blank small pre-broken puzzle per PP in a bag
- Markers, pencils, pens
- 1 Sugar Cube per PP
- 1 Circle shaped "shot" band-aid per PP
- 1 pair of crutches
- 1 wheelchair
- A bag for each puzzle
- Example puzzle per group

People:

- 1 PL
- 10 GL's
- 2 Rovers
- PP's

Location:

Various amount of spots based on how many groups formed

Background Info:

Dr. Jonas Salk grew up in New York. He had two brothers, but was the most observant Jew. He laid tefillin and attended synagogue daily. He experienced anti-Semitism growing up, and wanted to do something positive for humanity as a whole. He researched poliomyelitis, a viral disease that causes a flu-like illness which can enter the nervous system and cause paralysis and death. He discovered the vaccine to cure polio, and gave credit to Judaism for all of his work.

So, a lot of this might end up with yes and no answers. Please push the PP's to discuss further. Use the Timeline if you have extra time. It has a lot of topics on there which would be interesting to discuss with PP's. For example you could have a whole new conversation about how Polo is still around. (See timeline sheet for more info)

Detailed Procedure:

1. Look ma no legs!6 min

[Questions asked to all PP's]

PL: Please raise your hand if any of the following statements apply to you.

- a. You enjoy playing sports.
- b. You love jumping around at a NFTY song session
- c. You appreciate strolling outside on a beautiful day in a park, or on the beach.
- d. You have a weakness for walking around the mall for hours.
- e. You walk up a set of stairs in your house, school, temple, or any other facility.

PL: Ok, now everyone's hand should be raised. We are now going to do a little activity. Without using your legs, everyone on this side (point to one side) try to get to the other side of the room and everyone on this side (point to other side) get to the other side. Ready, set, GO!

(PP's attempt to get across the room for a couple minutes unsuccessfully)

PL: All right, everyone stop where you are and face forward.

[Hannah divides PP's into groups]

2. Divide into groups.....2 min

3. Name game..... 5 min

GL: YAY woo hoo, we will now play a fun name game! Please say your name, TYG, and favorite activity that involves moving your legs.

(Shalom, I am Joshua from CANDY and I love tiptoeing around and scaring my pet ferret)

4. Explain opening.....6 min

GL: Ok, great. Now could someone please explain the questions and activity you all just participated in?

(Well, the PL asked us things we enjoy doing on our feet, and then we could not use our feet)

GL: How did it make you feel not being able to walk?

(Frustrated, annoying...)

GL: Well some people have to struggle with not being able to walk every day. Do you guys know any diseases that affect people's ability to use their legs?

(POLIO, Parkinson's, other examples)

[Once polio is listed, acknowledge it and move on, it not said, say it!]

GL: Yah, POLIO! That is the precise disease we are going to discuss. Does anyone know what Polio does to your legs?

(Paralyzes your legs)

GL: So do any of you know who invented the first vaccination to get rid of Polio?

(JONAS SALK!!!)

5. Timeline.....

GL: Correct! So now we will learn a little background information on Polio so we can fully understand why Salk's invention is so praiseworthy.

[Pass out Handout #1 (timeline)]

GL: Please go around the circle each reading a different year's event.

(PP's read timeline out loud)

GL: Do any of these specific events stick out to any of you?

(Examples: ~FDR had polio ~it is still around today)

GL: Can anyone tell when the height of Polio occurred?

(1945-1955)

GL: Yes! So, can anyone think of a generation or specific group of people alive around this time period that may have been affected by polio? Hint: They are really important to us, perhaps related to us!

(Grandparents, and our mommies, and daddies!)

GL: Yes, that's right! What do you think would happen if Jonas Salk did not recently discover the vaccine for polio?

(We would all have polio!)

GL: Right again, we would probably all be much more affected by polio! Thank goodness he invented the vaccine. That Jonas Salk is one AAAA-mazing dude.

6. Hand out "vaccines" and sugar cubes.....7 min

GL: So, did you know that you were all cured from this horrible disease as a baby by none other than JONAS SALK's vaccine?!?

