**Yael Ben Horin:** We are in the lobby of one of the hotels in the Dead Sea. And it's filled with people.

**Mitch Ginsburg:** Oh look, (*Bruchim habaim mitchan hinuchi, gimel ad vav),* Welcome to the educational area, classes—grades three to six.

**Yael Ben Horin**: So we found school.

**Mitch Ginsburg:** So we've arrived at the improvised classroom slash school of all of those from Sderot who have come to the Dead Sea area. Looks like about 25 kids. I see what looks like maybe a kindergarten teacher, maybe a grandmother.

**Yael Ben Horin**: Maybe both.

**Mitch Ginsburg**: Maybe both, correct. Lots of different volunteers, both from youth movements and from the army's educational corps.

**Yael Ben Horin**: What else? There is also a Lego station.

**Mitch Ginsburg:** Lots of Lego: kids playing avidly…some hula hoops, some bean bags.

**Yael Ben Horin**: Tiny chairs.

**Mitch Ginsburg**: Colorful tiny chairs

*[Hebrew]*

**Tomer Oshri:** All over the hotels in the Dead Sea we have about 6,500 people that came here, and something around 2,500 children to take care of from Eshkol and from Sdot Negev, and from Sderot, Netivot and Ofakim and Ashkelon: all around.

**Mishy Harman (narration)**: Hey listeners, it's Mishy. So as you know, during these incredibly difficult days we're trying to bring you voices we're hearing among and around us. These aren't stories, they're just quick conversations or postcards really, that try to capture slivers of life right now.

During normal times, Tomer Oshri, a 48-year-old history teacher from Jerusalem, works at The Joint and runs an educational nonprofit. Nowadays however, he's the man in charge of building and operating 17 different makeshift schools for survivors and displaced residents of the communities around the Gaza border.

Our producers Mitch Ginsburg and Yael Ben Horin, went down to the Dead Sea hotels, yanked him out of an endless stream of problem solving meetings, found a shady spot underneath a palm tree, and with most of the region's birds chirping in the background, asked him about the incredible educational operation he's running.

**Tomer Oshri**: My name is Tomer Oshri, and I'm living in Jerusalem: father of four children. I'm an educator, a history teacher. I used to be a principal in Jerusalem: that's what I'm doing in my routine. And these days I got recruited to build the educational systems for all the people that are living here now at the Dead Sea hotels.

**Mitch Ginsburg**: Take us into the picture. Everything started on October 7th, on Saturday.

**Tomer Oshri**: I think on Sunday morning I understood that I personally need to do something bigger than what I'm doing each and every day. I was back in my house, trying to figure out who needs help. And I tried to ask people, where can I volunteer. And I reached the person that in charge of all the schools in the Ministry of Education. And he told me:” Take with you a small bag, and a sleeping bag, and a tent, and just go and try to figure out how we can help the people that left their houses from Sderot and the municipality of Eshkol in the hotels of the Dead Sea.” And when I came here, I think the first community that I came it was Kibbutz Be’eri. Wow, it was a big chaos.

I asked, and maybe it was a mistake: “Are there any people from the kibbutz they can help?” And they said that one of them got murdered, the other one, her parents got murdered, so we have no manpower to work in the kindergarten. So I didn't know who to reach, who to talk with. There were many people at the hotel, many volunteers trying to locate people they needed help. So I asked the people from the kibbutz, who's in charge of education, to give me a person and I start talking with them and start building the picture…an understanding of what this Kibbutz Be’eri needs—education wise. And after I understood that I went to Kibbutz Sa’ad and I went to Kibbutz Magen.

I start to understand the picture and the needs. And the second thing was the decision of the Ministry of Education to build a school for each and every community. I tried to call the best people that I know in the educational field—principals that know how to work fast, that are very sensitive to the needs of the people surrounding them…so we did the matching. They start working, and when it worked, it worked. And in each and every hotel, it took us like only five days to build a school from kindergarten to 12th graders. I'll say something about the hotel managers: they're amazing. All the hotel managers here, they've given us everything—from rooms, food, places to be, to build our schools, and we build. And the next day people came from all the hotels with their kids to the schools. It was amazing and very, very exciting. People came from all over Israel to help. A lot of volunteers that coming here and working with pets that they bring in or working with ropes or each and every thing that we can bring here.

We tried to build a schedule, and it's very hard actually. Many teachers—we need people to work in the kindergartens. We are missing so many people because we have around 2,500 students here. Some learn within the hotels; others we’re taking on tours, so they can see Masada or Ein Gedi, and get a little bit outside of the stress.

**Mitch Ginsburg**: So you're here full time. How's your wife with this decision? How are your kids? Tell us what's happening there.

**Tomer Oshri:** The best place maybe to say that my wife is amazing. I hope she hears that. And she's taking care of our four children. So I can be here and try to help the other children that are located here in the Dead Sea hotels.

**Mitch Ginsburg**: Say a bit about what you've seen, about what a lot of these children have gone through. I mean some of them have come from some of the worst scenes imaginable.

**Tomer Oshri**: I'll say that one of the suggestions I got from a friend of mine my neighbor, which is a psychologist, he told me: “Don't ask people how they're doing, just do.” So I'm trying not to listen to stories. The stories are there and the pain is there, and that's very hard. But I think my duty here is to give them what they need so they will have routine, and they can build their resilience.