

Jewish Sensibilities: An Interactive Guide





This curriculum began life as a deck of cards that students at Kent State University Hillel helped to develop with their Senior Jewish Educator, Rabbi Lee Moore. Each card bore the name of a sensibility, a Jewish way of thinking about the world and responding to it. These cards have since been used at Hillels all over the world to help students think about what it means to live, breathe and speak Jewish ideas in the world today. The term was first introduced by Vanessa Ochs in her 2003 Sh'ma Journal article "Ten Jewish Sensibilities", http://shma.com/2003/12/ten-jewish-sensibilities/.

We are pleased to offer you an expansion pack for those cards — a curriculum designed with the needs and activities of Hillel professionals in mind. This curriculum offers different ways of bringing the ideas presented on those cards to life within activities that you might run at your Hillel. It was prepared with the support and guidance of the Lippman Kanfer Foundation for Living Torah.

This curriculum was written and developed by

Aliza Sperling and Dr. Laura Yares, Hillel International

Graphic Design by

Ken Falk, Ken Falk Marketing and Communications

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2016. Our goal is to disseminate these materials as widely as possible. Hillel International grants you permission to copy or otherwise distribute this curriculum to anyone who might find it valuable.

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What is it and Who is it for?

This is a curriculum for Hillel Professionals. It's written to help you bring Jewish ideas to life for your students. **And** it is focused around 10 Jewish Sensibilities, key values that for centuries have helped guide Jews in how they think about the world and how they live their lives.

We think these Sensibilities still have a lot to say to us. They can help us resist distorted images about our bodies (Tzelem Elohim), put down our cell phones and focus on what's important (Shabbat), and argue productively (*Elu v'Elu*). They can help us deal with failure (*Shevirah*), celebrate with responsibility (*Simcha*) and take the next step (Na'aseh v'Nishmah). They guide us when we try to figure out who we really are (Teshuvah), what we owe to others (*Brit*), how to lead (*Yisrael*), and how to dare greatly (*Lech Lecha*).

Many of these sessions are designed to be used at events where you might want to bring some Jewish content into the conversation. Going on a service trip? Check out Brit: Jews and Social Justice. Cleaning out the dorm? Check out Simcha: Hakarat Hatov (Gratitude). Looking to celebrate graduation? Look no further than Lech Lecha: Graduation Havdalah. You get the picture. And of course, we have sessions designed for Jewish holiday learning, Alternative Services, Beit Midrash and Group Learning. We know you are busy, and so we designed these sessions and activities to be "plug and play" so you can use them with a minimum of preparation.

STOP! Don't read this book from beginning to end!

Don't think of this as a textbook that you have to work your way through. Instead, think of it as a recipe book. You select the pages that most appeal to you.

Our curriculum has ten sections, corresponding to our ten Jewish Sensibilities. Each section offers a range of different options that have been written with the activities that many Hillel professionals run on a day to day basis in mind from coffee dates, to intern learning, to social justice events. Each section starts out with an "On One Foot" page. Is this sensibility new to you, or do you want to find out more about it? Start there and get the overview! After that, each session is labeled with a "This Activity is Great For" icon that tells you right at the beginning what it can be used for. At the end of each unit you'll find a section of textsheets for students. This will give you just the texts used in each activity so that you can photocopy the bare essentials for your students, and keep the facilitator's notes for yourself.

So dive on in! Flick through our ten Sensibilities, find the activities that speak to you, and choose your own adventure!





Look Out for these Icons to **Know Instantly What Each Activity** in this Curriculum is Great for...





- End of the Year Celebration
- Career Development
- Welcome Week
 - Graduation



· Alternative Break Pre-Birthright Session



- Learning
- Beit Midrash
- · Group Learning
- Rosh Chodesh
- Dvar Torah



Pastoral Counseling

- Career Development
 - Self-Worth
 - Relationships



Identity & Relationships

- Inclusion
- Team Building
- Group Dynamics
- Student Leaders
 - Art and Creative Play



- Service Projects
- Challah for Hunger



Holidays

- Thanksgiving
 - Purim
- MLK Day
- Shavuot
- Pesach (Passover)
 - Shabbat
 - Chanukah
 - · High Holidays
 - Sukkot
- Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day)



Spirituality

- Alternative Service
- Havdalah
- Prayer
- Mindfulness



Just for Hillel **Professionals**

- Inclusion
- Working with Colleagues and Students Who are Very Different
 - from You Resting and
- Recharging Trusting in Your Work
- Vulnerability in Teaching and Leading
- Keeping the Joy Alive
- Dealing with Failure
- Try Something New
 - Service Trips
- Dissent Within the Jewish Community

The Ten **Jewish Sensibilities Cards**





















These are the 10 sensibility cards that today are used at Hillels on campuses all over the world. Check out each card for a brief description of each sensibility. Want a pack for yourself? No problem! Just visit jewishsensibilities.org. In the card pack you'll find suggestions of games and ice breakers using just the cards alone. Use this curriculum when you are ready to go even deeper and explore these sensibilities with your students by integrating them into your work on campus.









