

BOOK OF LIFE

Preparing Your Personal Statement

Signing the Book of Life gives you the chance to write a statement of up to 300 words in length that expresses what has motivated you to make your legacy commitment to the Jewish community.

There is no formula or required topic. Here are some suggestions of things to think about to get you started.

- ◆ Why is supporting the Jewish community through philanthropy important to you?
- ◆ Were there special circumstances or a significant life experience that led you to create a legacy for the Jewish community?
- ◆ Was *tzedakah* a part of your childhood? If so, in what way? What ideas about *tzedakah* would you like your children, grandchildren and even great grandchildren to embody?
- ◆ What are your concerns about the future of the Jewish community?
- ◆ What are your dreams for the future of the Jewish community? How do you think your legacy will help make them a reality?
- ◆ How does your legacy gift to the Jewish community express your commitment to Jewish tradition and the Jewish people?

Sample Statements

Sample #1

We are honored to fulfill our obligation of supporting the Jewish community through the mitzvah of “tzedakah”.

Generations before us have passed on this tradition to us and by making this promise we hope to pass on the same legacy to our children. We are committed to ensuring the survival and growth of a vibrant, learned Jewish community in San Diego and through giving charity we can make a difference in achieving this goal.

Our children are our precious gifts. It is our responsibility to create and enhance every possible opportunity for them and their fellow Jews to live a rich life steeped in our Jewish heritage and teachings. With this knowledge they too can pass on to their children these attributes to ensure Jewish survival for the future. Thanks to the Jewish Community Foundation for giving us this opportunity.

Sample #2

The ability to help others is one of life’s greatest joys and privileges. From assisting those in crisis, guiding someone to become independent, or providing long-term sustenance, having a positive impact on someone is blessed.

Whether the Federation, a Jewish Agency, Synagogue or the general community, the opportunities are almost infinite and all are deserving of our time, attention and financial support.

Sample #3

I left Germany, my home and my family in early 1933, shortly after Hitler came to power. I went to Italy, a country whose language I did not speak, without the comfort of family or friends, or the support of a community.

Six years later, in 1939, after Hitler sent his Gestapo to Italy, I was forced to leave again, to a country whose language I did not speak, whose customs I did not know and without the benefit of much community support.

Thus, I learned to appreciate the importance of Jewish community support, and ever since, I have given my time and as soon as I could afford – financial assistance to the “United Jewish Appeal” and many other philanthropic organizations.

From my own experience I learned what it means to be without family and friends and community support, when in need.

Therefore, it gives me great satisfaction to realize that my charitable contributions may serve to make life a little easier and a little better for someone, in need, somewhere.

Sample #3

I endowed my annual UJF gift and other gifts because I believe in and feel passionate about the San Diego Jewish community. I want to be sure that if anything happened to me, my gifts would continue to be given.

Since the untimely death of my husband at 41 years of age, I know how fragile life is and how one needs to prepare for the unexpected. Our Jewish community, both local and global, depends on my endowment gifts; therefore I want them to know that they will always be able to depend on me.

Sample #4

With our experience as children escaping virulent European Anti-Semitism and as uprooted young refugees brought to America, in the ensuing half a century we have fulfilled the immigrant's dream of acceptance, achievement and the establishment of roots by creating a multi-generational close-knit family.

To honor the memory of our parents who brought us to safety, freedom and opportunity, to further our support for the continuation and strengthening of Jewish life in this land, in Israel and throughout the world, and especially to set an example for our future generations, we endow our continuing philanthropic commitment.

Sample #5

I will not be there to ensure the strength of the synagogues, community centers, and agencies that will serve the Jewish world in five hundred years. What I can do, and will do through my legacy, is help to make sure that the Jews of the next generation have the tools to create a vibrant Jewish life for their great-grandchildren.