

# Jewish Professional—Professional Jew: Commitments and Competencies for a Jewish Mission

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## I.

As the American Jewish communal agenda becomes increasingly complex and as the demands on Jewish agencies to be more effective, efficient and sophisticated escalate, there is a concomitant need for well-trained and devoted Jewish community personnel. Although a professional may be employed primarily in one facet of communal service (i.e. in one of the various fields represented by affiliated professional organizations), it has become necessary for workers to become comfortable with, if not expert in, a wide range of skills and contexts. More and more, workers need to be multi-disciplinary, able to mix and match techniques and strategies, in order to respond adequately and appropriately to the demands of their job and the needs of the community.

Extensive discussion has filled the pages of this Journal concerning the issue of hiring trained personnel with graduate degrees in social work and Jewish communal service.<sup>1</sup> Much of the

debate has been devoted to the relative merits of these advanced degrees, the conferring institutions and their respective curriculum emphases. Although degrees do not inherently guarantee qualified practitioners, a higher incidence of individuals with graduate training would promote a rising standard of professional and, in many cases Jewish, competence in our field.

This healthy debate reflects the ongoing tensions between the sectarian (particularistic) and non-sectarian (universalistic) orientations within the field. It is reflective of the continuing, evolving and ever shifting relationship of the Jewish community to the general society.<sup>2</sup> These tensions have practical significance in that they affect goals within the field, roles of the professional, the educational orientations of training programs and the necessary outlook/actions of workers themselves.

The purpose of this paper is to comment on what we might call the issue of the Jewish competency of the Jewish communal professional, in Jewish knowledge, values, practice, commitment, continuing education and experience. This is surely not to de-emphasize

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Reisman, "An Alternative Perspective on Training Jewish Communal Workers," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Summer 1976), p. 338. It is recognized that a variety of professionals with different backgrounds work in our field. For the purposes of this essay, I am utilizing a definition of Jewish communal service from Reisman's article. The field includes professional personnel who perform a range of social work functions within the network of Jewish social welfare agencies. As such, excluded are educators,

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rabbis and others from the purview of this article. The author himself is a graduate of the Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Reisman, "The Jewish Component in the Training Programs of Jewish Communal Workers," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (Winter 1981-2), p. 95.

or denigrate the importance of technical skills and training. Yet, in this pluralistic, post-Emancipation, post-Holocaust, post-Independence era, we are faced with an agonizing and growing list of unmet Jewish needs. As a result of the many demands upon the agency and therefore, the worker, beyond the stated agency function and job description, he/she must be adequately prepared to serve in a variety of Jewish capacities. To consider this, we need to examine such basic questions as what are, or should be the basic values and commitments of workers? How can we ensure an adequate level of Jewish competence in the field? What guidelines for Jewish living do we offer, composed of Jewish values, which will promote Jewish survival and continuity?<sup>3</sup> In turn, what kind of people should be brought into the field? What should be their background, their education, their experiences, their beliefs?<sup>4</sup>

In this article, I will survey a selection of the writings of distinguished colleagues that have appeared in this *Journal* over the years and provide some additional insights into this important topic. In that I am most familiar with the fields of fund-raising and community relations, my frame of reference derives from that perspective (as well as from an overwhelmingly New York experience). However, my conclusions will also hold true for other professional contexts and will have meaning within the overall framework of Jewish communal service. To an extent, Jewish communal service is intrinsically generic in practice, even as each of us specializes. In reality, we are all community organizers, fund-raisers, educators, counselors, commu-

nity relations practitioners, and so forth.<sup>5</sup>

We Jews tend to be perfectionists, with tremendously high expectations of ourselves and of others. Our lay leaders want professionals who are capable "technical" practitioners and capable Jews. And they are right. This cannot be an "either-or" question, for the health and future of our community depends on this dual competency. As Mogulof notes, professional skill without a value commitment is not worth very much to the Jewish community.<sup>6</sup> A Jewish communal worker must combine Jewish values and knowledge with professional skills.<sup>7</sup> As others have said, Jewish communal service is not objective, not value-less. We are in the business of providing service to and on behalf of the Jewish community, promoting and sustaining its short and long-term well-being, growth and survival.

