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The secret sauce

It's a quiet summer ... relatively. But in the last few weeks my colleagues in our Planning and Impact Department have been starting a round of meetings with our partner agencies and programs. We're going to various summer camps funded by our One Happy Camper program support, seeing how lives are touched and saved by our local agencies and platforms, and hearing great stories of inspiration and impact.

Our Chief Planning Officer, Jessica Mehlman, and our Director of Impact Assessment & Learning, Lauren Silverstein, created a cheat-sheet of questions for us to ask at these site visits. Most of them are expected, but clever. A few are quite sharp: what do you need to do better to accomplish your mission? What are the top three things in your bucket list for the next year, or five years?

But one, in particular, really drew my attention. It said "what's your secret sauce?"

I love this question. It sums up so much of the vitality and energy of our community's institutions. I've visited so many of the incredible programs and agencies and platforms in our community, and each one has this unique - secret - sauce to it.

I drove home after a full day of talking with colleagues from other organizations and agencies in our community. Impressive, visionary, Jewish communal professionals who have dedicated their lives to faithfully deepening the caring, compassionate and inspiring aspects of life in our community. There was a great interview on the radio with the author Angela Lee Duckworth, who writes about "Grit." Grit, she says, is the key to success - and it consists of perseverance, determination, and a drive to improve. Sustained investments of time, over time, continually acknowledging where we can improve. All these, she said, "are the secret sauce."

And she's right. I see it every day in our community.

P.S. You can receive this blog by email by clicking on the "subscribe" button to the right.

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THE CORRIDOR

By Dov Ben-Shimon, Federation CEO

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