On One Foot: Brit (Partnership)

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham is to become a great and populous nation and all the nations of the earth are to bless themselves by him? For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right, in order that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what He has promised him." — Breishit (Genesis) 18:17-19

"The wicked child — what does he say? "What is this service for you" — for you and not for him. Since he excluded himself from the nation, he has spoken heresy. You shall thus sharply condemn him and say to him, "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I left Egypt" — 'for me' and not for him; had he been there, he would not have been redeemed." Passover Haggadah

"If there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman. Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs." — *Devarim* (Deuteronomy) 15:7-8

The Implications

We will look at Brit in the context of:

- Jews and Social Justice: A Covenant of Responsibility 6
- Passover: Can I be Jewish Without Community? 10
- Tzedakah: How Many People Must I Save? 13
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Jews and Social Justice: A Covenant of Responsibility

This Activity is Great For





Alternative Break



ig Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Ask students if they have ever heard of "code switching", when we express ourselves differently depending on who we are with at the moment. As an example, show them the Key and Peele clip of code switching: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzprLDmdRlc

NPR defines code switching in this way:

So you're at work one day and you're talking to your colleagues in that professional, polite, kind of buttoned-up voice that people use when they're doing professional work stuff. Your mom or your friend or your partner calls on the phone and you answer. And without thinking, you start talking to them in an entirely different voice — still distinctly your voice, but a certain kind of your voice less suited for the office. You drop the g's at the end of your verbs. Your previously undetectable accent — your easy Southern drawl or your sing-songy Caribbean lilt or your Spanish-inflected vowels or your New Yawker — is suddenly turned way, way up. You rush your mom or whomever off the phone in some less formal syntax ("Yo, I'mma holler at you later,"), hang up and get back to work. Then you look up and you see your co-workers looking at you and wondering who the hell you'd morphed into for the last few minutes. That right there? That's what it means to code-switch.

Linguists would probably quibble with our definition. (The term arose in linguistics specifically to refer to mixing languages and speech patterns in conversation.) But we're looking at code-switching a little more broadly: many of us subtly, reflexively change the way we express ourselves all the time. We're hop-scotching between different cultural and linguistic spaces and different parts of our own identities — sometimes within a single interaction.

Gene Denby, How Code Switching Explains the World, http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/04/08/176064688/how-code-switching-explains-the-world (accessed August 21, 2016).





TALK IT OUT

- How do you code switch in your own life?
- Do you code switch between home and college? Between the rest of college and Jewish life?
 - What are some of the words you use in your college life?
 - What are some of the words you use in your Jewish life?
 - If you do code switch, does it bother you?

If you are using this session before a social justice or service activity:

- As you are about to go on your service/social justice activity with Hillel, does it feel Jewish? Or does it feel like a student trip/activity that happens to be run by Jews?
- Which language do you speak when you do justice work: your college/universal code or your Jewish code?



II. A Deeper Dive

Divide students into chavruta *pairs and ask them to read the next two sources, and discuss the questions that follow.*

A. In the following excerpt from Breishit (Genesis), God tells Abraham that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are about to be destroyed because of the great sins of their inhabitants. Note in particular verse 19 when God explains why Abraham and his descendants have been chosen.

Breishit (Genesis) 18:16-21

טז וַיַּקמוּ מִשָּׁם הַאַנַשִּים וַיַּשָּׁקפוּ עַל פָּנֵי סִדם וְאַבְרָהַם הֹלֵךְ עמם לשלחם. **16** The men set out from there and looked down toward Sodom, Abraham walking with them to see them off.

יז וַה׳ אַמַר הַמְּכַּסֶּה אֵנִי מֵאַבְרָהַם אֲשֶׁר אֵנִי עֹשֶׂה.

17 Now the Lord had said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,

יח ואַבְרָהָם הָיוֹ יִהְיֵה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְעָצוּם וְנָבְרְכוּ בּוֹ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי ָהָאָרֱץ.

18 since Abraham is to become a great and populous nation and all the nations of the earth are to bless themselves by him?

יט כִּי יָדַעִתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצַוָּה אֶת בַּנַיו וְאֵת בֵּיתוֹ אַחֵרָיו וִשְׁמַרוּ דֵּרֵךְ ה׳ לַעֲשׂוֹת צָדַקָה וּמִשְׁפַּט לְמַעַן הַבִּיא ה׳ עַל אַבְרַהַם אֵת אֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר עַלַיו.

19 For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right, in order that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what He has promised him."



Breishit (Genesis) 18:16-21 (continued)

ב וַיֹּאמֵר ה׳ זַעַקַת סָדֹם וַעַמֹּרָה כִּי רָבָּה וַחַטַּאתַם כִּי כַבְדַה מִאֹד.

כא אַרַדָה נַּא וְאֵרָאֶה הַכָּצַעַקַתַהּ הַבַּאַה אֵלַי עשׂוּ כַּלַה וִאָם לֹא אֱדַעַה. 20 Then the Lord said, "The outrage of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sin so grave!

21 I will go down to see whether they have acted altogether according to the outcry that has reached Me; if not, I will take note." (Translation from http://www.taggedtanakh.org/Chapter/ Index/english-Gen-18.)

B. In this text, Rabbi Sid Schwarz looks at two main purposes of Judaism. The first purpose that he finds comes from God's words to Abraham in Genesis Chapter 18. Note how he translates verse 19 slightly differently.

Rabbi Sid Schwarz, "Can Social Justice Save the American Jewish Soul?":

Based on my reading of Judaism, there are two compelling answers to the question, "What is the purpose of Judaism?"

The first purpose is based on Genesis 18, when God expands on an initial charge to Abraham to go forth from his land to the land that God will show him. In 18:19, God adds a critical prerequisite that will enable Abraham to fulfill his destiny and become the father of a great nation. He is to obey God's commandments and "extend the boundaries of righteousness and justice in the world," la'asot tzedakah umishpat.

The second purpose of Judaism is based on God's revelation to Moses, which is recounted in Exodus 19:6. The Jewish people are told to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," a mamlechet kohanim and goy kadosh. The Hebrew word for holiness — *kedusha* — comes from a root that means separate and apart.

Judaism is a religion based on a paradox: Jews are expected to maintain a holy apartness as God's chosen people and, at the same time, are expected to be totally engaged with the world around them. The observance of ritual laws must be combined with acting toward others with justice and compassion, to be loyal to God's covenant with the Jewish people.

Rabbi Sid Schwarz, "Can Social Justice Save the American Jewish Soul?" Righteous Indignation: A Jewish Call for Justice, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008, http://www.rabbisid.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/social_justice_save_ american_jewry_soul.pdf (accessed August 16, 2016)







TALK IT OUT

- Rabbi Schwarz points to two purposes of the Jewish people: to spread righteousness and justice, and to be a holy nation. How have these two purposes of Judaism manifested in your own life?
- Do these two purposes seem opposed to each other? Could you think of a way that these two purposes could work together?

