

Effective Altruism and Judaism - Handout

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Effective Altruism - a **research field** and **practical community** that aims to find the best ways to help others, and put them into practice. The main focus is on impact.

- Our ability to help the poorest people in the world is tremendous, and that is a very exciting prospect
- The best charities are significantly better than good ones, so we should be more mindful as to where we donate
- Donating to charities in poorer countries can magnify our impact even further

Framework for identifying impactful problems:

1. Scale (Importance) - significantly impacts many lives
2. Tractability (Solvability) - there are clear and practical ways of making progress
3. Neglectedness - still needs more funding and support

Cause areas:

- Improving human wellbeing
- Improving animal welfare
- Creating a better future

Recommended books:

 **Doing Good Better** by **Will MacAskill**

 **The Life You Can Save** by **Peter Singer**

Jewish sources:

Deuteronomy 16:20 *“Justice, justice you shall pursue.”*

Leviticus 19:9-10 *“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field [...]; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger.”*

Deuteronomy 15:7-8 *“When there will be a needy person from among your brethren, in one of your gates in your land that the Lord your God has given you, don't harden your heart and don't close your hand from your needy brother. Surely open your hand and lend him according to his need that is lacking to him”*

🤔 Rashi's commentary on Exodus 22:24 *“the poor of your own city come first”*

🤔 Maimonides' eight levels of charity