

Israel Guidance Questionnaire

Name:

Below is the Israel Guidance Questionnaire that I have been using during my initial interviews with my students. The rationale behind this questionnaire is to get students thinking about growing religiously. Then I would like them to see that a year of study in Israel is one of the best ways, if not the best way, to continue on a path of religious growth in an environment that combines personal freedom with religious guidance. My school population is primarily Sephardic so some questions are geared in that direction.

I would like to thank the following people who helped give me questions and ideas for this questionnaire: Rabbi Raphael Malavsky, Rabbi Josh Joseph, and Mrs. Dara Knapel. This is still a work in progress so I would very much like if you could email your helpful suggestions and constructive critique to me at: Pittinsky@msn.com. Please feel free to share this with your school as long as credit is given.

Kol Tov,

Rabbi Tzvi Pittinsky

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Directions:

Think deeply about the following questions and answer them with your Israel Guidance Counselor. You may choose to skip a question if you don't know an answer.

General Questions
1. What argument would you give to someone who would ask you why you believe in God?
2. What is the reason that you think God created you or (in other words) what is your purpose in this world?
3. What formula do you use to decide what is right and what is wrong?

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4. Do you consider yourself to be religiously observant? If yes, why are you religiously observant?

5. Why have you been going to Yeshiva all of these years?

6. When would you say that you have begun to start thinking maturely?

7. Do you think that you have grown religiously during your years in high school?
Explain your answer.

8. Do you wish to grow religiously after high school or are you satisfied with where you are at right now? Explain your answer.

9. Imagine yourself ten years from now. What type of person would you like to be?

10. Do you consider yourself to be more religious than your parents, less religious, or the same? Explain your answer.

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11. What type of college would you like to go to? How has your religious background influenced your choice of college?

Questions about Israel Schools

1. Do you want to go to learn in Israel after high school? Why or why not?

2. Do you want to go to a Sephardic school, a school with a Sephardic program, or any school?

3. Do you want a school that spends most of the time learning Gemara or a school that devotes a substantial amount of time for Tanakh and Hashkafa?

4. Is the best place for you to study in Jerusalem or someplace less central?

5. Do you want an Israeli school with an American program, or do you want a school that caters exclusively to American students?

6. Do you want a Haredi school (black hat) or a more Centrist Orthodox school?

7. Do you want a program that focuses on text study and analysis, or one that offers something more experiential (ruah, devekut)?

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8. Do you need close supervision or do you want a supportive, but less restrictive environment?
9. How important are the size and diversity of the student body?
10. What style of learning is most appropriate for you? (self-guided havruta study vs. structured learning)
11. Do you want a school that focuses exclusively on learning or a school that combines learning with hesed or volunteer work?