

Leadership in the Wilderness

A Series for Jewish Early Childhood Leaders

'Tis the Season for Reflective Supervision

Harness the energy of Elul and strengthen your leadership with this powerful ritual



Introduction by PJ Library's Sarah Wilensky; and

Presentation on a recent research study conducted by Ilana Dvorin Friedman and Anna Hartman

Monday, September 14, 2020

1:15pm ET/ 12:15pm CT/ 11:15am MT/10:15am PT/ 7:15pm Israel

[Recording](#)

[Slidedeck](#)

[PJ Library Holiday Guide \(PDF\)](#)

[PJ Library Online Resources](#)

Sarah Wilensky, PJ Library

- **Book:**
<https://www.amazon.com/Power-Ritual-Everyday-Activities-Practices/dp/0062881817>
- Ritual - connecting to yourself, people around you and the natural world
- What is “essential” to the High Holidays?
- How do we think about this word right now - essential workers etc.
- What do we need to take with us in this season?
- What has been essential to YOU in the past six months?
 - regular zoom meetings with friends/colleagues
 - ice cream

- The parks in Manhattan!
- family facetimes
- Cooking for our celebratory dinners - just for less people!
- The time spent in children's programming on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
- PJ Library New Resource - created with the idea in mind - "What is essential?"
Two Resources:
 - One PDF- packet, a hands on kind of experience. Speak both to families and educators. pjlibrary.org/highholidays
 - You can share ANYTHING - images, individual pages etc.
 - Rosh Hashanah Seder evening meal, recipes, blessings etc
 - Other aspects connected to spirituality, prayer and thoughtfulness
 - Prompts for deep conversations for children and families - can be used at home or at school
 - Second resource is an Online Experience - including video, music and interactive components. <https://pjlibrary.org/listen>
 - PJ library Listen - sharing music, podcasts, prayers, and prayer-eoke
- Reach out with any further questions: sarah@hgf.org

Ilana Dvorin Friedman and Anna Hartman

Ilana is a child development consultant, instructor, and researcher. She holds a PhD in child development from the dual program at Loyola University Chicago and Erikson Institute.

Anna is the director of the Paradigm Project, the Director of Early Childhood Excellence at the Jewish United Fund, and a doctoral student in Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Ilana and Anna undertook a research project last year to learn more about teachers' perspectives on reflective supervision.

- One of the most powerful quotes about reflective supervision from a teacher, "I think it's been probably the single best thing I have done as a teacher"
- First context about the study and then data analysis
 - Engaging in reflective supervision is not hard.
 - Show up and pay attention!!
 - Supervisor does not have to be perfect - we are all human and this practice is about being a human with another human
 - A single pomegranate busting with potential - theres a return on investment

- We hope you will feel reinvigorated about reflective supervision
- Study should inspire action and change!!
- At the heart is that reflection supervision leads to action together
- Elul
 - “Every soul needs to express itself” and “every heart needs to crack itself open” ([Rabbi Alan Lew](#))
 - “Every soul needs to express itself. Every heart needs to crack itself open. Everyone of us needs to move from anger to healing, from denial to consciousness, from boredom to renewal. These needs...are fully expressed in...the Days of Awe.” (Rabbi Alan Lew)
 - Connection to Elul and high holidays to our heart, soul, and our readiness for growth
 - We can reimagine the possibilities
 - Shofar - we hear the blast and it's a reminder, an alarm, a wake up call. When we tune into it we linger in it and can take a step back collectively. It reminds of of a process, we are not in this alone, we are in a shared moment together
 - At the heart of the reflective supervision relationship is a shared journey of self-discovery; About supervision and about Elul!
 - A leader's ability to be genuine is essential
 - “I'm real” (Thanks J-Lo ;)
 - Leading comes from the heart
 - It's real, its true, it's not a show
 - It is connected to who we are!!!
 - Shofar is a call, a hand extended, we need to connect to that sound
- Attunement
 - A baby's brain is ready for shared moments
 - Caregivers - “Tune -in”
 - The child responds given the response that was given to them
 - Be Human Together
 - Attunement = Share in the experience
 - Act with emotional responsiveness - validation, trust and joy
 - Key ingredients of reflective supervision:
 - 1. Relational - between supervisee and supervisor, over time, many context, it fuels the work, allows for secure safe base for exploration, it creates a strength based approached
 - 2. Reflective - safe space to reconsider, reflect

- 3. Co-constructed - validation, support that is shared allows for new ideas to exist and develop and for conversation to unfold.

Transformation can happen when you are open together

- Our Research study
 - Reflective Supervision in terms of leadership and in terms of professional growth of educators
 - study involved 15 participants
 - Interviews and journal entries once a month after supervision meetings
 - Supported by the Jewish United Fund
- Themes:
 - 1. Collaboration - sets a tone for conversation, not top down, it's a conversation
 - 2. Regularity - educators wanted it more and have it for longer time. However knowing that there is some time and set space with regularity creates a secure base over time
- Mezuzah - once it is a-fixed it is there! We can reaffirm it's importance and reschedule - we have to be flexible!
- Supervisor meets us where we are
- Elicit the feelings that are beneath the work
- Supervisor - didn't dismiss feelings
- She still was able to create a professional setting even when the teacher wasn't in the mood
- Showing up and paying attention
- "She really gets me. She knows what this journey's been about for me. And she's really part of my growing process, as well"
- The agenda belongs with the teacher
 - Here are some things going on in the classroom/ I really would like to discuss / I'd like to share with you a child's question and reflect on the direction further learning could take/ I'd like to talk about something that has been challenging for me recently / id like to reflect on a memorable encounter I have had with a family recently
- The leader is showing up - asks questions too!
 - Connecting Questions - tell me about a joyful/funny/inspirational moment in your classroom today
 - Reflective Questions - helps teacher think more deeply about a given scenario. What's one thing you won't compromise. What do you see as an important next step
 - Supportive Feedback - I can see how passionate you are? Have you noticed your growth?

