



PRESENTER PROFILES

RABBI KENNETH BRANDER



Rabbi Kenneth Brander is Vice President for University and Community Life at Yeshiva University. He served as the inaugural David Mitzner Dean of Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future. Prior to his work at Yeshiva University, Rabbi Brander served for 14 years as the Senior Rabbi of the Boca Raton Synagogue. He oversaw its explosive growth from 60 families to over 600 families. While Senior Rabbi of the Boca Raton Synagogue (BRS), he became the founding dean of The Weinbaum Yeshiva High School, founding dean of the Boca Raton Judaic Fellows Program – Community Kollel and founder and posek of the Boca Raton Community Mikvah. He helped to develop the Hahn Judaic Campus on which all these institutions reside and as co-chair of Kashrut organization of the Orthodox Rabbinical Board of Broward & Palm Beach Counties (ORB). Rabbi Brander also served for five years as a Member of the Executive Board of the South Palm Beach County Jewish Federation, as a Board member of Jewish Family Services of South Palm Beach County, and actively worked with other lay leaders in the development of the Hillel Day School. Rabbi Brander is a 1984 alumnus of Yeshiva College and received his ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary in 1986. During that time he served as a student assistant to the esteemed Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. He also received an additional ordination from Rav Menachem Burstein the founder and dean of Machon Puah and from the Chief Rabbi, Mordechai Eliyahu, in the field of Jewish Law and Bioethics with a focus on reproductive technology. He is currently a PhD candidate (ABD) in general philosophy at Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

DR. SCOTT CHUDNOFF



Dr. Scott Chudnoff is Associate Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Women's Health at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He is also the Director of Gynecology at Montefiore Medical Center. Dr. Chudnoff is an AASECT certified sexuality counselor & supervisor, and is a lecturer for many national and international events.

DOV FINKELSTEIN, LCSW



Dov Finkelstein, LCSW, is a Clinical Instructor of Psychiatry at the NYU School of Medicine's Program for Human Sexuality and maintains a private practice in Brooklyn, NY and Passaic, NJ. He is affiliated with the Center for Alliance-Focused Training and received supervision from the co-director Dr. Jeremy Safran. Dov also trained at the Ackerman Institute for the Family and has a certificate in sex therapy from the NYU School of Medicine. He has published over sixty articles in various Jewish publications including *The Jewish Press*, *The Jewish Observer*, *Mishpacha Magazine*, and *Hamodia*. In his free time he enjoys learning about Jewish history and is presently pursuing a Masters degree at the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies.

RABBI YAAKOV GLASSER



Rabbi Yaakov Glasser is the David Mitzner Dean of Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future, and the Rabbi of Young Israel of Passaic-Clifton. In addition to his broad Torah knowledge, he brings an incredible energy and enthusiasm to his work, as is attested by the hundreds who attend his explanatory Kinot on Tisha B'av and his Shabbos Hagadol and Shabbos Shuva lectures. He possesses extensive experience in youth work and informal Jewish education, having served as founding director of the Orthodox Union's Jewish Student Union in New Jersey – a network of public school clubs for Jewish teens. Rabbi Glasser has Yoreh Yoreh Smicha from Yeshiva University, as well as an M.S. in Jewish Education from the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration. He is also a member of Yeshiva University's Kollel LeHoraah. He and his wife, Ruth, have four children.

DR. MARTIN GRAJOWER



Dr. Martin M. Grajower graduated YU in 1970 and then received his MD degree in 1973 from Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He completed his post-graduate training in Internal Medicine and in Endocrinology and Metabolism and is board-certified in both specialties. He is actively involved in teaching medical students, residents, fellows, and attending physicians and holds the title of Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Endocrinology, at Einstein. He is also an Affiliate Physician at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Besides maintaining his private practice in Riverdale, he is active in the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, serving on many national committees over the past 15 years, and is currently also the vice president of the Lower New York Chapter. Dr. Grajower has published twenty papers in peer-reviewed journals. He serves on the editorial board of Endocrine Practice, is a co-editor of Diabetes/Metabolism: Research and Reviews, and is the endocrine consultant to Prescriber's Newsletter. He authored an article on the use of Aygestin in preventing *chupas niddah* together with Rabbi Mordechai Willig, which is available on YUTorah.org. He is currently preparing an updated article based on his experience in treating over 500 *kallahs*.