An example from the realm of fund-raising will illustrate. In the UJA-Federation Campaign, our "manifest" function is the creation and development of the conditions, structures and human resources necessary to obtain maximum economic resources for the ultimate use by and for the Jewish community. A latent but certainly not unintended function of our work is to help build community, beyond the potential benefit for campaign purposes.

A campaign professional is not merely a fund raiser or campaign functionary, but a Jewish professional dedicated not only to raising dollars, but Jews and communities. A campaign professional (as all Jewish communal workers) is one of a team of professionals working to

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Penn, "The Professional Worker and the Jewish Component in Communal Practice," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (March 1979), p. 254.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>5</sup> Sidney Vincent, "Reaffirming Jewish Life: The Challenge of Change," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Fall 1979), p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Melvin B. Mogulof, "Community Organization in Jewish Communal Work," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (Winter 1982), p. 128.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

heighten Jewish consciousness and connectedness. By helping people join in community life and fully share in its joys, sorrows, celebrations, privileges and responsibilities, we broaden involvement and deepen commitment. In a real sense, we are agents of social change in both means and ends.

We dwell in a contemporary world in which community association is purely a voluntary act. While the modern period has produced a freedom from communal constraints, it has also destroyed a communal consciousness among Jews. The resulting sense of isolation from the collectivity has engendered a loosened sense of communal responsibility and participation. In generations past, Jews came to organizational life to act out their Jewishness. Today, organizations very often provide the first point of entry for Jews into the community and into Jewish life. Many people are coming to Jewish organizations, and, sadly, not often enough to synagogues, to find out why and how to be Jewish and what it all means. They want to find their own existential Jewish answers concerning why they should be involved in Jewish life at all. We in the field have to be prepared to do all we can to nurture that interest and search for meaning. Organizations must assume the wider role of "identity builder" to increase the Jewishness of our publics, while we are striving to advance our agencies' more specific goals. It is critical that we broaden our organizational perspectives and programs to open as many doors as possible to allow Jews to enter the community. This must be the responsibility of each professional and each organization at all times.<sup>8</sup> Otherwise, we will have

<sup>8</sup> I must attribute this analysis and line of reasoning to Dr. Egon Mayer, Assistant Professor and Deputy Chairman in the Department of Sociology at Brooklyn College in New York. Dr. Mayer made these comments during a two part study series entitled, "Jewish Survival . . . Looking

forfeited any opportunity to intervene in the ongoing erosion of individual and collective Jewish identity in America. By allowing this erosion to continue unabated and unchallenged, we risk long term viability for the sake of short term agency purposes.

The need of the day demands that our communal agenda include turning Jewish Americans into good Jews. Toiling daily as we do to nurture the breath of Jewish life, our stake in the matter as Jewish professionals and professional Jews is obvious.<sup>9</sup> All of us become, by definition, leaders, role models, and teachers. However, there is an extremely competitive marketplace for the attention of our audience. As the frequent point of contact for many Jews, we cannot function in this atmosphere without sufficient grounding, vision and passion, despite the best of intentions.<sup>10</sup>

Lay people have Jewish expectations of Jewish communal workers and turn to us as they would to a professional in any other field. As they approach lawyers for legal counsel, they turn to us, whether we present ourselves in this fashion or not, for Jewish advice and information. As Jewish professionals and professional Jews, the lay population looks to us for leadership and guidance as an inherent feature of the work we do. The professional role should not only be limited to operations and implementation but must entail full partnership with the laity. Professional leadership means active participation in decision-making processes and sharing the responsibility for the outcomes of our efforts. In that we are among the

Inward" in which he was the featured scholar in residence. This leadership development series was sponsored by the Westchester UJA-Federation Campaign in December, 1983. Another excellent analysis of the Jewish condition can be found in Steven M. Cohen, *American Modernity and Jewish Identity*. New York: Tavistock Publications, 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Sidney Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

most informed group of Jewish individuals regarding communal issues, trends and developments, we are the closest to being Jewish experts and specialists. As such, it is our obligation in our professional and personal lives to exercise a responsible leadership role in communal affairs.

It is also clear that the professional unavoidably but properly serves as a role model to his or her community. We are public figures and people look to us for examples of Jewish living. In both our own lay and professional lives, we have a responsibility and opportunity to conduct our affairs in such a way as to gain respect and to exert positive influence on lay people. How we act sends messages about how we view the totality of Jewish experience and affects not only our own credibility but the success and public image of our organizations as well. These messages will also have indirect and often direct influence on Jewish attitudes and the Jewish choices people make.

