



September 2009, Elul 5769

## My Very Dear Friends - Shalom ,

It is customary in synagogues, before Rosh Hashana until after the High Holidays, to add Psalm 27 to daily prayers. Interestingly, it highlights abandonment – "...though my father and mother have left me" as leading towards a future of "goodness of the Lord in the land of the living"... Isn't that what we together are all about?

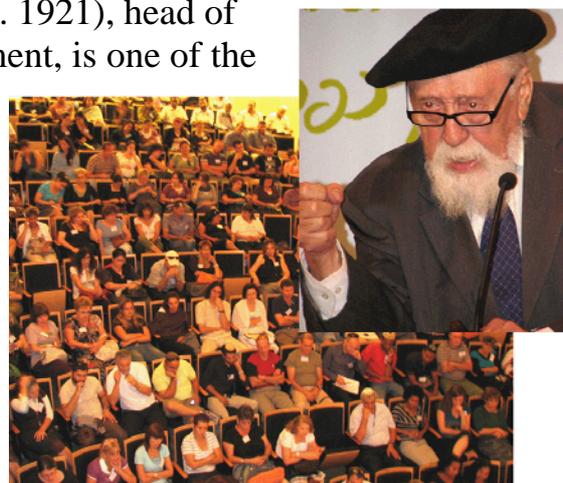


**Jennya Shatelle**, our graduate, came to visit just as I was sitting down to write this letter. Jennya, who arrived here alone from Eastern Europe years ago, came to "speak education" and consult about her work as head of five kindergartens in the Upper Galilee. Her fresh, innovative approach has really made my day, and I just had to capture the moment. Jennya incorporates the surrounding nature in the children's upbringing in a most creative way. Her path in life and self-fulfillment are another beautiful example of Yemin Orde's life-changing impact not only for graduates but for ever-widening circles.

**World-renowned Prof. Reuven Feuerstein** (b. 1921), head of the International Center for Learning Enhancement, is one of the legendary founders of the children villages in Israel. As years went by and villages declined, he was the foremost and tireless advocate of the need to restore their past glory.

When we launched Yemin Orde Initiatives to rejuvenate these villages in the spirit of Yemin Orde, I received Prof. Feuerstein's overwhelming public and moral support. At our first educational symposium this summer, he passionately charged the audience -

hundreds of educators from the five participating villages - with a strong sense of purpose and continuity. Indeed, after merely one year of putting our expansion plans into practice, an increasing number of educators are joining us, forming a movement committed to the spirit and the practices of Yemin Orde and spreading it throughout Israel.

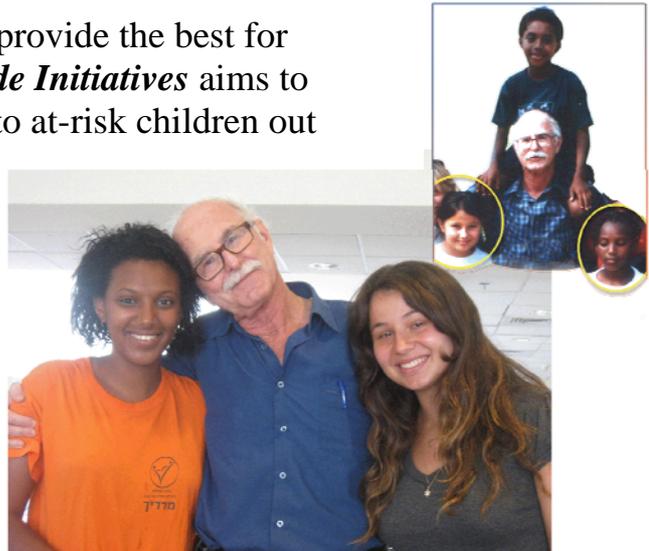
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**Dr. Benny Fisher, the incoming leader of our flagship Yemin Orde:** Benny, a



highly acclaimed educator and leader, comes with an outstanding record of accomplishments in the field of at-risk child care in Israel. But what matters most to us is his being what we call a total *mensch*, who fits hand-in-glove with Yemin Orde. As you may recall, Ofer Yerushalmi had to leave his position as village head for personal reasons. He will always remain connected to us, especially to the children and graduates. Needless to say, I am fully involved in making sure that the transition is smooth and successful.

While working to provide the best for children within youth villages, *Yemin Orde Initiatives* aims to make the most of what villages can offer to at-risk children out there, those who are so badly in need of a 'safety net'. One such program is about providing a haven for children from broken homes who are in need of a stable anchor, helping them cope with the instability of their circumstances. Almaz and Ina's story is one of many. They first arrived here 10 years ago, and are now lovely young adults, ready for National Service (in picture: then and now...). They attribute much of their amazing transformation - from lost souls to charming, confident personalities - to their feeling that they have a whole village behind them. This summer, as part of a leadership program, Almaz and Ina took care of dozens of small children of similar background, who once again came to Yemin Orde for a fresh-air program. Here at the village we make sure they're always wanted and will never be abandoned again.



May you and your loved ones enjoy all the goodness of the *Land of the Living*: meaningful connectedness to people and to the world, spiritual joy and good health. It is your continued care and partnership that allows our shared vision to bring hope to all those young souls.

With all the love and gratitude of Yemin Orde,

*as ever - Chaim Peir*