Reconvene the group and discuss the *chavruta* pairs' answers to these questions.

III. Letter to Abraham

In preparation for your social justice activity or trip, ask students to write a letter to Abraham. They should answer the following two questions (handout included in Student Textsheets):

Dear Abraham,

- 1. When I am on this social justice trip/activity, I commit to following in your footsteps by . . .
- 2. After I complete this social justice trip/activity, I will continue to "extend the boundaries of righteousness and justice" by ...



Passover: Can I Be Jewish Without Community?

This Activity is Great For







Beit Midrash



Pre-Birthright
 Session



Big Idea

Jews are connected by a "covenant of fate" in which we affirm that we are interconnected and have responsibilities toward each other.

I. Beginning the Conversation

Tell students to walk around the room. Each person should secretly choose two people and try to walk exactly in between both of them, without them knowing. Let students attempt this difficult feat for a few minutes, then reconvene the group. (This activity is taken from: http://trainings.350.org/for/trainers/)



- Was it difficult to stay in the group you chose?
- What groups do you consider yourself to be part of?
- Do you consider yourself to be part of the Jewish people? Is that an important part of how you identify yourself?

II. A Deeper Dive

A. At the Passover seder, we read about the four children. The wicked child asks a question that does not seem so bad:"What is this service to you?" and yet he is answered harshly:

רַשַּׁע מַה הוּא אוֹמֵר: מַה הַעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לַכֶם? לַכֶם וִלֹא לוֹ.

The wicked child — what does he say? "What is this service for you" — for you and not for him.

וּלְפִי שֶׁהוֹצִיא אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִן הַכְּלַל כַּפַר בַּעָקָר. וָאַף אַתַּה הַקְהֵה אֵת שָׁנַיו וָאֲמַר־לוֹ בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עַשָּׂה ה׳ לִי בִּצֵאתִי מִמְצְרַיִם לִי וָלֹא לוֹ.

Since he excluded himself from the nation, he has spoken heresy. You shall thus sharply condemn him and say to him, "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I left Egypt" — "for me" and not for him; had he been there, he would not have been redeemed.

אָלּוּ הַיָה שָׁם לֹא הַיָה נָגְאַל:



Ask: Do you think that this child should be called wicked based on her question? Is her question really so terrible?

B. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks explains that the wicked child is understood in ancient texts as someone who had chosen to abandon his people — and it is this separation from the fate of other Jews that earns him the Haggadah's wrath. Rabbi Sacks explains:

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Bo (5768): The Covenant of Fate:

Judaism is a communal faith. This is the "principle" that the rebellious child denies. Judaism is not addressed to individuals. Nor is it addressed to humanity as a whole. God chose a people, a nation, and asked them at Mount Sinai to pledge themselves, not only to Him but also to one another. *Emunah*, that key word of Judaism, usually translated as "faith," more properly means loyalty — to God, but also to the people He has chosen as the carriers of His mission, the witnesses to His presence. To be sure, Jews are sometimes exasperating. Rashi, commenting on Moses' charge to his successor Joshua, says that he told him: "Know that they [the people you are about to lead] are troublesome and contentious." But he also told him: "You are fortunate for you will have the privilege of leading the children of God Himself."

[A] Jew who does not say "You" when Jews or Israel are under attack, but "Me," has made a fundamental affirmation — to be part of a people, sharing in its responsibilities, identifying with its hopes and fears, celebrations and griefs. That is the covenant of fate and it still summons us today.

(Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Bo (5768): The Covenant of Fate, http://www.rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation-5768-bothe-covenant-of-fate/)

Ask: How important do you think it is "to be part of a people, sharing in its responsibilities, identifying with its hopes and fears, celebrations and griefs"?

Take three pieces of paper. On one paper, write "Jew? Who Me?", on another write "Jew-ish" and on the third write "Jewy Jew". Place the "Jew? Who Me?" sign to the far left of the room or table, "Jew-ish" sign in the middle, and "Jewy Jew" sign to the far right. Tell students that these papers form a continuum of how connected one might feel to the Jewish people - from "Jew? Who Me?" to "Jewy Jew." Remind students that you are not talking about ritual observance, but only how connected they feel to the Jewish people. Ask students to stand somewhere on the continuum that represents how connected they feel to the Jewish people.

Once students have chosen their spots, debrief their choices with them.







OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Invite students to call The Jewish Number, a phone hotline that connects you with Jewish people all over the world. They can dial 1-323-310-0622 to connect with a Jew in any participant country, or they can go to the website (http://jewishnumber.com/) and use the menu to find the direct extension number to call a specific country.

When on the phone, students should ask: What connects you to other Jews? Did you have a time in your life when you felt most connected to other Jews?

After about 5 minutes, ask students to finish their calls, reconvene and compare notes on the conversations that students have had.

Brit

How Many People Must I Save?

This Activity is Great For

Tzedakah:



Service Projects





Alternative Break



Big Ideas

I. Beginning the Conversation

The philosopher Peter Singer has developed a scenario, called "Child in the Pond" that challenges us to re-think our views about "charity" and the ethical use of our money. You may wish to read Singer's article *The Drowning Child and* the Expanding Circle (http://www.utilitarian.net/singer/by/199704--.htm) to prepare for this segment of the session.

