



The Jewish Federation
OF GREATER WASHINGTON
presents

The Sara & Samuel J. Lessans

Good Deeds Day

DOING A WORLD OF GOOD



Four Things to Know About Doing Good at Good Deeds Day

1. Good Deeds Day was “made in Israel!”

If Good Deeds Day had a product label, it would proudly say “Made in Israel!”

Shari Arison is an American-born Israeli who increasingly felt exhausted from a lifetime of fighting to succeed. She asked herself “Is that all there is? Is there something else I was meant to do?” Through the philanthropic NGO called Ruach Tova (Spirit of Good), the first Good Deeds Day was held in Israel in 2007. 7,000 people joined in that first year. By 2014, 500,000 people in Israel alone took part. Using TV, social media, and volunteer organizations, Good Deeds Day spread to 50 countries around the world. Greater Washington, coordinated by The Jewish Federation, is the largest region in the U.S. to participate in Good Deeds Day.

Shari Arison understood the limits that government has on making changes in a society. It was time to step up as a citizen. *She first asked herself- “What is my role? What can I offer to the world, given my specific skills, life experiences, and through the platforms I attained?” Consider these reflective questions as you prepare for Good Deeds Day.*

2. Doing Good is not a suggestion; it is a form of justice our tradition asks us to live every day.

Judaism values world repair, *tikkun olam*, as an ongoing human endeavor. Our tradition embraces repairing the world by participating in *tzedakah* (justice and righteousness) and *g’milut hasadim* (acts of loving kindness). When individuals come together as a community, and when communities link one to another through doing deeds of justice and loving kindness, we approach our goal of *tikkun olam*, partnering in perfecting the world. *How can you integrate just giving, acts of loving kindness and world repair into your life style?*

3. Mental health research agrees: Volunteer your time to help a charity you believe in. Put your energy into helping someone else, and you will inadvertently help yourself. Doing good is also a way of recognizing the good in your own life and paying it forward. Giving yourself (skills, time, talents, presence and empathy) as a gift to others is also the gift of gratitude. Before volunteering, reflect on the need to preserve the dignity of those you help. Recite the traditional Jewish mantra “Love your fellow human being as yourself,” and take that with you moving forward.

4. Like most things in life, what you put in is what you get out. Prepare for your doing good experience. Reflect on what you felt and learned about people and human needs after your participation so that the day can remain an important memory for you and your family.