

WELLNESS SUMMIT PROVIDED HEALTH RESOURCES FOR SHLUCHIM

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Photos: Chaim Tuitto - Kinus.com



For the first time ever, the International Kinus Hashluchim featured a full-day, dedicated educational forum focusing on health and wellbeing led by *rabbonim*, *shluchim*, and doctors.

For the first time ever, the International Kinus Hashluchim featured a full-day, dedicated educational forum focusing on various physical and mental health-related matters.

The Vaad Hakinus, together with Chabad on Call at Merkos 302 and *The Wellness Institute* from the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, created a wellness summit for Shluchim to participate in at the Kinus. The Summit included a brand-new four-part

training session for *shluchim*, timely lectures and a "Health Expo" throughout the day to provide *shluchim* with the necessary resources and available options for their critical work as spiritual and physical caretakers of their respective communities.

After introductory remarks from *The Wellness Institute's* **Rabbi Zalman Abraham, Dr. Casey Skvorc**, PhD, JD, National Institute of Health, Professor at the American Public University System and the American Military University spoke effusively of his relationships with various *shluchim* throughout the world, specifically **Rabbi Sholom Raichik** of Chabad of Upper Montgomery County, Maryland and how much they are faced with those struggling with mental and emotional challenges.

Dr. Shloimie Zimmerman, Psy.D., spoke candidly to the *shluchim*, citing various personal stories as well as encounters with the Rebbe to impress upon the audience just how much they are able to empower and help others. "The word *yedid*, friend, is a conjugate of *yad yad*—extending a hand. One of the most important things a *shliach* can do is simply be a true friend—something that isn't so simple at all." Concluding with a poignant story about how anyone who's looking out for it and truly cares can literally save a life, *shluchim* walked away with a real sense of clarity and empowerment to continue their essential work.

As part of Chabad on Call's mission to serve those in medical care, other sessions devoted to such topics as navigating end-of-life challenges and its accompanying *halachic* intricacies were led by **Rabbi Menachem Horowitz** – Brooklyn, NY – Rov of Machon Chaim Aruchim.

Continuing on the theme of providing for those under medical care, **Rabbi Lazer Hershkovich** – Park Ridge, IL, **Rabbi Menachem Stern** – Melbourne, Australia, **Rabbi Mendy Mentz** – Bel Aire, CA presented a workshop on how to build a volunteer network and the positive impact it has on a community, both the people receiving the aid, as well as the volunteers themselves.

The summit concluded with a passionate presentation from **Rabbi Mendel Kaplan** on the topic of Communicating With Heart. With wisdom and empathy, Rabbi Kaplan shared advice on being present and listening with true heart, as well as communicating more effectively, especially with those coping with difficult situations.

Throughout the day, various smaller booths and other such presentations were scattered around the facility, providing *shluchim* with resources for their efforts to be frontline responders to those in need.

"Being confronted with serious and sometimes life-threatening situations can be very daunting. For Shluchim, this can happen on a daily basis," said **Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky**, Chairman of the International Kinus Hashluchim and Vice Chairman of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch. "As the natural first address for so many in distress, shluchim are eager to learn how to assist in such situations. We are delighted to be able to bring the best voices in the field directly to the shluchim and help them in this critical corner of their shlichus."

For more information regarding Merkos 302's efforts in empowering Shluchim to navigate today's health challenges, visit <https://www.shluchimrefuah.org/>