DR. JONATHAN LASSON



Dr. Jonathan Lasson is a psychotherapist with a clinical practice in Baltimore, Md. He received his Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the Miami Institute of Psychology in Miami, Florida. Before completing his Doctorate, Dr. Lasson studied at the Talmudic University of Florida under HaRav Yochanan Zweig, where he received his Bachelors in Religious Education. He also studied at Ner Israel Rabbinical College and received a Bachelors in Talmudic Law. Dr. Lasson has lectured on topics that interface Torah and psychology with a particular interest in studying elements in human relationships that can be gleaned from the Torah and Talmud.

Dr. Lasson wears a few hats which keep him quite busy. Currently, he is a professor of Psychology at two local universities, a psychotherapist in private practice specializing in the assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of traumatic brain injuries as well as a general men's issues. He is currently in the process of writing two books, one fictional and one self-help book on the topic of guilt. He and his wife Chaya, have six children and live in Baltimore, Maryland.

RABBI NAPHTALI LAVENDA



Rabbi Naphtali Lavenda is currently Director of Online Rabbinic Programming at Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future. He has been working in Jewish non-profit for over 10 years, first at the Orthodox Union and currently at YU, coordinating programs and resources for rabbis, including several online continuing education courses for rabbis. Naphtali graduated from Yeshiva University's Sy Syms School of Business, received rabbinic ordination from its Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, and completed studies at the Bar Ilan International MBA program.

Originally from Cincinnati, OH, Naphtali spent a number of years in New York until he made Aliyah in 2009. Naphtali currently lives in Yad Binyamin with his wife and four children.

REBBETZIN ABBY LERNER



Mrs. Abby Lerner is the Director of Admissions at the Yeshiva University High School for Girls where she has served on the faculty since 1988. She teaches the senior required course on "Women in Jewish Law." Her husband, Rabbi Yaacov Lerner, has been the Rabbi of the Young Israel of Great Neck since 1975 and Mrs. Lerner has been there with him since their marriage in 1977. The Lerner's have four married daughters, and many grandchildren (B"H). Mrs. Lerner teaches Taharat Hamishpachah and has presented a paper on this subject which appears in *Gender Relationships In Marriage and Out*. She lectures on topics of interest to women. She and her husband have also

lectured as a team on the subject of marriage.

DR. CHANI MAYBRUCH



Dr. Chani Maybruch is a relationship educator and coach. She has been teaching and mentoring individuals, couples, and communities to enhance their relationships for the past fifteen years. Her celebrated cognitive-behavioral approach is distinctive because it combines her unique training in education and social psychology, and integrates the timeless insight of the Torah. She is well known for her relationship education workshops, which have helped many improve their dating experience and achieve results. She has also taught *kallos*/brides for many years and delivered refresher courses on *Taharas Hamishpacha*/Jewish Family Law in several communities. Her

warmth, charisma, and genuineness come through to her clients and to her audiences in her enlightening presentations. Dr. Maybruch graduated from Stern College for Women of Yeshiva University with a B.A. in Biology. She holds a M.A. in Bible from Yeshiva University, a M.A. in Social-Organizational Psychology from Columbia University, and a Doctorate in Education from Yeshiva University. Her seminal doctorate focused on relationship education and its efficacy in enhancing marriages in the Jewish community. Dr. Maybruch independently created the J-RES, the first empirical scale to measure relationship education in the Jewish community. The results of her studies are being used to assist professionals to better educate and guide people towards successful relationships.

