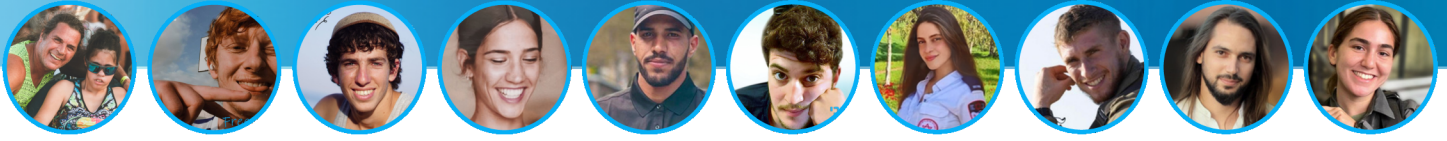


THE HEROISM EXPERIENCE OF OCTOBER 7th

A MICROCOSM OF JEWISH HEROISM OF ALL TIME



INTRODUCTION

Within this file, which serves as a tool for creating an experience, you will find **a fresh narrative of the values and characteristics of Jewish heroism**, along with unique materials designed to deliver the message through a transformative emotional experience: stories, songs, and videos focusing on the heroes of October 7th as a microcosm of Jewish heroism across all generations.

[LINK TO PRESENTATION](#)

LESSON STRUCTURE

Background (total 3-5 minutes)

- The pivotal moment of October 7th
- The Project Heroes initiative (How Project Heroes came to life)
- The creator of Project Heroes and his vision

Jewish Heroism (total 3-5 minutes)

- What is Jewish Heroism?
- Jewish Heroic Values
- The Unique Traits of Jewish Heroism

Meet The Heroes of October 7th (total 30- 35 minutes)

- The Heroes of October 7th Through the Lens of Time
- Presentation of the Heroes' Stories: (5-7 minutes per hero):

Introduction (1-2 minutes)

Brief introduction of the hero's story.

Song Screening (3 minutes)

Read the hero's name at the end of the video, invite applause in their honor.

Insights - Open discussion (2-3 minutes)

Sharing insights, emotions, and points of inspiration related to the song.

Repeat this cycle for 5 heroes.

Summary (5-7 minutes)

- **Highlights:** Every heroic act becomes a light, continuing to heal and inspire for generations.
- **Taking Part in Reshaping The Story:** Understanding how we can take part in changing the narrative.

BACKGROUND

THE PIVOTAL MOMENT OF OCTOBER 7TH

Just as October 7th has been defined as the darkest day in the history of the State of Israel, a day whose scenes echo the darkest moments in Jewish history, it was also a day when **exceptional heroism was revealed**, echoing the spirit of Jewish heroism across generations.

This is seen **not only in the sheer number of heroic acts, but perhaps above all, in their quality**. The bright light of that heroism, when examined, is seen to rest entirely on a weave of deep values and traits that Jewish people hold in times of crisis. These are values that Jewish people throughout history, from the time of Abraham to today, have sanctified and fulfilled.

And yet, a quick search on Google or ChatGPT reveals a big paradox: **there is barely any adequate documentation of this deep-rooted Jewish heroism**, neither among the nations of the world, nor often even in the Jewish collective memory.

This absurd reality, as it happened on October 7th, where absolute good stands opposite absolute evil while much of the world continues to cheer for pure evil, is not just the result of antisemitism; it's also linked to the way we tell our story, first and foremost, to ourselves.

The shattering moment of October 7th is also a moment of **opportunity: to change the Jewish narrative**. No longer a story built only on victimhood, pogroms, and wars, but one of rare heroism, and of values that have always been and will always remain a moral beacon for all of humanity.

Facing the most difficult day in Israel's history and the trauma it has caused, there is a real opportunity to tell the story differently, the story of the ordinary people who did the extraordinary and reflected the values of Jewish heroism onward.

THE PROJECT HEROES INITIATIVE

In response to this moment, artist and social entrepreneur **Gilad Segev, together with the families of the heroes**, created a breathtaking musical-visual program telling the stories of the heroes of October 7th. The program includes 10 songs and music videos, 40 written poems, a stage performance, and a book featuring a foreword by the President of Israel.

Today, the program has grown into a broad educational project with the mission of shifting the Jewish narrative from victimhood to heroism. Since this is a massive challenge, major Jewish organizations from around the world have joined together in a common effort. The hope is that **you, the reader of these lines**, will choose to join in spreading this heroic narrative, to share this extraordinary light with others.

