

As part of the faith community, I approach inclusion from the perspective of ancient teachings that Jews and Christians share as scripture and that Muslims embrace as important. The first is: Love your neighbor as yourself. That implies a sense of self-worth, of how you want to be treated. A second is, do not stand idle while your neighbor bleeds, which we understand as: Just because it happens to someone else doesn't mean I don't have to help.

A third concept is more modern. It comes from a Holocaust survivor, Rabbi Joachim Prinz, who befriended Martin Luther King Jr. and spoke at the 1963 march on Washington. He described how the word "neighbor" is not a geographical demarcation; rather, it is a moral concept. That is so relevant in Pittsburgh in 2017. It's hard to break beyond the isolation of the neighborhood. We want to help people change the definition of neighbor.

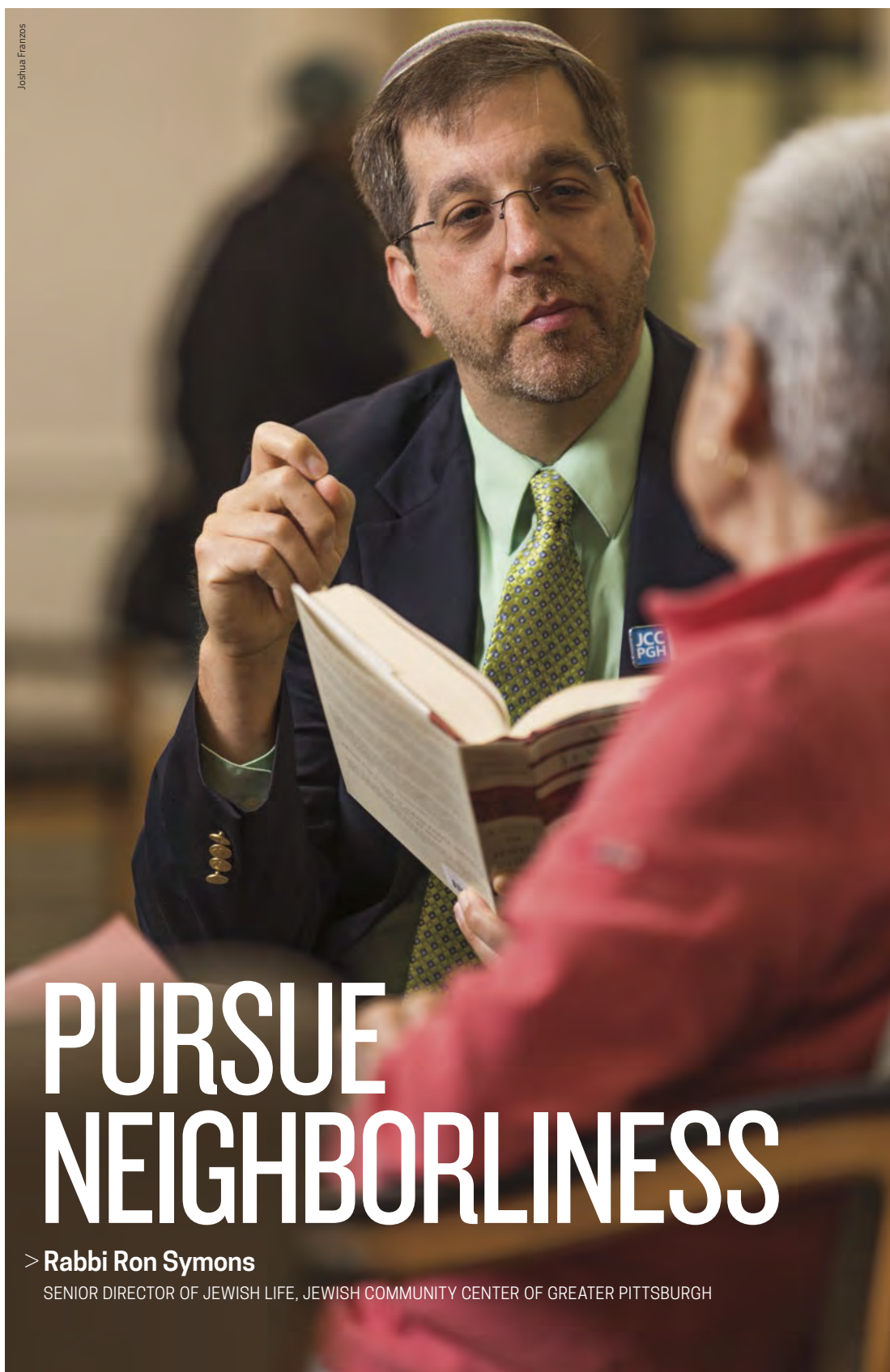
I have to tell you, Pittsburgh is the perfect place to do it. Mister Rogers asked, "Won't you be my neighbor?" That is simple and deep. I am terribly concerned that we have lost the impact of his ideas.

One new way the JCC is pursuing more "neighborliness" is through creating the Center for Loving Kindness, with five project areas. We're reaching out through theater arts and through conversations at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes. We want to create deliberative democracy—not just voting in November, but also struggling with issues on the ballot and how they relate to people's faith traditions. We're creating an East End gathering of clergy, which hasn't previously existed, to work with Pittsburgh Public Safety.

We have to fight a lack of trust—the idea that if you think differently from me, you're not telling the truth. We must fight that. I'm not going to sit back and give my children a lesser world.

— Interviewed by Christine O'Toole

Joshua Franzos



PURSUE NEIGHBORLINESS

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