

As a student of politics, oratory, and communication, I enjoy Donald Trump. I was a viewer of *The Apprentice* from day-one (although it got boring pretty quickly). The media has made him a larger than life cartoon character. But what can you expect in the age of melding politics and entertainment? It doesn't appear to me that there's much substance in his bluster, but I have to admit that I am fascinated by his salesmanship; and I know he is persuasive, for some. I actually enjoyed much of the Republican Party debate in early August. I didn't think I would. The Donald was correct -- millions would not have watched it if he were not there. There is so much that we can chew over regarding the Trump phenomenon, but's let's discuss simple good manners and respect for others.

The firestorm hit early and hard at the debate when Mr. Trump verbally attacked Megyn Kelley of Fox News for her question about his attitude toward women; and it did not stop there with women. What chapped me was that he used as his defense to his racist and misogynistic language the need to end all of this "politically correct" rhetoric that he contended will be the downfall of our nation (ok, slightly exaggerated, but you get the point).

Through Mr. Trump, the campaign against political correctness has made a turn into the avenue of bullying and demeaning rhetoric. There is much to attack about how maintaining respect and care for others has morphed into limitation of free speech on some of our college campuses – the most radical manifestation of what we have come to call "political correctness." But Mr. Trump's inappropriate comments and self-centered blustering is not the antidote to "political correctness."

On the other hand, as Jeffrey Pfeffer, a Stanford University professor of Organizational Behavior, recently pointed out in a *Fortune* article, "we may disapprove of Trump's self-promotion, disdain for facts, and unapologetic persona. But these are the very qualities that allow leaders to succeed." His point is that we repeatedly look to these people who are described as "toxic leaders," and until we stop making excuses for the Trumps of the world, we will get what we want.

Applying this to our shul, we try very hard to have a "no jerk zone" in our shul leadership. This does not mean that we stifle dissent or limit debate on issues (cue all the jokes of Jews, synagogues, and opinions on how things should be run). At least on this level, one of the secrets of our success is that we have developed a tradition of respect for the opinions of all. What would hap-pen if we stood on the Bima or at a board meeting and started calling people "stupid," "slobs," or "idiots"? It would not be pretty.

So, as we roll into 5776, let's maintain our respect for others; and more importantly, teach and reinforce that trait to our children. From our family to yours, *L'shana Tova U'metuka*.

Howard