



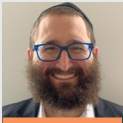
Chavrusa Profile

SESSIONS

156

SINCE

2017



Adam
Kaman

LOCATION

Austin, TX

AGE

35

OCCUPATION

Senior Business Analyst at
Whole Foods

BIOGRAPHY

Adam is a Jew in a non-Jewish environment looking to be inspired in his Judaism and doing outreach, while filling some gaps in his Torah knowledge.



Shloime
Sirota

LOCATION

Brooklyn, NY

AGE

24

OCCUPATION

Kollel Fellow

BIOGRAPHY

Shloime is a graduate of the Chabad education system, who is looking for regular learning and inspiration and enjoys putting tefillin on people in his spare time.

The Analyst Who Distributes Pushkes at Whole Foods

BY MUSIA GUREVITCH

Adam grew up in a town in Dallas, Texas, where sports was a religion and religion was a sport.

"My parents wanted me to have a *bar mitzvah* and marry a Jew, that was basically it. But from a pretty young age I wanted more."

Adam had endless questions about this world, G-d, and the purpose of life.

"One of my best friends in high school came from a traditional home, so I loved going to his house and absorbing the spirit of Shabbat. I guess you could say my teenage rebellion was unique; at 16, I was praying daily behind my parents back.

"In college, my religious friend was my roommate and together we continued taking baby steps towards living a more Jewish life. We stopped eating at the school cafeteria. We put up *mezuzot*."

But Adam wasn't keeping all the mitzvos and definitely didn't want to be recognized as a practicing Jew.

"One day, I was strolling on campus when a Chabad bachur asked me to put on *tefillin*. I responded simply, no. But this guy wasn't easily swayed. He asked me if I had a pair of *tefillin* in my room and I conceded that yes, I did. "I'll make you a deal," he said. "If you promise to

put on *tefillin* today when you get home, I'll leave you alone." I agreed, and when I went home that day, I opened my long-forgotten bag and put on my *tefillin*. I haven't missed a day since!"

But Adam still had quite a way to go.

"During my senior year of college," continues Adam, "I became closer to the Chabad shlichim on campus, the Levertovs. They encouraged me to start observing Shabbat. It was a breath of fresh air amid the chaos and stress of college life. It was the one day a week when I didn't have to think about anything class-related, I just had to exist.

"At the time, I started dating a girl named Michelle, who I had met at a Jewish event. We encouraged each other to keep growing in our Judaism, and spent Shabbat and holidays together. A year after college graduation, Michelle and I got married, and eventually moved back to Austin, Texas.

"I wanted to continue studying Torah but I never went to *yeshivah*, so even basic Hebrew was a challenge. My Rabbi recommended I join JNet, and that's what I did."

...

Shloime is a typical 770 bachur trying to mind his own business when a friend of his called him over and introduced him to JNet director Rabbi Yehuda Dukes saying, "This guy should be a volunteer for you." Initially, he refused but after hearing about the program he finally

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agreed.

"Thank G-d I did, because it's the best thing that ever happened to me."

"We learn Gemara and Shulchan Aruch together. Personally, after being in the Lubavitch system my entire life, I feel like I am learning Torah for real for the first time. Additionally, every week we have a mini *chassidische farbrengen*, where he'll tell me a story he heard or vice versa. Honestly, one story from Adam's daily life is enough to make ten bachurim inspired."

Through their weekly learning sessions, they became fast friends.

Adam lives in a non-*frum* environment.

"I work in a busy corporation. My shul doesn't even have a *minyán* most mornings. So the hour or two a week that I spend on the phone with Shloime every Tuesday is like a charging station. It fills me up with the energy I need to continue living the life I want to live.

"I'm not someone whose personality is naturally an 'outreacher.' Speaking with Shloime and seeing the way he does *mitzvoim* changed my attitude and taught me not to fear. Now, for the first time, I dare to share my passion with others.

"For example, I recently brought a bunch of *tzedakah* boxes to work and gave them to my coworkers, both Jewish and not, along with a chabad.org article about

the value and merit of giving charity. The whole office is excited about it- they're even competitive about who will fill up their *tzedakah* box first!"

For Shloime, speaking to Adam is a privilege and a lesson.

"His stories teach me to be thankful for how lucky I am to be surrounded by Jews in a *chassidische* environment."

For a while, the two wanted to meet face to face unsuccessfully. Recently, however, the right occasion arrived.

"Last year Shloime got married and I flew to his wedding in Connecticut. I didn't know anybody at the wedding, but everybody knew who I was. All his friends recognized me. 'Ah, you're Shloime's *chavrusa*, the guy he's busy with every Tuesday!'"

Intriguingly enough, each of them feel that they are the one gaining the most!

"Nobody's pressuring or paying us, so when we stop everything to learn, it is purely for the sake of learning. There's nothing else like it, I never want to stop," concludes Shloime.

For Adam, the learning helped him come full circle. As he puts it, "The biggest gift I have received from JNet is the ability to be a giver, not just a receiver."

This chavrusa is one of many success stories that started with a simple choice to dedicate one half hour a week for another Jew.

News

Yud Shevat Learning Campaign

In honor of the 70th anniversary of Yud Shevat, JNet is holding a campaign to learn some excerpts of Basi LeGani 5720 - 5740 (with English translation). Got to jnet.org/tenshevat to access the material and then fill out the form or text your Hebrew name and mother's Hebrew name to 347-770-JNet (5638) to be entered into a *duch* and raffle.

Accomplishments

Gemara - Maseches Shabbos

R. Avrohom Keller
Brooklyn, NY

Eliezer Moshe Bulman
Annapolis, MD

13 Principles of Faith

Mrs. Devorah Barnett
Brooklyn, NY

L. Silver
Tuscan, AZ

Perek 14 of Tanya

Mrs. Rivky Altein
Montreal, QC

Leehe Fai
Yardley, PA



JNet provides one-on-one learning on the phone or online for half an hour a week to people all over the world.

Know someone would be interested in learning, volunteering or supporting torah learning? Have them go to jnet.org or call or text us at **347-770-JNet** (5638)

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