- Constructive Feedback- We need to be reflective, honest and real. Supportively nudging for teacher to be more aware. I notice that your action had a certain effect. Did you notice that. Did you get the response you expected
- Closing Questions- What are you thinking now, how can I be of assistance?
- The Black Box of Reflective Supervision- the teachers words
 - Teacher - I listen, explain, find their place, prioritize, be honest
 - My supervisor helps me:
 - Think, hone, navigate, face challenges, solve problems, make sense of things, develop as an educator, find my voice, see the big picture, see a different perspective, find my passion so that I can focus there, improve my communication with the team, know where to find resources
 - Together we:
 - Touch base, find clarity, plan, reflect, engage with honesty, get to our why, put a plan in place, talk through things, go deeper in talking about our students, talk about the meaning of a child's words
- Teachers leave sessions feeling CONFIDENT and EXCITED. Imagine the possibilities !! So powerful!
- Key active ingredient!!! What can it be!?!?
 - Reflective Supervision also impacts children and families - it is a multiplier
- Parallel Process
 - There is a ripple effect that leaves an impact
 - New idea, trust, power, energy all ripples!
 - It's a seed that grows overtime
 - Honi the circle maker - tree takes 70 years to grow. just as my ancestors planted for me so to that I plant these for the children
 - As we support the children we support the children
 - Image of gears: leader turns the gear it affects teachers who impacts children and families
 - Can't always see the effects of it
 - affirms the importance of the parallel process. Models the attunement of the work we do in the classroom.
 - Modeling shows explicit recognition that we all have those relationships
 - shows respect at all levels
 - Opens the door for me to have ideas and communicate them - which then shows children that their ideas can be shared and worthy as well

- So simple and so powerful
- Show up and be a human who connects
- we show up in our full humanity and shape the lives of those around us
- Supervisor helps the teacher see who they are
- gives the teacher voice and validates that voice
- Reflection - What do we see and what does that mean?
 - Individual and communal improvement
 - We look at mirrors to express what they understand
 - Metaphorical mirrors - what is the proper path that a person should choose for themselves
 - We strive to be human beings, we strive to be our true selves - we are created with the potential for greatness
 - Anything is possible
 - Particularly when you look in the mirror to ask how to be your best self
 - We are awake, aware and in motion
- Feel urgency and also want to linger in the moment - what does this mean for us right now?
- Core components of Reflective Supervision
 - Supervisors deserve ongoing training and support
 - We are all human and learning to be human together
 - Reflection is a lifelong developmental process
 - Reflection occurs within a relationship that is co-constructed over time
 - Reflection requires a slow and intentional stepping back
 - Feelings matter
- Parallel process
- Be kind to yourself!
- Sometimes we feel mismatch or there are mistakes in the process
- You're enough and you are doing great - when you prioritize the relationship you know there will be mistakes, but we can repeat them
- This year:
 - you might have to make an adjustment on frequency and duration
 - Better than abandoning the practice
 - we might want to reevaluate throughout this year
 - Can this happen another way? A different way?
 - Can you take a walk together?
 - Picnic bench or even the gym?
 - Ask our educators
 - Think / Reevaluate our "MUST" list
 - What can move and shift?

- Can you promote someone to help with supervision?
- Transparency leads to authenticity
- Be kind to yourself - gauge your own feelings, set tone and allow for the focus to remain on the educator
- Care bear stare!
- Carebears hearts word burst! Care bear stare!
- My heart can be pulled before my head
- Let this wash over you and your heart, grab a partner - use each other as support
- Writing a prayer together - A Prayer for 5781
 - We sit together as humans and use that language in our prayers
 - “As we are nurtured, so we are enabled to nurture”
 - “Just as a great teacher XXX so too may our leaders XXX”
 - “Just as a great leader XXX, so too may our teachers XXX”

A Prayer for 5781 (co-constructed)

“As we are nurtured, so we are enabled to nurture”

Just as a great teacher listens, so too may our leaders (Ken yehi ratzon/may it be God’s will)

Just as a great teacher thinks about what’s really going on here, what’s behind this behavior, so may our leaders.

Just as a great teacher listens, so too may our leaders listen.

Just as a leader loves, so too may our teachers love

Just as a great teacher learns from her students, so may our leaders learn from our teachers

Just as a great teacher listens to her students, so too may our leaders listen to our teachers

Just as a great teacher tries to play to everyone’s strengths, so may our leaders.

Just as a great teacher cares, so too may our leaders care

Just as a great leader supports, so may our teachers support

Just as a great teacher spreads joy, so too may our leaders spread joy

Just as a leader listens, so may our teachers listen.

Just as a great leader welcomes, so too may our teachers.

- Music video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlcxEDy-lr0>

Resources for Further Reading:

- Heffron, M. C., & Murch, T. (2011). [Reflective supervision and leadership for infant and early childhood programs](#) (1st ed.). Zero to Three.
- Heffron, M. C., & Murch, T. (2012). [Finding the words, finding the ways: Exploring reflective supervision and facilitation](#). California Center for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health at WestEd Center for Prevention & Early Intervention.

- Heller, S. S., & Gilkerson, L. (2009). *A practical guide to reflective supervision*. Zero to Three.
- Parlakian, R. (2001). [Look, listen, and learn: Reflective supervision and relationship-based work](#). Zero to Three.
- Parlakian, R. (2002). [Reflective supervision in practice: Stories from the field](#). Zero to Three.