A Jewish communal worker not only needs to be a good technical specialist, he or she must be a teacher, providing lay persons with basic information on Jewish life, tradition, current events, etc. Too often, we are the sole source of Jewish information and what we provide may comprise the only Jewish knowledge a volunteer possesses. Similarly, the worker must be an effective resource person. Recognizing that we may not be formal educators or scholars, we must be humble enough to know when and where to direct someone to obtain further information. Another adjunct role is that of an outreach worker. We must be aware enough to reach out sensitively to Jewishly interested individuals to nurture that spark, even when they may not be specifically seeking the programs and services we offer. Acting in these capacities, we serve as important mediating

structures, anchoring Jewish individuals to the larger community and channeling them to the appropriate Jewish connection.<sup>11</sup>

One caveat: it is not our purpose as social workers to *poskin sha'alas*, to interpret questions of religious practice. We are not in business, nor for the most part qualified, to compete with rabbis and synagogues, nor to conduct surrogate adult education programs. But it is appropriate, if not imperative, for the Jewishly employed Jewish professional to play a support role of directing and encouraging people to enhance the Jewishness of their lives and also to provide the opportunities for such Jewish training to occur—directly or indirectly—thereby starting people on the path to a fuller Jewish expression.

There is a much heavier responsibility to bear in this expanded version of the professional's "mission." It is as much a "calling" as is that of a religious leader, although quite different. (Paralleling the words of the recent advertising campaign of the U.S. Army, "it's not just a job, it's a career," Jewish communal service is not just a career, it is a mission.) We have chosen this calling and have been confirmed in it by our leaders' acceptance of us. Consequently, we all become "willy-nilly *klei-kodesh*—literally "holy tools"—performing the sacred tasks of healing, serving and building the Jewish nation.<sup>12</sup> Our work

<sup>11</sup> Norman Linzer applies this concept especially in the case of the assimilated Jew, where Jewish identity is not a major factor in a client's total identity. The agency provides a rationale for Jewish living, affirming and strengthening the individual's Jewish identity and looks for opportunities to connect Jews to a more substantive Jewish lifestyle. See Linzer, "A Jewish Philosophy of Social Work Practice," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Summer 1979), p. 316.

<sup>12</sup> Gerald B. Bubis, "The Jewish Component in Jewish Communal Service—From Theory to Practice," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 56, No. 3 (Spring 1980), p. 236.

truly is holy, for not only are we in the practice of fulfilling *mitzvot* on a regular basis, consciously or not, we are also enabling others to do likewise. We facilitate the performance of deeds of *tzedakah* and *chesed*—acts of justice (voluntary private support of Jewish social welfare institutions) and civic virtue (Jewish obligations of caring for the sick, burying the dead, welcoming strangers, comforting mourners, etc.).<sup>13</sup> There is perhaps no higher purpose than this, transforming and elevating mundane tasks into sacred acts of serving our people.

## II.

Where does this discussion lead us? Certainly not to a universal call to all Jewish communal workers past, present and future to become Orthodox observers of tradition, nor for us to necessarily convince others to become so. But it is a call to colleagues to conceptualize their roles in terms of a Jewish mission and to suffuse their professional and personal lives with a spirit and practice of Judaism at all times.

I believe we all suffer from a very serious Jewish definitional problem in America. It is a mistake to perpetuate the notion that Jewishness is synonymous with level of religiosity, that it must be defined in exclusively religious terms. This perspective has resulted in a prevalent "all or nothing," maximalist approach to Jewish expression and in effect alienates many Jews from Judaism and anything perceived to be a religious ritual. The Torah belongs to all of us and though a high level of practice might be meaningful to some or even desirable in the long run for Jewish continuity, we hurt ourselves by de-

legitimizing diversity in belief and observance. Better is not always more, Orthodox is not necessarily more or better than Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, etc., or vice-versa. Jewish communal workers especially should not be deterred from personal experimentation nor from encouraging others, even if neither has any plans to follow a maximalist degree of ritual practice.