(OMG!! NO WAY!)

GL: Well, you were! Now I will practice his and other famous scientists' methods of curing polio on all of you.... Muah hahahahaha! Here is the famous vaccine invented by Jonas Salk.

[Hand out band aids and a slight pinch.]

GL: Ok you are all now Polio free! On April 12, 1955 Jonas Salk found a way to stop the contagious infection of polio through a shot vaccination. I will now hand out the vaccine invented by Albert Sabin, which followed Jonas Salk. This was given orally and made on sugar cubes so that children could easily eat it. It was eventually decided that Jonas' vaccine was preferred.

[Hand out sugar cubes]

(YUM I LOVE SUGAR!)

GL: So aren't you happy that Jonas Salk cured you all? Want to learn something even cooler about Jonas?

(Yes ☺ <- PP's faces)

GL: Well, can anyone guess his religion??

(JUDAISM!)

GL: YES! How awesome is that.

7. Salk and his Judaism.....6 min

GL: So now would you like to read a quote from Jonas Salk about his Judaism?

(Please, please, please can we?!?)

[Pass around handout #2]

GL: OK would someone please read Jonas' quote?

(A PP reads Handout #2)

GL: Lovely, what do you guys think Jonas meant when he said this?

(PP's reply with:

-Judaism has survived a long time

-Judaism influenced Jonas' life

-Loves being Jewish

-Judaism is a continuous cycle)

GL: So how do you think Judaism played a role in his life, specifically in his discovery for the Polio vaccine?

(Good work ethic, Family values, Persistence, Tikkun Olam)

8. When Judaism Influences You.....25 min

GL: Not only was Jonas a sweet Jew but he also had the value of modesty. After he invented this life saving vaccine, he was offered many honors of recognition, yet declined many because of his humbleness. How would you have reacted in this situation?

(I would/would not have accepted it because of my values)

GL: Do you think being raised Jewish had anything to do with his actions?

(Yes)

GL: So now we are going to get a little creative! I will now hand out a bag full of blank pieces of cardboard. On some of the pieces you are going to write or draw anything that connects you to Judaism. This could remind you of your Jewishness, or even be a favorite Jewish activity. On the other pieces please write or draw something that you feel does not have a direct correlation to your Jewish identity. This could be any activity, or something special in your life. Do NOT put the pieces together yet.

[Hand out puzzles, markers, pencils, colored construction paper, glitter something]

GL: Here is an example puzzle.

[Show puzzle... examples: playing the piano, swimming & wearing jewish apparel, praying]

GL: (after 15 minutes) Allriightyyyy, let's go around and share what we drew on the pieces!

(PP's go around circle and share each piece separately)

GL: They are all B-E-A-uutiful. So what do these very different pieces represent?

(The different aspects of our lives)

GL: Great. Sow now lets put the pieces together and see what these puzzles look like.

(PP's put together their puzzles)

GL: So on a whole what does the puzzle represent?

(Our jewishness coming together with other things in our lives.)

GL: So do you think your daily activities can be influenced by your Judaism, like Jonas Salk?

(Yes, like Jonas, our Judaism consistently affects our everyday life. Examples: like through occupations, sports, music, school)

GL: Can any of you find a non-Jewish piece of your puzzle that could somehow be connected to a Jewish piece?

(Yes, PP's give examples from their own personal puzzle, like Violin to Hebrew School)

GL: Great! You may keep your puzzle to remind you that your everyday activities connect with your Judaism. Jonas Salk loved studying medicine and he always somehow brought a Jewish aspect into his work.

10. Wrap up skit.....2 min

ALL GL's: [Jump rope, hackie sack, Frisbee, hopscotch, jumping jacks, cartwheels, dancing the can-can, skipping, dancing]

PL: If it wasn't for Jonas Salk, no one could be doing any of these fun things.

ALL GL's: Thanks Jonas Salk!