Ask students the following questions (These questions are adapted slightly from: http://www.philosophyexperiments. com/singer/) based on Singer's scenario:

- 1. Your route to class takes you past a shallow pond. One morning you notice that a small child has fallen in and appears to be in difficulty in the water. The child is crying in distress and it seems is at risk of drowning. You are tall and strong, so you can easily wade in and pull the child out. However, although you'll come to no physical harm if you rescue the child, you will get your clothes wet and muddy, which means you'll have to go home to change, and likely you'll be late for class. In this situation, do you have a moral obligation to rescue the child?
- 2. Okay, now suppose that there are other people walking past who would equally be able to rescue the child but are not doing so. Does the fact that they are not doing what ought to be done mean that you're no longer obligated to save the child?
- 3. Let's imagine that there is some uncertainty attached to the situation. You know you're not going to come to any harm if you attempt the rescue, but you can't be sure that your efforts will make any difference to how things turn out. This is partly for the counterfactual reason that if you don't intervene, then it is possible that somebody else will do so, thereby bringing about the same result (i.e., the rescue of the child from the pond); and it is partly because it is possible that by the time you reach the child, it will already be too late.

It is important to be clear about the precise situation here. You have *good reason* to suppose that your intervention will bring about a better outcome than would otherwise be the case, but you can't be sure about it. The question is —



does this element of uncertainty mean you're no longer obliged to go ahead with the rescue attempt?

- 4. Now consider another variation on the basic scenario. It so happens that you cycle to work, and the pond is located in a park where you know a gang of bicycle thieves operates. You don't have time to lock up your bike, and you know that if you leave it, even briefly, to rescue the child, there's a good chance that it'll be stolen. It's a battered old bike, it doesn't hold any particular sentimental value to you, and you can easily replace it. Does the possibility your bike will be stolen while you're saving the child mean you're no longer obliged to go ahead with the rescue?
- 5. Now let's imagine that this is not the first time you've come across a child struggling in an expanse of water and seemingly at risk of drowning. In fact, only last week on your way home from work you heard cries as you passed by a local reservoir and when you investigated, you found that a young boy had fallen in and was struggling to drag himself out. Happily, he was quite near to dry land, so you were able to reach into the water and pull him out, albeit you did ruin your work shirt in the process.

Does the fact you saved a child's life last week mean you're not obliged to go ahead with the rescue this week?

6. We have one final question based on this scenario. Would it make any difference if the child were far away, in another country perhaps, but similarly in danger of death, and equally within your means to save, at no great cost and absolutely no danger – to yourself?

Note to Facilitator:

Ask them: If you believe that you are obligated to save the drowning child, despite the costs, then what is your obligation to the children around the world who are dying and could be helped by your donations? Are you obligated to help them?

Specifically:

- If it costs \$10 to buy a mosquito net for a family in Africa to protect them from malaria, do you have an obligation to do so?
- How many nets do you have to buy?
- Are you obligated to take the money you were going to use to buy a new shirt or see a movie, and send the money to a charity to save someone instead?

Singer writes: "In a society in which the narrow pursuit of material self-interest is the norm, the shift to an ethical stance is more radical than many people realize. In comparison with the needs of people going short of food in Rwanda, the desire to sample the wines of Australia's best vineyards pales into insignificance. An ethical approach to life does not forbid having fun or enjoying food and wine; but it changes our sense of priorities. The effort and expense put into fashion, the endless search for more and more refined gastronomic pleasures, the added expense that marks out the luxury-car market - all these become disproportionate to people who can shift perspective long enough to put themselves in the position of others affected by their actions. If the circle of ethics really does expand, and a higher ethical consciousness spreads, it will fundamentally change the society in which we live." http://www.utilitarian.net/singer/by/199704--.htm



II. A Deeper Dive

Let's look and see how Judaism answers these questions.

Divide students into groups, and give them the following 5 sources. Ask them to keep in mind the questions we had raised before, about a person's obligation to buy malaria nets or otherwise use their money to save lives.

Ask them to specifically think about the following questions as they read the sources:

- (1) According to Jewish law and thought, how much tzedakah do you think one should give?
- (2) Would these Jewish texts agree with Singer? Do they have a different rationale for why to give tzedakah?



1. *Devarim* (Deuteronomy)15:7-8, 10-11

רָנִי יִהְיֵה בָּךָ אֵבִיוֹן מֵאַחַד אַחֵיךָ בִּאַחַד שָׁעָרֵיךָ בִּאַרְצָךְ אֵשֵׁר יַ ָה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ נֹתֶן לַךְ לֹא תָאַמֵּץ אֶת לְבַבְרָ וְלֹא תִקְפֹּץ אֶת יַדְרָ ַמֵאָחִיךָּ הָאֵבִּיוֹן.

ּח כִּי-פַתֹחַ תִּפְתַּח אֵת יַדְךָ לוֹ וְהַעֲבֵט תַּעֲבִיטֵנוּ דֵּי מַחְסֹרוֹ ...וֹאַשֵּׁר יֵחָסַר לוֹ...

י נָתוֹן תִּתֵּן לוֹ וִלֹא יֵרַע לְבָבָךְ בִּתְתִּךְ לוֹ כִּי בִּגִלַל הַדָּבָר הַזֵּה יָבַרֵכָךָ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךָ בָּכָל מַעֲשֵׂךָ וּבַכֹל מִשְׁלַח יָדֵךָ.

יא כִּי לֹא יֵחַדַּל אֵבִיוֹן מִקּרֵב הָאָרֵץ עַל כֵּן אָנֹכִי מִצַוִּךְ לֵאמֹר ַפַּתֹחַ תִּפְתַּח אֵת יַדָּךְ לְאַחִיךְ לַעֲנְיֵּךְ וּלְאֵבִינִךְ בִּאַרְצֵךְ.

- 7 If there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman.
- 8 Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs...
- 10 Give to him readily and have no regrets when you do so, for in return the Lord your God will bless you in all your efforts and in all your undertakings.
- 11 For there will never cease to be needy ones in your land, which is why I command you: open your hand to the poor and needy kinsman in your land.

(Translation adapted from: http://www.taggedtanakh.org/ Chapter/Index/english-Deut-15.)