I would like to offer the following model for an expanded view of Jewish communal practice. It is based on the social work principle underlying all professional action, that of the *conscious use of self*. The term connotes the disciplined, alert, knowledgeable, planful, and intentional intervention by the worker to further a process of interaction with a client(elle). Rephrasing this concept in the language of Jewish communal service, three interconnected action principles can be discerned:

1. Jewish conscious use of self
2. Conscious Jewish use of self
3. Conscious use of Jewish self

The notion of the conscious use of self requires the worker to command the full range of professional knowledge and skill and to utilize them in the fulfillment of his or her professional responsibilities. But social work represents a distinct ideological and value system which cannot exist in a vacuum. It cannot be seen as perfect and closed, impervious to external evaluation. A Jewish conscious use of self enjoins the worker to integrate social work and Judaic principles. One's practice must be viewed through the critical lens of a Jewish microscope, not the reverse. The worker must seek to comprehend and conceptualize practice Jewishly, and ask him or herself such questions as, "Is this a Jewish way for me to act? Is this a Jewish way of thinking? Is my agency utilizing methods and policies in consonance with basic Judaic precepts (seek-

<sup>13</sup> Laurence H. Rubinstein, "Tzedakah: The Highest Mitzvah," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Fall 1984), p. 32.

ing compassion and justice; protecting human dignity; safeguarding against defamation of character and reputation or embarrassing others, etc.)?" This principle, then, creates the mandate for practitioners to develop and enact a personal Jewish philosophy of practice and to turn the professional conscious use of self into a Jewish activity.<sup>14</sup>

The second concept, the conscious Jewish use of self, requires the staff person to act in a disciplined, responsible Jewish way—to be a competent representative (spokesperson, advocate and defender where necessary) of Jewish tradition/heritage/community. This demands separating out, even controlling, one's own Jewish biases and feelings, and using oneself Jewishly without reservation to promote all facets and versions of Jewish life. This means treating all of Judaism with reverence, respect, care and love. It does not mean holding oneself up as an authority on all Jewish matters; it demands a measure of humility regarding one's own Jewish limitations, and extending deference to more knowledgeable others. But it does mean asserting one's knowledge and position where necessary and appropriate. Using oneself Jewishly also requires an active commitment to specifically Jewish causes, issues and concerns, both in the professional and personal contexts. Being a Jewish professional engaged in Jewish communal service transcends one's workday obligations and attentions. The employee acknowledges the existence of a corporate Jewish destiny and that he or she has a personal stake and function in this grand scheme.

The third principle of Jewish professional practice is the conscious use of the Jewish self. It pertains to the utilization of one's own sense of personal Jewish

identity, values, beliefs, passion and vision. It demands that one is not neutral to the outcomes of Jewish communal work and that one places him- or herself as a Jew into the community or client process. Whereas the two former rules focus on the obligatory aspects of communal work, this principle refers to the volitional and emotional impulses underlying our choice of profession. Here the worker makes full use of the power of personal motivation and conviction and desires to succeed not merely due to a work ethic sense of pride but because he or she is a caring Jew. While all intervention is purposeful and directed, the worker colors the practice with his or her own Jewish dreams, bringing inspiration, energy and enthusiasm to the process. The practitioner strives to make one's work more relevant and meaningful to Jewish destiny at large. In tactful, appropriate ways, the worker seeks to imbue client, self, community and practice with greater Jewishness.

Professional life is always one of juggling time pressures, multiple and competing responsibilities and allegiances. The components of this tripartite model of Jewish action principles are closely related to each other and exercise mutual restraints and controls. It is incumbent upon the professional to create an appropriate balance among these three rules, knowing when and where to activate one or another. Situations will occur where the demands of the moment seemingly place one principle in conflict (even contradiction) with a second. In such a case, the worker may be enjoined to limit consciously his or her exercise of an action rule, even to the point of suppressing one's own opinions and views. The context may necessitate a use of self as an objective Jewish spokesperson; that is, requiring a greater infusion of the conscious Jewish use of self over the conscious use of

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<sup>14</sup> Norman Linzer has written extensively on the integration of Judaic and social work principles. See Linzer, *Ibid.*, pp. 309–317.

one's own Jewish self. Other occasions will develop where the employee will be freer to express his or her own uniquely Jewish identity. We all have surely experienced moments which have placed Jewish and social work values in tension. It becomes a Jewish professional situational assessment to determine which (and how much of an) action principle should appropriately take predominance in a given context. The ultimate litmus test will be the extent to which one can weave these elements over time into a coherent pattern of outlook and action. It is not the purpose here to delineate all of the potential applications and implications of this model, but to offer it as a framework for further discussion and review. No model is monolithic or perfect, not all situations predictable or simple. The dynamics of human relations, conflict, confrontation and change, replete with the full range of pressures, tensions and feelings will provide fertile ground for testing the applicability of the model. Clearly, living Judaism (professional and private) is not a part-time encounter. Its vitality and relevance are indeed enhanced by challenge and risk. But it is also evident where our allegiances must ultimately fall. The dominant organizing principles of our lives and practices (as depicted in the model) are to be our Jewishness and our Jewish obligations.

