

BBYO Stand UP Dictionary

BBYO Stand UP Campaigns involve a combination of advocacy, philanthropy, and service. No campaign is sufficient without one of these three parts. When discussing these ideas people often reference other terms such as social justice, social action, or *tikkun olam*. The terms below will help you build a Stand UP vocabulary to ensure that all aspects of your philanthropy, advocacy, and service are thorough and well rounded.

Avodah – עבודה Work /Service/Worship

The word for work in Hebrew, *avodah*, is the same word used for prayer. *Avodah* connotes service. (It is also the word for slavery, which is involuntary service.) Work is not only a necessary part of life, it is a form of service to the world, to the rest of humanity, and to God. We are meant to be of service, to be partners with God in the ongoing creation of the world. (*Rabbi Michael Strassfeld*)

Gemilut Chasadim/Hesed – גמילות חסדים/חסד Acts of loving kindness/compassion

The term *gemilut hasadim* is used to describe everything from the work done by synagogue *bikur holim* committees [that visit the sick] to service projects designed for high school students to lessons on how to treat a homeless person you pass on the street. The Talmud establishes *hesed* as one of the core pillars of human behavior. ("The world rests upon three things, Torah, *avodah*, and *gemilut hasadim*." *Pirkei Avot 1:2*) In the Babylonian Talmud, Sukkot 49b, *hesed* is laid out as a broader value than *tzedakah* because it can be done not only with money, but also with one's person. It can be given to the rich and the poor, the living and the dead. It furthermore states that, "The reward for charity depends entirely upon the extent of the kindness in it." (*Rabbi Sara Paasche-Orlow*)

Tikkun Olam – תיקון עולם "Repair of the World"

Tikkun Olam usually defined as "repairing the world" and incorporates many types of social action - from philanthropy to direct service to advocacy. Some understand *tikkun olam* as the image of a puzzle with pieces missing - when we do *tikkun olam*, we are placing the missing pieces into the puzzle. The term itself has historically had several different connotations - from social policy legislation that protected the disadvantaged to the mystical concept that humans complete the work of creation by following God's commandments. (*Rachel Meytin, based on Rabbi Elliot Dorff*)

Tzedakah – צדקה Righteous Giving

Although often translated as "charity," *tzedakah* is not equivalent to charity. Rather, its root means "justice." Charity comes from the Latin word *caritas*, which means "love." The concept of charity in English is considered voluntary because it comes from the heart. In Christianity, charity is something which people give when their hearts move them. In contrast, *tzedakah*/justice is a biblical and rabbinic concept that embodies the idea that Jews are obligated to pursue social and economic justice. Jews must help the oppressed members of society as well as those in financial straits not because they want to, but because they are required to do so as one way of serving God, performing God's commandments, and even acting like God. (*myjewishlearning.com*)

Tzedek – צדק Justice

The concept of *tzedek* extends beyond the basic legal requirements of the state, and beyond the execution of strict justice. *Tzedek* appears as a term that describes a contract between God and humanity, or between humans of differing social or political status, to establish a system aimed at liberating the vulnerable from their oppressors. (*Rabbi Jill Jacobs*)