2. George Robinson, *Tzedakah* in the Jewish Tradition, MyJewishLearning

(http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tzedakah-in-the-jewish-tradition/ (accessed August 17, 2016):

Tzedakah is loosely translated as "charity," but that is a misrepresentation of the concept. The Hebrew has its root in another word, tzedek/justice. In the Torah, we are strongly enjoined, "Tzedek, tzedek tirdof/Justice, justice thou shalt pursue." Rabbinical commentators have said that the repetition of the word justice is designed to underline the importance of the command. Tzedakah is not charity given out of caritas, in the Christian understanding of those words; it is given as an act of redress, as part of the process of seeking a just world.



3. Maimonides, Hilchot Matnot Aniyim, Chapter 10, Halachot 1-2

א חייבין אנו להיזהר במצות צדקה, יתר מכל מצוות עשה-שהצדקה סימן לצדיקי זרע אברהם אבינו, שנאמר "כי ידעתיו, למען אשר יצווה . . . " (בראשית יח,יט). ואין כיסא ישראל מתכונן ודת האמת עומדת אלא בצדקה, שנאמר "בצדקה, תיכונני" (ישעיהו נד,יד); ואין ישראל נגאלין אלא בזכות הצדקה, שנאמר "ציון, במשפט תיפדה; ושביה, בצדקה" (ישעיהו א,כז).

ב ולעולם אין אדם מעני מן הצדקה, ואין דבר רע ולא היזק נגלל בשביל הצדקה -שנאמר "והיה מעשה הצדקה, שלום" (ישעיהו לב,יז).

- 1 We are obligated to be careful with regard to the mitzvah of *tzedakah* to a greater extent than all [other] positive commandments, because tzedakah is an identifying mark for a righteous person, a descendant of Abraham, our patriarch, as [Genesis 18:19] states: "I have known him, because he commands his children... to perform charity." The throne of Israel will not be established, nor will the true faith stand except through charity, as [Isaiah 54:14] states: "You shall be established through righteousness." And Israel will be redeemed solely through charity, as [ibid. 1:27] states: "Zion will be redeemed through judgment and those who return to her through charity."
- 2 A person will never become impoverished from giving charity. No harm nor damage will ever be caused because of charity, (Rabbi Sid Schwarz, "Can Social Justice Save the American Jewish Soul?" Righteous Indignation: A Jewish Call for Justice, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008, http://www.rabbisid.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ social_justice_save_american_jewry_soul.pdf (accessed August 16, 2016) as [ibid. 32:17] states: "And the deed of charity is peace." (Translation adapted from: http:// www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/986711/jewish/ Matnot-Aniyim-Chapter-10.htm.)

4. Rambam Hilchot Matnot Aniyim Chapter 7, Halachot 1,5

א מצות עשה ליתן צדקה לעניים כפי מה שראוי לעני אם היתה יד הנותן משגת שנאמר פתוח תפתח את ידך לו ונאמר והחזקת בו גר ותושב וחי עמך ונאמר וחי :אחיך עמך

ד [ה] בא עני ושאל די מחסורו, ואין יד הנותן משגת--נותן לו כפי השגת ידו. וכמה: עד חמיש נכסיו, מצוה מן המובחר; ואחד מעשרה בנכסיו, בינוני; פחות מכאן, עין רעה. ולעולם אל ימנע אדם עצמו משלישית השקל בשנה; וכל הנותן פחות מזה, לא קיים מצוה. ואפילו עני המתפרנס מן הצדקה, חייב ליתן צדקה לאחר.

1 It is a positive commandment to give tzedakah to the poor according to what is appropriate for the poor person if this is within the financial capacity of the donor, as [Deuteronomy 15:5] states: "You shall certainly open your hand to him." [Leviticus 25:35] states: "You shall support him, a stranger and a resident and they shall live with you," and [ibid.:36] states: "And your brother shall live with you."

5 When a poor person comes and asks for his needs to be met and the giver does not have the financial capacity, he should give him according to his financial capacity. How much? The most desirable way of performing the mitzvah is to give one fifth of one's financial resources. Giving one tenth is an ordinary measure. Giving less [than that] reflects parsimony... Even a poor person who derives his livelihood from charity is obligated to give charity to another person. (Translation adapted from: http://www.chabad.org/library/article_ cdo/aid/986708/jewish/Matnot-Aniyim-Chapter-7.htm#footnote14a986708.)



5. Derech Eretz Zuta, 1:29

אם הטיבות הרבה, יהי בעיניך מעט, ואמור לא משלי הטיבותי אלא ממה שהטיבו לי.

If you did someone a great favor, regard it as small, and say, 'I did not do this good act with my own money; rather it was from the good that others have done for me."

Reconvene the group and discuss what they have learned from the texts about *tzedakah*.

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Give out index cards and ask students to write one specific thing they will do as a result of this discussion this week. If they will not do anything different, they should write "nothing" and explain why. Let them know you will read these out loud.

- Collect the index cards and read the answers out loud.
- Remind students to follow through on their answers over the next week.





Just for Hillel Professionals: Service Trips

This Activity is Great For



I. Beginning the Conversation

Use these questions to incorporate some of the lessons of *Brit* into your service trips:

- 1. What is your goal for this service trip?
 - To bring students into Hillel?
 - To bring students to ritual observance?
 - To help students feel connected to a community?
 - To give another perspective on Judaism?
 - · What other goals do you have?
- 2. It has been said in the Jewish world: "You can't build Jewish identity on the backs of poor people." How would you respond in terms of your service trip?
- 3. How will you continue the experience of service and Judaism when students return from the trip?
- 4. What is your ideal Jewish community? How does it blend the Jewish obligation of service and the obligation of holiness?

Textsheets for Students

Brit

BRIT partnership

On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you!



Textsheets for Students



Jews and Social Justice: A Covenant of Responsibility

A. In the following excerpt from *Breishit* (Genesis), God tells Abraham that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are about to be destroyed because of the great sins of their inhabitants. Note in particular verse 19 when God explains why Abraham and his descendants have been chosen.