### III.

The next obvious query relates to the practical aspects of these notions. I draw upon the wisdom of two colleagues who have advanced thoughts on this subject. For once such a perspective on the role of Jewish communal service is adopted, it becomes necessary to populate our ranks with capable staff. Working within the context of Jewish family and children's services, Martin Greenberg has laid the foundations for a general guide

to personnel recruitment and development. He stipulated that a staff person should be comfortable with his or her own Jewish identity; be accepting of other viewpoints and ideological positions; possess a knowledge of Jewish practices and beliefs and how they affect clients; and know where to go for further information and consultation on Jewish issues that relate to service to clients.<sup>15</sup>

Bernard Reisman goes a bit further in discussing the body of knowledge that Jewish communal workers should possess. Social workers in training must master what he terms the technical competencies of social work *and* Jewish heritage, as well, in order to be capable of transmitting information and values about that heritage. His outline of the requisite Jewish knowledge, skills and values for communal practice is valuable and commended to the reader.<sup>16</sup>

The blueprints offered by Reisman and Greenberg complement well this writer's action principles and together present a fuller picture of the ideal attributes and roles of the professional. However, just as our lay population often turns to organizations to learn the why and how of Jewishness, commonly our staff are composed of individuals looking to discover and express their Jewishness through professional employment. In addition, even Jewishly "initiated" individuals will possess uneven backgrounds with gaps in knowledge. The agency, then, has an obligation to its staff (and by extension, to the larger community) to provide the necessary orientation and continuing education, especially along Reisman's paradigm. This must include, in addi-

<sup>15</sup> Martin Greenberg, "The Jewish Component in Jewish Family & Children's Service," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Summer 1979), p. 364.

<sup>16</sup> Bernard Reisman, "The Jewish Component," *op. cit.*, pp. 98-100.

tion to work-related trends and skill training, ongoing Jewish educational and experiential programs. However, the larger obligation in this area rests with the individual professional. "Enlightened" or a neophyte, the Jewish communal service worker must make the serious commitment to Jewish education, experience and practice. Once more, this mandates not a specific brand of Judaism, but a discipline to immerse oneself in Judaism.

Thus, a number of expectations should be made of professionals. Beyond entering the field (or position) with as much technical skill, commitment and Jewish background as possible, the worker must take steps to fulfill a regular Jewish lifestyle. Religious belief cannot be imposed, but it is the responsibility of the worker to embrace honestly and openly the Jewish tradition (in the broadest conception of the term), learn it and incorporate elements of it into his/her life. It would be quite a contradiction, if not hypocrisy, for center workers, campaign professionals, counseling and clinical social workers, community relations personnel and others, indirectly or directly to use Jewish themes and programs to attract, motivate and educate clients for any number of purposes and not consider adopting Jewish expression for themselves. "You cannot help people move toward a lifestyle or value system which you consider 'good' and 'Jewish' if you are not willing to engage in the selfsame adventure yourself. You must be in a state of evolution and movement."<sup>17</sup> We also cannot bemoan the infirmities of the community (zero population growth, assimilation, disaffiliation, Jewish illiteracy, intermarriage and Jewish rejection) and not actively pursue steps to reverse these negative trends

with our own lives. "It is not the option of Jewish social workers paid with Jewish dollars for work in Jewish agencies, to be parties to the destruction of Jewish life."<sup>18</sup> As professionals we are expected to communicate Jewish concerns and knowledge to our clientele and we too must live Jewishly. "Detachment and objectivity in the realm of Jewish beliefs and practices are not virtues for Jewish communal workers."<sup>19</sup> We can not be the teachers, role models and capable professionals, let alone leaders, without participating fully in Jewish life and community.