THE CREATOR OF PROJECT HEROES AND HIS VISION

Gilad Segev, drawing on his experience as an international artist creating multisensory content experiences, built a program that has already been presented on the biggest stages in North America, including headlining Central Park UJA's Oct 7th annual event, conferences, and dozens of other stages.

It all began when Gilad wanted to commemorate the heroes of October 7th, just as he had once done for his brother through the song "Achshav Tov" ("It's good now") written in his memory after he was killed during his service in the IDF. But in the process, he realized he had uncovered a powerful and inspiring kind of heroism, and he felt a strong need to share it with the world.

JEWISH HEROISM

WHAT IS JEWISH HEROISM? (THE MESSAGE)

Beyond religion or biology, Jewish heroism is, first and foremost, a worldview, **a set of values that Jewish people have practiced** more consistently than any other people throughout history, as well as consistent traits displayed during times of difficulty. It is important to note that while some of these values exist in other cultures as well, the unique combination of them under one umbrella is what defines Jewish heroism.

WHAT ARE JEWISH HEROIC VALUES?



Responsibility



Compassion



Non-Violence



Liberation



Modesty



Sanctity of Life

- **A remarkable sense of responsibility and mutual commitment:** not just mutual commitment in the usual sense. Jewish people uphold responsibility not only within themselves but also toward all humanity, even when humanity rejected, persecuted, or sought to destroy them. This is a commitment also to the weak, to those who cannot reciprocate. It manifests in instinctive concern for others. It is based on self-sacrifice for others, based on "Love thy neighbor as thyself."
- **Deep and enduring compassion:** especially when there's an option not to show mercy. Compassion that comes from a place of love.
- **Refraining from violence and hatred:** a desire for peace, a pursuit of justice, and moral integrity, especially during times of danger or distress. A will to heal, to save, not to destroy.
- **A desire to liberate and set others free:** to be liberators, not conquerors. Not to convert by force, but to do the opposite. Belief in equality and human dignity.
- **Modesty:** the daily heroism of those who do not seek medals or recognition. They act simply because it is the right thing to do.
- **Sanctity of life, not death:** Every moment of life has a value. In the darkest hours, the Jewish people have chosen to live, create, love, and enlighten the world. Preserving both the body and the soul. Heroism is not just saving lives, but saving the human spirit.

THE UNIQUE TRAITS OF JEWISH HEROISM

- **Growth and evolution from hardship:** Creative response to danger. Solutions are not meant to destroy the challenge but to rise above it, turning trauma into rebuilding. This includes innovative thinking that seeks connections, searching for new bonds, inventions, and original ways to face adversity.
- **Harmonious thinking for the greater good:** not only improving personal circumstances, but lifting the world as a whole. Seen, for instance, in the overrepresentation of Jewish people among Nobel Prize winners. Jewish people have helped save humanity, made deserts bloom, and brought hope from emptiness. This thinking uses knowledge to improve lives, a deep and moral form of leadership.
- **Transcendent faith:** clinging to values even in the hardest moments, against all odds. A minority standing against many who try to destroy it. Believing that love will beat the statistics. Refusing to give up even when everything seems lost.
- **Special spiritual resilience:** not just resisting physical destruction, but preserving the human soul, identity, and inner self.

MEET THE HEROES OF OCTOBER 7TH

THE HEROES OF OCTOBER 7TH THROUGH THE LENS OF TIME

The horrors of October 7th caused immense tragedy but also uncovered extraordinary heroism. In a single day of unending terror, **countless acts of selflessness** shone through, with people risking everything to protect others.

The heroism demonstrated on that day **embodied timeless Jewish values**. It echoed biblical levels of courage, as it wrote new verses into the history of the Jewish people.

This lesson highlights a selection of the unimaginable heroism that occurred on that day. Just a few stories out of hundreds, which we are honored to share on this platform. In their final moments, these heroes became a source of light, **opening a door to a deeper understanding** of our identity, our values, and our strength as a people.

Their heroism continues to live on, for an act of heroism does not end when the moment passes. It endures as long as the stories are shared, read, sung, and remembered, keeping the heroes alive for generations.