Breishit (Genesis) 18:16-21

- טז וַיַּקְמוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֵנָשִׁים וַיַּשִּׁקְפוּ עַל פְּנֵי סִדֹם וָאַבְרָהָם הֹלֵךְ עִמָּם לְשַׁלְּחָם.
- יז וַה׳ אַמַר הַמְכַסֶּה אֵנִי מֵאַבְרָהַם אֵשֶׁר אַנִי עֹשֵׂה.
 - יח וָאַבְרָהָם הָיוֹ יִהְיֵה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְעָצוּם וָנְבַרְכוּ בוֹ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֵץ.
- יט כִּי יִדַעִתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצַוַּה אֶת בַּנַיו וְאֶת בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרַיו וְשַׁמְרוּ דֵּרֵךְ ה׳ לַעֲשׁוֹת צָדָקָה וּמִשָּׁפָּט לְמַעַן הָבִיא ה׳ עַל אַבַרַהַם אֵת אֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר עַלַיו.
- כ וַיֹּאמֵר ה׳ זַעַקַת סִדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה כִּי רַבַּה וַחַטַּאתַם כִּי כַבְדַה מִאֹד.
- כא אַרְדָה נָּא וְאֵרְאֵה הַכִּצַעַקְתָהּ הַבָּאָה אַלַי עַשׂוּ כַּלָה וְאָם לֹא אֶדַעָה.

- 16 The men set out from there and looked down toward Sodom, Abraham walking with them to see them off.
- 17 Now the Lord had said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,
- 18 since Abraham is to become a great and populous nation and all the nations of the earth are to bless themselves by him?
- 19 For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right, in order that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what He has promised him."
- 20 Then the Lord said, "The outrage of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sin so grave!
- 21 I will go down to see whether they have acted altogether according to the outcry that has reached Me; if not, I will take note." (Translation from http://www.taggedtanakh. org/Chapter/Index/english-Gen-18.)



Textsheets for Students Brit

Jews and Social Justice: A Covenant of Responsibility (continued)

B. In this text, Rabbi Sid Schwarz looks at two main purposes of Judaism. The first purpose that he finds comes from God's words to Abraham in Genesis **Chapter 18.** Note how he translates verse 19 slightly differently.

Rabbi Sid Schwarz, "Can Social Justice Save the American Jewish Soul?":

Based on my reading of Judaism, there are two compelling answers to the question, "What is the purpose of Judaism?"

The first purpose is based on Genesis 18, when God expands on an initial charge to Abraham to go forth from his land to the land that God will show him. In 18:19, God adds a critical prerequisite that will enable Abraham to fulfill his destiny and become the father of a great nation. He is to obey God's commandments and "extend the boundaries of righteousness and justice in the world," la'asot tzedakah umishpat.

The second purpose of Judaism is based on God's revelation to Moses, which is recounted in Exodus 19:6. The Jewish people are told to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," a mamlechet kohanim and goy kadosh. The Hebrew word for holiness *kedusha* — comes from a root that means separate and apart.

Judaism is a religion based on a paradox: Jews are expected to maintain a holy apartness as God's chosen people and, at the same time, are expected to be totally engaged with the world around them. The observance of ritual laws must be combined with acting toward others with justice and compassion, to be loyal to God's covenant with the Jewish people.

Rabbi Sid Schwarz, "Can Social Justice Save the American Jewish Soul?" Righteous Indignation: A Jewish Call for Justice, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008, http://www. rabbisid.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/social_justice_save_american_jewry_soul.pdf (accessed August 16, 2016)





Textsheets for Students

Jews and Social Justice: A Covenant of Responsibility (continued)

TALK IT OUT

- Rabbi Schwarz points to two purposes of the Jewish people: to spread righteousness and justice, and to be a holy nation. How have these two purposes of Judaism manifested in your own life?
- Do these two purposes seem opposed to each other? Could you think of a way that these two purposes could work together?

Reconvene the group and discuss the *chavruta* pairs' answers to these questions.

III. Letter to Abraham

In preparation for your social justice activity or trip, ask students to write a letter to Abraham. They should answer the following two questions (handout included in Student Handouts):

Dear Abraham,

- 1. When I am on this social justice trip/activity, I commit to following in your footsteps by . . .
- 2. After I complete this social justice trip/activity, I will continue to "extend the boundaries of righteousness and justice" by ...



Textsheets for Students Brit

Passover: Can I Be Jewish Without Community?

A. At the Passover seder, we read about the four children. The wicked child asks a question that does not seem so bad: "What is this service to you?" and yet he is answered harshly:

רָשָׁע מַה הוּא אוֹמֵר: מָה הָעֵבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֵם? לכם ולא לוֹ.

The wicked child — what does he say? "What is this service for you" — for you and not for him.

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Nurture Comm

וּלְפִי שָׁהוֹצִיא אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִן הַכְּלֵל כַּפַּר בַּעקּר. וָאַף אַתָּה הַקְהֵה אֵת שָׁנַיו וָאֱמַר־לוֹ בַּעַבוּר זֵה עָשָׂה ה׳ לִי בִּצֵאתִי מִמְצְרַיִם לי ולא לוֹ.

Since he excluded himself from the nation, he has spoken heresy. You shall thus sharply condemn him and say to him, "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I left Egypt" — "for me" and not for him; had he been there, he would not have been redeemed.