We ourselves must grow even as we seek to promote the viability of the larger Jewish group. The alternatives for exploration and expression are truly endless and opportunities exist in both formal and informal settings. The list that follows provides only a modest and incomplete set of options:

1. Study—Adult education classes; university courses; lectures; continuing education courses; cultural clubs/literary circles/disciplined reading (books, journals, Israeli papers); study partnerships (*chavrusas*.)
2. Practice—Synagogue attendance, weekend retreats, holiday workshops; *chavurah* membership; consultation with rabbis.
3. Communal Affiliation—Fraternal, social, political action, social action groups; rallies and marches; community councils; local YM-YWHAs.
4. Culture & Arts—Concerts; shows; museums and exhibits; dance troupes; choral groups.

We can find or create numerous opportunities to suit our own personal interests and needs. The key is that each of us must be conscientious in attempting to seek out these alternatives for study and practice.

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>19</sup> Bernard Reisman, "The Jewish Component," *op. cit.* p. 100.

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<sup>17</sup> Gerald B. Bubis, *op. cit.*, p. 232.



## IV.

It is quite clear that Jewish communal service is not a nine to five endeavor. Naturally, there are limits to how much we can be expected to do. But, if we can make tremendous demands of our lay leaders and if we believe that our policies and stated objectives are not mere rhetoric, we are indeed involved every day in the sacred task of ensuring Jewish survival. Not only are we impelled to push ourselves to the limit in our jobs, but we cannot hide from the community when we come home.<sup>20</sup> It means a serious commitment to study, practice and activism. It means setting standards of excellence on the job, in our families and in our home communities by living Jewishly, learning Jewishly, working Jewishly, leading Jewishly, volunteering Jewishly and giving Jewishly (a capacity gift to the UJA-Federation Campaign and contributing to Jewish causes generally. Our occupations do not exempt us from personal *tzedakah* and *chesed*).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Each person must set his or her own limits, balancing a demanding job with other professional, social, family and personal needs. I believe it to be extremely important for trained communal workers also to act as lay persons and lend support to community councils, synagogue boards, etc. I am omitting another major agenda, that of involvement in professional associations and the vast number of important non-sectarian (universalistic) causes. We cannot be all things at all times. It is up to each professional to select active affiliations over many years of a career. The point is to continue to be active beyond the immediate responsibilities of one's position.

<sup>21</sup> In discussions with colleagues regarding the thrust of this essay, the issue of non-Jews serving in professional capacities was raised (i.e. fund-raiser, center worker, etc.). Does the model espoused by this writer necessarily exclude non-Jewish professionals? I would venture the opinion that it is dependent upon the exact role the employee plays and the nature and extent of contact with the client and community. In theory, it is not inconceivable for a non-Jew to be a Jewish communal worker, but I would maintain that practically it would be unfeasible. Despite any legal or moral

## V.

It would be most fitting to close with a lesson from our heritage about the duties of a Jewish leader. Maimonides relates that a king of Israel must be in possession of two Torah scrolls. (It is assumed that he already has one as an inheritance from his family).<sup>22</sup> Upon his ascension to the throne the newly anointed monarch is required to write an entire scroll by hand. Why two and why must he write out an entire scroll? So that he will have one to carry with him at all times and one that will be stored at home. Perhaps even more significant, in the process of writing, he has studied the Torah in detail. Consequently, the king will never be distracted from its precepts even as he engages in his communal work—the rule of the kingdom. Whether the king goes to court or to war, travels on the road or remains at home, the physical presence and spirit of the Torah surround him always.

The king represents the communal worker par excellence and a lesson can be derived for Jewish communal workers today as well. It is our duty to envelop ourselves likewise with the spirit and knowledge of Jewishness and Torah in a literal and figurative sense. Let us all find our own personal meaning in the vast wealth of Jewish heritage, allowing it to enrich our lives and guide us as we carry out the sacred purpose of serving Jews and repairing the world.

reasons why we might not be comfortable with excluding non-Jews, it would be extremely difficult at best for such an employee to fulfill the mandate spelled out above. A sincere, competent, dedicated non-Jewish professional can make real contributions to the short term goals of the Jewish organization, but I doubt whether the employee could play a meaningful and effective part in the broader mission of community building, consciousness-raising and providing informed Jewish leadership.

<sup>22</sup> Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Melakim*, 3:1 and the commentary of "Kesef Mishneh."