RABBI SHMUEL MAYBRUCH



Rabbi Shmuel Maybruch, LSW, is a magid shiur/ instructor in the Stone Beit Midrash Program of Yeshiva University and a licensed social worker who coaches individuals and couples on how to succeed at all aspects of their relationships. He is the former Clinical Pastoral Counselor/ Sgan Mashgiach Ruchani of both the undergraduate division of Yeshiva University and RIETS' post-graduate ordination program, as well as founding Rabbi of the Shenk Shul of Washington Heights, New York. He is known for combining advanced Talmudic scholarship with his interpersonal connection and warmth for his clients, students, and congregants. In addition to coaching, educating, and mentoring individuals, couples, and communities about enhancing their relationships, Rabbi Maybruch specializes in coaching about anxiety (dealing with stress and/ or social discomfort) and youth at-risk. Rabbi Maybruch is a recognized authority on Taharas Hamishpacha/ Jewish Family Law and has provided intensive courses to rabbinical students as well as preparatory courses to chasanim/ grooms before their weddings. He frequently fields halachic questions from Rabbis and laymen alike in matters of Taharas Hamishpacha/ Jewish Family Law, intimacy, and the interface between intimacy and Jewish Law. Rabbi Maybruch studied in Yeshiva Shaar Hatorah and then at Yeshiva University, where he graduated with a B.A. in Psychology. He subsequently studied for ordination at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. He continued post-ordination intensive Talmudic and Halachic study in the Wexner Kollel Elyon there, where he concurrently pursued his education in psychotherapy and counseling. He has been on the faculty of Yeshiva University since 2002 and holds a Masters from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work. Rabbi Maybruch is a popular lecturer in both halacha/Jewish law, mental health, and the nexus of the two. Some of his lectures can be found [here](#).

RABBI YAAKOV NEUBURGER



Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger is a rosh yeshiva at the Yeshiva Program/Mazer School of Talmudic Studies of Yeshiva University. Rabbi Neuburger is also the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Abraham in Bergenfield, N.J. Rabbi Neuburger is an authority on issues related to marital relationships and the purity of the Jewish home. He offers his services to help young men train for married life and prepare to build a proper Jewish home built on Jewish law and spirit. From 1986 to 1990, Rabbi Neuburger was spiritual leader of the Jewish community at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the Jack D. Weiler Hospital. Rabbi Neuburger received semikha from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University in 1979. He is a graduate of Yeshiva College, and earned an MA in psychology from Columbia University.

DR. DAVID PELCOVITZ



Dr. David Pelcovitz holds the Gwendolyn and Joseph Straus Chair in Psychology and Jewish Education at Yeshiva University's Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration where he is also the Special Assistant to the President. For over two decades he was Director of Psychology at North Shore University Hospital-NYU School of Medicine, and Clinical Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry, at NYU School of Medicine. Dr. Pelcovitz has published and lectured extensively on a wide range of issues facing children and adolescents including child mental health, family violence, the impact of domestic violence, stress management, parenting, transmitting values to children and adolescents and coping with trauma and loss. His most recent publication is a book in collaboration with his father entitled, "Life in the Balance; Torah Perspectives on Positive Psychology" which follows their previous joint books, "Balanced Parenting" on parenting from a Jewish perspective and "Balanced Living: Torah Perspectives on Positive Psychology."

RABBI MENACHEM PENNER



Rabbi Menachem Penner is the Max and Marion Grill Dean of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva University and the Men's Undergraduate Torah Studies programs at Yeshiva University. Rabbi Penner holds the title of Rabbi Emeritus of the Young Israel of Holliswood in Queens, where he served as the spiritual leader proudly from 1996 – 2015. Rabbi Penner received his semikha from RIETS in 1994 and his BA from Yeshiva College in 1991.