אָלּוּ הַיָּה שָׁם לֹא הַיַּה נָגָאַל:

B. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks explains that the wicked child is understood in ancient texts as someone who had chosen to abandon his people — and it is this separation from the fate of other Jews that earns him the Haggadah's wrath. Rabbi Sacks explains:

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Bo (5768): The Covenant of Fate:

Judaism is a communal faith. This is the "principle" that the rebellious child denies. Judaism is not addressed to individuals. Nor is it addressed to humanity as a whole. God chose a people, a nation, and asked them at Mount Sinai to pledge themselves, not only to Him but also to one another. *Emunah*, that key word of Judaism, usually translated as "faith," more properly means loyalty — to God, but also to the people He has chosen as the carriers of His mission, the witnesses to His presence. To be sure, Jews are sometimes exasperating. Rashi, commenting on Moses' charge to his successor Joshua, says that he told him: "Know that they [the people you are about to lead] are troublesome and contentious." But he also told him: "You are fortunate for you will have the privilege of leading the children of God Himself."

[A] Jew who does not say "You" when Jews or Israel are under attack, but "Me," has made a fundamental affirmation — to be part of a people, sharing in its responsibilities, identifying with its hopes and fears, celebrations and griefs. That is the covenant of fate and it still summons us today.

(Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Bo (5768): The Covenant of Fate, http://www.rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation-5768-bothe-covenant-of-fate/)





Textsheets for Students

Tzedakah: How Many People Must I Save?

1. Devarim (Deuteronomy)15:7-8, 10-11

ז כִּי יָהָיֶה בָךָּ אֶבִיוֹן מֵאַחַד אַחֵיךָ בָּאַחַד זַ שָׁעַרֵיךָ בָּאַרְצָךָ אֲשֶׁר ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךָ נֹתָן לַךְ לֹא תָאַמֵּץ אֵת לְבָבָךְ וִלֹא תִקְפֹּץ אֵת יָדָךְ מֵאָחִיךְ האביוֹן.

> ח כִּי-פַתֹחַ תִּפְתַח אֵת יַדְרָ לוֹ וְהַעֲבֵט ּתַעַבִּיטֵנּוּ דֵּי מַחָסֹרוֹ אֱשֵׁר יֵחְסַר לוֹ. . .

י נַתוֹן תִּתֵּן לוֹ וִלֹא יֵרַע לְבָבְךְ בִּתְתִּךְ לוֹ כִּי בּגְלַל הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה יְבָרֶכְךָ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךָ בִּכָל ַמַעֲשֶׂךְ וּבָכֹל מִשְׁלַח יַדֵּךְ.

יא כִּי לֹא יֵחַדַּל אֵבִיוֹן מִקּרֵב הָאָרֵץ עַל כֵּן אָנֹכִי מְצַוּךְ לֵאמר פַּתֹחַ תִּפְתַּח אֶת יַדְךְ לְאַחִיךְ ַלַעַנִיֻּךְ וּלָאֶבִינִךְ בִּאַרְצֵךְ.

7 If there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman.

8 Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs

10 Give to him readily and have no regrets when you do so, for in return the Lord your God will bless you in all your efforts and in all your undertakings.

11 For there will never cease to be needy ones in your land, which is why I command you: open your hand to the poor and needy kinsman in your land.

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Tzedakah: How Many People Must I Save? (continued)

3. Maimonides, Hilchot Matnot Aniyim, Chapter 10, Halachot 1-2

א חייבין אנו להיזהר במצות צדקה, יתר מכל מצוות עשה-שהצדקה סימן לצדיקי זרע אברהם אבינו, שנאמר "כי ידעתיו, למען אשר יצווה . . . " (בראשית יח,יט). ואין כיסא ישראל מתכונן ודת האמת עומדת אלא בצדקה, שנאמר "בצדקה, תיכונני״ (ישעיהו נד,יד); ואין ישראל נגאלין אלא בזכות הצדקה, שנאמר "ציון, במשפט תיפדה; ושביה, בצדקה" (ישעיהו א,כז).

ולעולם אין אדם מעני מן הצדקה, ואין 🗅 דבר רע ולא היזק נגלל בשביל הצדקה -שנאמר "והיה מעשה הצדקה, שלום" (ישעיהו לב,יז). 1 We are obligated to be careful with regard to the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* to a greater extent than all [other] positive commandments, because tzedakah is an identifying mark for a righteous person, a descendant of Abraham, our patriarch, as [Genesis 18:19] states: "I have known him, because he commands his children... to perform charity." The throne of Israel will not be established, nor will the true faith stand except through charity, as [Isaiah 54:14] states: "You shall be established through righteousness." And Israel will be redeemed solely through charity, as [ibid. 1:27] states: "Zion will be redeemed through judgment and those who return to her through charity."

2 A person will never become impoverished from giving charity. No harm nor damage will ever be caused because of charity, (Rabbi Sid Schwarz, "Can Social Justice Save the American Jewish Soul?" Righteous Indignation: A Jewish Call for Justice, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008, http://www.rabbisid.org/wp-content/ uploads/2013/02/social_justice_save_ american_jewry_soul.pdf (accessed August 16, 2016) as [ibid. 32:17] states: "And the deed of charity is peace." (Translation adapted from: http://www.chabad.org/ library/article_cdo/aid/986711/jewish/ Matnot-Aniyim-Chapter-10.htm.)





Textsheets for Students

Tzedakah: How Many People Must I Save? (continued)

4. Rambam Hilchot Matnot Aniyim Chapter 7, Halachot 1,5

א מצות עשה ליתן צדקה לעניים כפי מה שראוי לעני אם היתה יד הנותן משגת שנאמר פתוח תפתח את ידך לו ונאמר והחזקת בו גר ותושב וחי עמך ונאמר וחי :אחיך עמך

ד [ה] בא עני ושאל די מחסורו, ואין יד הנותן משגת--נותן לו כפי השגת ידו. וכמה: עד חמיש נכסיו, מצוה מן המובחר; ואחד מעשרה בנכסיו, בינוני; פחות מכאן, עין רעה. ולעולם אל ימנע אדם עצמו משלישית השקל בשנה; וכל הנותן פחות מזה, לא קיים מצוה. ואפילו עני המתפרנס מן הצדקה, חייב ליתן צדקה לאחר.

