

Mitzvah Pizza

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What makes a community stick together?

Love Your Neighbor

Missy is confused. Why is her new pal, Jane, paying for her pizza with sticky notes? As Missy's father helps her understand how the sticky-note system works, Missy also becomes aware of ways that Jane is similar to her and different from her. As Missy and Jane play at the park, Missy focuses on their commonalities, understanding that their differences are less important. This is a powerful example of *V'ahavta le'rei'echa kamocho* ("Love your neighbor as yourself") — that is, treat others equally, even though we all come with our own set of circumstances. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/mitzvahpizza.

Good Ideas Have Sticking Power

The medieval philosopher Maimonides taught that one of the best ways to give *tzedakah* (charity) is anonymously, so the person receiving the charity doesn't know who gave it, and the one who gave the charity doesn't know who's receiving it. This is exactly what's happening at the Pizza Corner: the sticky notes allow people to eat well while maintaining their dignity. Believe it or not, a similar donation program was instituted at the ancient Holy Temple in Jerusalem, where there was a fund for people to give in secret — whoever wanted to give could give, whoever needed to take could take, and everyone got to hold their heads high.

Thank You for Being a Friend

Missy and Jane meet at a local pizza joint that also happens to serve as a community gathering place. Community is a central component of both religious and secular Jewish life. Many Jews tend to build their communities around synagogues, religious schools, and community institutions like Jewish community centers and federations, which allow people to gather and spend time with each other. But any community institution, even pizzerias and playgrounds, can be a great place for people to convene, chat, and become friends (not to mention eat and play!). Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of the United Kingdom, wrote, "Community is the place where we know we're not alone." That is certainly true for Missy and Jane.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

Giving away free pizza is a fun way to feed hungry people. What are other creative ways you can think of for helping out people who are less fortunate?

Why is it important to consider other people's feelings when we spend time with them?

Why does pizza taste so good?



HANDS ON!

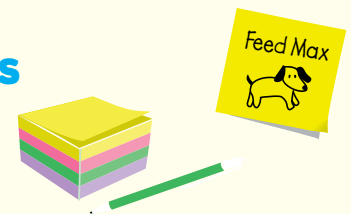
Make Your Own Sticky-Note Wall

In this story, sticky notes are substitutes for money. At home, you can use them as gift certificates of a different kind. Create a sticky-note wall for chores. Someone who needs a little extra help can grab a sticky note!



Supplies

Sticky notes
Pen



Here's how it works. When people in your family go out of their way to do something nice for you, pay it forward. Write a small chore ("take out garbage" or "feed cat") on a sticky note and stick it on the fridge. The next time someone else needs a hand getting chores done, that person can turn in a sticky note, and you'll get the job done — with a smile!