MEET THE HEROES OF OCTOBER 7TH

PRESENTATION OF THE HEROES' STORIES

Liron Barda - The One Who Stayed

Liron worked at the Nova party and had many friends there. She could have escaped; her family begged her to. Instead, she chose to stay and learned on the spot how to provide medical aid to people she didn't know. The last time she was seen was with a wounded young woman who asked not to be left alone.

Insights: Liron Barda is "the one who stayed," embodying the principle of not abandoning a friend, true mutual responsibility with the cost of the ultimate price, her life.

Netta Epstein - Forever Inside Me

Netta and Irene lived together in Kibbutz Kfar Aza. They had planned to marry. On the morning of October 7th, just a short time before the invasion of Hamas, Netta flew a kite toward Gaza as a symbol of peace. They were attacked in their home, and a grenade was thrown into their safe room. Netta jumped on it and sacrificed his life to save his beloved. Irene, herself a true heroine, hid behind him and later told the story on which this song is based. She also invited the Heroes team to her home to film, and she appears in the video.

Insights: A story of true love, the kind of love that underpins heroism. The story of the Jewish people, above all, is a love story. Our love for one another.

Amer Abu Sabila - You Are Israel

Amer, a Muslim Bedouin, when passing through Sderot, saw what was happening and couldn't remain indifferent. In a split-second decision, he jumped into a car to save the Swissa family, who were under terrorist fire. When the father was murdered, Amer drove the mother to the police station, unaware that it had been taken over by terrorists. He and the mother, who were sitting in the front, were shot. While the two daughters were hidden in the back, and thanks to Amer, they survived. When the police arrived at the vehicle, the six-year-old girl refused to open the door and asked the police officer, "Are you with Israel?"

Insights: If you are with Am Yisrael, you are Am Yisrael. If you are with us, you are one of us. Heroism is not a genetic or religious club; it is a worldview, a perception.

Amer, who left behind two children of his own so he could save two Jewish children, is our hero. (You may invite the audience to clap along to the chorus in Amer's memory.)

Amit Mann - Hello

A paramedic at Kibbutz Be'eri, Amit, went straight to the clinic when the Hamas attack started. For hours, she treated and tried to save severely wounded people while calling for help, until the clinic was breached. People often say someone sings like an angel, in her case, it was literally true. Her sister, Haviva, told us that Amit's biggest dream was to perform on stages around the world. Today, even though she is no longer with us, we were able to fulfill her dream, as she appears on the biggest stages in North America and the rest of the world, although she is on the other side .

Insights: The mutual responsibility Amit demonstrated, rushing straight to the clinic, treating the wounded under impossible conditions, and showing resourcefulness in calling for help, will resonate over time. A young girl with dreams, who set them aside for the sake of others.

Free - The Heroism of the Hostages:

Yotam Haim was a musician- abducted from his home in Kfar Aza, one of the worst hit communities on the Gaza border, in which scores of residents were murdered.

Despite the many difficulties he faced in life, which led some to believe he'd struggle terribly in captivity, not only did he survive, but he also overcame everything and managed to escape.

Eli Sharabi, who lost his wife and daughters, now strengthens those who try to support him.

Gadi Moses, whose first request after returning from captivity was to be driven to his destroyed kibbutz, Nir Oz, to rebuild it.

This song is dedicated to all the families of the hostages.

Insights: The fact that so many hostages demonstrated acts of heroism during captivity proves that even if a human being is deprived of liberty and subjected to torture of body and soul, there still remains a certain degree of freedom of choice that cannot be taken away. This inner freedom is what allows a person to act according to personal values, especially under the harshest conditions. Choosing heroism, in this sense, may be the ultimate act of freedom.

EXPLORE MORE HEROES

*Additional heroes can be found by scrolling down in this file.
You can include these stories in your lesson or substitute them for those above,
tailoring the lesson to the heroes and values most relevant to your group.*

SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

Heroism is an act that never ends

Heroes are a force of light, one that can heal, inspire, and lead others. A heroic act creates a window in time, and it continues to exist as long as we reflect its light. Each and every one of us can take part in it. By echoing heroism, we honor the past, strengthen the present, and inspire hope for the future.

The Uniqueness of Jewish Heroism

Heroic stories exist in every nation because they carry healing, inspiration, and a hope that transcends the darkness. Still, in Judaism, heroism shines as both a constant value and a distinctive moral beacon that resonates across cultures. It is a living tradition, carried faithfully through history; time and again, in moments of trial, the Jewish people have shown remarkable constancy in embodying these values.