DR. DAVID RIBNER



David S. Ribner earned his BA, Smicha (Rabbinic Ordination), MS (history) and MSW degree from Yeshiva University and his doctorate from Columbia University. He is the founder and chairman of the Sex Therapy Training Program, School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University, Israel and is certified as a sex therapist and supervisor in Israel and the U.S. He is in private practice as a sex and marital therapist in Jerusalem, has authored some 40 articles and book chapters and writes and lectures extensively on cultural sensitivity and sexuality. He is also the co-author, along with Dr. Jennie Rosenfeld, of Et Le'ehov (A Time to Love): The Newlywed's Guide to Physical Intimacy, the first book to offer guidance and advice on marital intimacy for Orthodox Jewish couples, and which serves as a model for understanding the interface between traditional religions and sexuality. Dr. Ribner is an Associate Editor and Book Review Editor of the journal Sexual and Relationship Therapy and is a member of the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists; the Israel Society for Sex Therapy; the International Academy for Sex Research; and the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality. His Facebook page is Kosher Sensuality.

RABBI BARUCH SIMON



Rabbi Baruch Simon is the Colonel Jehiel R. Elyachar Professor of Talmud at the Yeshiva Program/Mazer School of Talmudic Studies and a Rosh Yeshiva at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University. In addition to his regular daily shiur, he teaches Hilchos Issur V'Heter, Niddah and Aveilus to the semikha students. Rabbi Simon is the author of divrei torah on the parsha titled Imrei Baruch, which has been published in numerous volumes, as well as a sefer on Eiruvim and Minhagim. Rabbi Simon received semikha from RIETS in 1988. A graduate of Yeshiva University High School for Boys, Rabbi Simon earned his BA, magna cum laude, in Judaic studies from Yeshiva College, where he delivered the birkat preidah, a singular honor given the Yeshiva Program valedictorian. Rabbi Simon was a fellow of the prestigious Caroline and Joseph Gruss Kollel Elyon and a fellow of the Marcus and Adina Katz Kollel. Before teaching in the Yeshiva Program, Rabbi Simon was a member of the halakha faculty at the Isaac Breuer College of Hebraic Studies.

RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY



Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky is a Rosh Yeshiva at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva University. In addition, he also serves as spiritual leader of Congregation Ohr HaTorah in Bergenfield, N.J. His synagogue has attracted many Orthodox Jews to the community. Rabbi Sobolofsky also lectures at the Bergen County Beis Medrash Program, housed at Congregation Bnai Yeshurun in Teaneck, N.J. Prior to his appointment as a rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Sobolofsky was a fellow of the Gruss Kollel Elyon and then went on to teach in the Irving I. Stone Beis Medrash Program. Rabbi Sobolofsky studied at Yeshivat Kerem BeYavneh and Yeshiva. Graduating in 1987, he was named valedictorian of the Mazer Yeshiva Program. He then attended RIETS, where he studied under Rabbi Hershel Schacter and Rabbi Mordechai Willig, finishing in 1990 and proceeded to the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration in 1996. Rabbi Sobolofsky is the author of Reishis Koach, on Maseches Bechoros, and has produced a recorded series of shiurim on Hilchos Nidda, Hilchos Aveilus, on the construction of a mikvah and on halachic aspects of the Seder, which are available on CDs and MP3s. His most recent sefer is titled The Laws and Concepts of Niddah.

RABBI GIDEON WEITZMAN



Rabbi Gideon Weitzman was born in Britain and received his rabbinical ordination from the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. Teaching in a variety of educational institutions has brought Rabbi Weitzman into contact with many different kinds of people from all walks of life and helps him in his capacity as director of PUAH Institute. Rabbi Weitzman is also a Visiting Associate Professor at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine

RABBI MORDECHAI WILLIG



Rabbi Mordechai Willig is a Rosh Yeshiva and Rosh Kollel at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, where he is the Rabbi Dr. Sol Roth Professor of Talmud and Contemporary Halachah. Rabbi Willig has served as spiritual leader of the Young Israel of Riverdale in the Bronx since 1974. He is the author of Am Mordechai (on Brachot, Shabbat and most recently on Yom Tov), and has authored many articles in Torah scholarship journals. Rabbi Willig is also the deputy av beis din of the Beth Din of America. Rabbi Willig received a BA in mathematics from Yeshiva College in 1968, an MS in Jewish history in 1971 from the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies, and was ordained that same year at RIETS.