[Thumbs up cheesily]

Dana Robin Friedman
Feb Institute
Handout #1

Totally Tremendous Timeline!

1916 - There is a large outbreak of polio in the United States. Though the total number of affected individuals is unknown, over 9000 cases are reported in New York City alone. Attempts at controlling the disease largely involve the use of isolation and quarantine, neither of which is successful.

1921 - Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) contracts polio and is left with severe paralysis.

1928 - Philip Drinker and Louis Shaw develop the iron lung, a large metal tank equipped with a pump that assists respiration, is field tested and goes into commercial production three years later.

1935 - Physicians Maurice Brodie and John Kollmer compete against each other, with each trying to be the first to develop a successful polio vaccine. Field trials fail with disastrous results as the vaccines are blamed for causing many cases of polio, some of which are fatal.

1938 - Entertainer Eddie Canter coins the name "March of Dimes " as he urges radio listeners to send their spare change to the White House to be used by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in the fight against polio. The name sticks.

1941 - The United States enters World War II. Most of the best medical researchers, including Jonas Salk , either enter the military or work on military-related projects.

1945 - World War II ends. Large epidemics of polio in the U.S. occur immediately after the war with an average of more than 20,000 cases a year from 1945 to 1949.

1948 - Salk's laboratory is one of four awarded research grants for the polio virus typing project. Salk decides to use the newly developed tissue culture method of cultivating and working with the polio virus that has recently been developed by John Enders at Harvard University. Other researchers, including Albert Sabin, who would later develop the oral polio vaccine, continue to do their work with monkeys infected with the polio virus, a more difficult and time-consuming process.

1952 - There are 58, 000 cases of polio in the United States, the most ever. Early versions of the Salk vaccine , using killed polio virus, are successful with small samples of patients at the Watson Home for Crippled Children and the Polk State School, a Pennsylvania facility for individuals with mental retardation.

1953 - Amid continued "polio hysteria," there are 35, 000 cases of polio in the United States.

1955 - News of the successful vaccine trials is announced by Dr. Thomas Francis Jr. of the University of Michigan at a formal press conference held April 12 in Ann Arbor (the site where the research data from the field trials had been gathered and analyzed). A nationwide vaccination program is quickly started.

1957 - After a mass immunization campaign promoted by the March of Dimes, there are only about 5600 cases of polio in the United States.

1958 and 1959 - Field trials prove the Sabin oral vaccine, which uses live, attenuated (weakened) virus, to be effective.

1962 - The Salk vaccine is replaced by the Sabin oral vaccine, which is not only superior in terms of ease of administration, but also provides longer-lasting immunization.

1964 - Only 121 cases of polio are reported nationally.

1977 - The National Health Interview Survey reports that there are 254,000 persons living in the United States who had been paralyzed by polio. Some estimates place the number at more than 600, 000.

1979 - The last indigenous transmission of wild polio virus occurs in the U.S. All future cases are either imported or vaccine-related.

1988 - With approximately 350, 000 cases of polio occurring worldwide, the World Health Organization passes a resolution to eradicate polio by the year 2000.

1993 - The total number of reported polio cases worldwide falls to about 100, 000. Most of these cases occur in Asia and Africa.

2000 - Wars, natural disasters, and poverty in about 30 Asian and African nations prevent the complete eradication of polio. There is even a polio outbreak in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, which along with the rest of the western hemisphere had been polio free since the early 1990s. A new target date for worldwide eradication of 2005 is now set by the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

2005 - Polio spreads from Nigeria to the Sudan, with 105 confirmed cases. This latest outbreak illustrates "the high risk posed to polio-free areas by the continuing epidemic in west and central Africa"

Dana Robin Friedman
Feb Institute
Handout #2

“The process of natural selection undoubtedly resulted in a stock that has been passed on to its successors. It gave me whatever qualities were necessary to survive and to evolve. So I’ve seen adversity as an advantage. Jews have developed an innate wisdom about how to manage to continue to thrive and strive. I could see that in the way my mother brought up her children.”

~ Jonas Salk

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