Jewish heroism goes beyond religion or biology, it is a timeless worldview, carried faithfully through history.

TAKING PART IN RESHAPING THE STORY

Share the stories of heroism:

Heroism isn't limited to those who perform it - by sharing its stories, we become part of it. An act of heroism does not end as long as we continue to echo it.

Find your unique way to pass on the light:

The more we pass the light forward, the more it shines, inspiring generations to come. Share stories of heroism in a way that resonates with you: write a song, paint a picture, create a video, or express it through any creative form that speaks to your heart.

Let the stories speak:

Choose to echo the light rather than argue with those who support a different narrative. Stories of heroism carry everything within them: values, inspiration, and courage. There is no need to apologize or explain; all that's needed is to tell them. Irrational problems, such as antisemitism, cannot be solved through reason, they are healed by spreading more light.

Be the first to change history:

History is written, and rewritten, through the stories we choose to tell. For the first time in Jewish history, we will tell it from a different angle: one of heroism. First to ourselves, and then to the world. The time has come to tell our story as heroes.

A MESSAGE FROM PROJECT HEROES TEAM

We hope this file will help you deliver a powerful experience. One that honors the heroes of October 7th and, through them, to the timeless legacy of Jewish Heroism..

To help you prepare your introduction and discussion points, we recommend reviewing the *Attachment* below, which can be found by scrolling further down in this file.

We emphasize that while October 7th remains the darkest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust, and though these heroes gave their lives for others, we do not regard their stories as mere tragedies. Rather, we see them as a **treasury of shining lights and inspiration**. May these lights guide us through this difficult time and illuminate our hearts with hope for brighter days ahead.

FROM VICTIMHOOD TO HEROISM - TOGETHER

In the near future, similar programs will be released on topics such as: Heroism in the Holocaust, Jewish heroines, Rise up Israel, modern-day biblical heroes, and others. All designed to form a continuous journey, addressing key topics through the lens of heroism.

These programs will also be presented at the Heroes Program Center, to be established in central Israel in summer 2026, open to delegations, students, tourists, and others.

Together with you, we hope to join hands for the first time in Jewish history, to change the Jewish narrative: from victimhood to heroism. Together, we hope to tell a new story.

With deep appreciation,
The Heroes Team



Explore Website

Visit our website for more information

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Arrange Visit

Check availability and schedule a session

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Join the community

Be part of the journey & follow us online

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ATTACHMENT

BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTION – IDEAS AND TOOLS

Find the heroes around you:

- A lone soldier, a family member of someone harmed, a person who acted heroically, building a personal connection with heroes in the community creates emotional resonance and a sense of relevance.

Create a Link Between Participants and the Heroes of October 7th:

- Show participants the similarities between themselves and the heroes, ordinary people who did the extraordinary.
- Present heroism as an emotional response to feelings like isolation, guilt, frustration, disappointment, and betrayal. Heroism as a path back to values and light.

Invite a Local Hero to Perform a Song from the Project:

- A live performance has a powerful impact (Heroes team is happy to provide videos with playback).

Questions to Spark Meaningful Dialogue:

- How are you feeling during this time?
- What did you feel in response to the heroism story shared here?

Strengthen Identity Through Family Roots:

- Ask participants to look into whether there are heroes in their family stories. Among the Jewish people, nearly everyone has an unsung heroism story.

MESSAGE DELIVERY METHOD

A TRANSFORMATIVE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE

After defining the values and characteristics of Jewish heroism, it was decided to convey the message through the stories of those who illuminated, more than anyone else, these values by their very actions.

The suggested approach here is a multi-sensory journey, **combining music, documentary, AI animation technologies, and storytelling**. The combination of these elements serves as a tool in the hands of the session leader, **enabling them to illustrate, feel, and bring Jewish heroism to life**.

The message is delivered by focusing on **personal, human stories of ordinary people** who, in a moment of truth, acted in a heroic way. The personal story has a unique power - it penetrates prejudices and emotional defenses, because before everything, and after everything, we are first and foremost human beings: a bride or groom, a child in a wheelchair, friends at a party.

**Experience Content**

Engage with stories, songs, and videos

**Learn Values**

Grasp the core values of Jewish heroism

**Amplify Heroism**

Share and spread the stories of Jewish heroism

The narrative of Jewish heroism can only change if it is carried by many voices, your voices. Together, we can achieve something never before done in Jewish history: to shift the story of our people from victimhood to heroism, from darkness to light.

MORE HEROES

Yonatan Elazari - With Bare Hands

Yonatan was a very adventurous boy, his mother always said she lived with constant worry. On October 7th, he was visiting friends and slept in Ofakim.

When armed terrorists arrived, even though he was in a protected place and unarmed, he went out with his bare hands to fight them. He felt it was his moment, the opposite of what one would expect: He raised a stone, like King David, to fight the armed terrorists. Later, he got hold of weapons, fought all day, and saved many lives through his actions.

Insights: We speak of the Bible as a book that has already been written and finalized, but we continue writing its verses every day through our actions.

Yonatan Elazari, who fought under impossible conditions, just like the Jewish people in every generation, is a biblical hero of our time.

The heroes of the Bible are all around us. History is being written in every moment.

Rose Lubin - Lone Soldier

Since she was a child, Rose knew she wanted to defend Israel.

She was a wonderful daughter and sister, grew to be a magnificent singer, and decided to make Aliyah from the US to protect Israel.

At age five, a girl in kindergarten wanted to be her friend, and she replied: "I'd love to be friends, just know that when I turn 18, I'll move to Israel to join the IDF."

She demonstrated great heroism on October 7th and became a symbol of the amazing phenomenon known as the Lone Soldier.

Insights: What causes someone to leave their life behind and fly across the world, to risk it all? What does it say about our people, who remained united despite historical dispersion? What do these invisible connections between us mean?

Lone soldiers show that our fight is not for land, it is for each other.

Ben Shimoni - Who Is the Man?

Even after managing to escape from Nova while saving others,

Ben decided to return to the terror scene, to hell, to save others.

And after doing so, he kept going back, eventually saving 13 people.

Insights: Who is the man who chooses to do that?

Against instinct, despite his family's wishes.

Who is the man who, after escaping hell, chooses to return again and again to save others? Ben was a guy who went out to party and ended up one of the greatest heroes in Israel's history.

MORE HEROES

Aner Shapira - The Hero Child

At the party, within moments, he found himself trapped with 30 people in a shelter. When grenades were thrown in, Aner heroically caught them with his bare hands and threw them back at the terrorists eight times, saving the lives of the ones behind him. But it's not only what he did, it's what he said:
"I'm Aner. The army is on its way. I'll protect you. If something happens to me, keep doing what I'm doing." He didn't just save them physically, he protected their souls.

Insights: We are a people who raise our children to be both warriors and artists. We fight for a better world that we are creating, and that is our people. Aner was a musician, a painter, and a protector warrior. A symbol of our nation, of love and music, of mighty fighters - a very special combination. It turns out our children are so much more than we imagined them to be. They called them the "TikTok generation" with scorn. But today's youth, the students, you are our heroes.

Erick and Ruth Peretz - Angels

Though Ruth had cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy, she loved going to parties. Erick would take her to parties all around the world. At those parties, they would dance together, hugging on the dance floor, sometimes with a wheelchair lit in colorful lights. At Nova, they were found embraced together.

Insights: Throughout her life, Erick cared for Ruth with extraordinary devotion, never allowing difficulties to deprive her of many happy moments. Erick used to say: Ruth is a treasure, the whole world is family, we need unity and love, we need to enjoy life.

Achshav Tov (It's Good Now)

This song is the personal story of the founder of Project Heroes, Gilad Segev, about his personal hero, his brother, Sharon Segev. The song was written about a fun day they shared when Gilad was a child recovering from surgery and couldn't participate in sports activity day at school: Sharon, his brother, heard about it, and came back from the army especially to give him the best day ever. This is a song Gilad wrote for himself, standing at a crossroads of despair. Choosing to see the good, he chose to name the song "it is good now" and not "it will be good". We all stand at a crossroads after October 7th and its horrors, where we need to make a decision, and choose to focus and share the light.

Insights: Like Gilad, we too are at a crossroads, and we must choose well. We can fall into trauma and remain there, but we must choose to see things through the lens of heroism and hope. Everything depends on how we tell the story, through heroism, not victimhood, and that's the essence of Project Heroes.