- 1 It is a positive commandment to give tzedakah to the poor according to what is appropriate for the poor person if this is within the financial capacity of the donor, as [Deuteronomy 15:5] states: "You shall certainly open your hand to him." [Leviticus 25:35] states: "You shall support him, a stranger and a resident and they shall live with you," and [ibid.:36] states: "And your brother shall live with you."
- 5 When a poor person comes and asks for his needs to be met and the giver does not have the financial capacity, he should give him according to his financial capacity. How much? The most desirable way of performing the *mitzvah* is to give one fifth of one's financial resources. Giving one tenth is an ordinary measure. Giving less [than that] reflects parsimony... Even a poor person who derives his livelihood from charity is obligated to give charity to another person. (Translation adapted from: http://www.chabad.org/library/article_ cdo/aid/986708/jewish/Matnot-Aniyim-Chapter-7.htm#footnote14a986708.)

5. Derech Eretz Zuta, 1:29

אם הטיבות הרבה, יהי בעיניך מעט, ואמור לא משלי הטיבותי אלא ממה שהטיבו לי.

If you did someone a great favor, regard it as small, and say, 'I did not do this good act with my own money; rather it was from the good that others have done for me."



Na'aseh v'Nishma

נעשה ונשמע

NA'ASEH V'NISHMAH

we will do and we will "hear" ("understand")

Try it—Learn by Doing

The Jewish approach includes taking an action without necessarily knowing why it's important or how it will work out, but trusting that it will lead to understanding.

SENSIBILITY CARD





On One Foot: Na'aseh v'Nishmah

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear" (understand) Exodus 24:7

"The heart follows the actions a person does." — Sefer HaChinuch Mitzvah 16

"Ruth replied, 'Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me." — Ruth 1:16-17



We will look at Na'aseh v'Nishmah in the context of:

- Learning to Trust and Trusting to Learn 23
- Ritual: What's the Point? 26
- Soul Session: Following in Ruth's Footsteps — Taking the Next Step 29
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Trusting In Your Work 34
- Textsheets for Students 35

Learning to Trust and Trusting to Learn

This Activity is Great For





· Beit Midrash

· Group Learning





Counseling





Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Trust Drive

Start your session by dividing students into pairs for a "trust drive."

As Jim Cain explains in "Find Something to Do":

Begin with partners of similar heights, in an open space with no obstacles, with one partner standing behind the other, both facing forward. The front 'driver' holds onto an imaginary steering wheel and closes their eyes. The 'backseat driver' eyes open, places their hands on the driver's shoulders and tells them, "I've got your back." The front driver controls the speed, while the rear driver provides information and direction (sort of a human GPS system), avoiding collisions with other drivers and fixed objects. After a few minutes, the front driver opens their eyes and the two participants exchange roles.

TALK IT OUT

- What words would you use to describe the experience of being the front driver?
- What kind of relationship did you need to have with the back driver in order to feel comfortable as the front driver?







II. A Deeper Dive

A. Receiving the Torah

Read together the description of Matan Torah — the Receiving of the Torah, on Mount Sinai. If your group is open to more text study, you may wish to read Exodus 19-20 together to get the full effect of the drama of the Revelation. If not, describe to students the awesome scene at Mount Sinai and then read together Shemot 24.

Shemot (Exodus) 24

ג וַיַּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וַיִּסְפֶּר לַעֲם אֶת כַּל דִּבְרֵי ה׳ וָאֵת כָּל הַמִּשִּׁפָּטִים וַיַּעַן כָּל הַעַם קוֹל אֱחַד וַיֹּאמָרוּ כַּל הַדְּבַרִים אֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר ה׳ נַעֲשֵׂה.

ד וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֵׁה אֵת כָּל דִּבְרֵי ה׳ וַיַּשָּׁכֵּם בַּבֹּקֵר וַיָּבֶן מִזְבֶּחַ תַּחַת הַהַר וּשְׁתֵּים עֲשְׂרֵה מַצְבַה ַלִשָּׁנִים עַשָּׂר שָׁבְטֵי יִשְּׂרָאֵל.

ז וַיָּקַח סֵפֶר הַבָּרִית וַיִּקְרַא בִּאַזְנֵי הַעָם וַיֹּאמְ־ רוּ כֹּל אֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר ה׳ נַעֲשֵׂה וְנָשָׁמָע.

- 3 And Moses came and recounted to the people all the Lord's words and the laws, and the people answered with a single voice and said, "all the words that the Lord has spoken we will do" (na'aseh).
- 4 And Moses wrote down all the Lord's words, and he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the tribes of Israel . . .
- 7 And [Moses] took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people, and they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear" (na'aseh v'nishmah).

(Translation adapted from Robert Alter, The Five Books of Moses)

- Ask students to compare the Israelites' response in verse 3 and verse 7 "naaseh" and "na'aseh v'nishmah". What does the extra word "v'nishmah" imply about how the Israelites will accept the Torah?
- Tell students that the phrase "na'aseh v'nishmah" is traditionally seen as the Jews accepting the Torah without knowing everything it contained - and that this was considered praiseworthy. Read the following Talmud text together.

B. The Glorious Secret of Na'aseh v'Nishmah

Shabbat 88a-b

דרש ר' סימאי בשעה שהקדימו ישראל נעשה לנשמע באו ששים ריבוא של מלאכי השרת לכל אחד ואחד מישראל קשרו לו שני כתרים אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע

Rabbi Simla lectured: When the Israelites gave precedence to 'we will do' over 'we will hear,' six hundred thousand ministering angels came and set two crowns upon each man of Israel, one as a reward for 'we will do,' and the other as a reward for 'we will hear'....



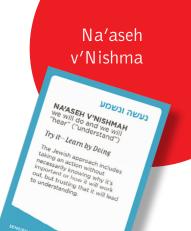
Shabbat 88a-b (continued)

אמר רבי אלעזר בשעה שהקדימו ישראל נעשה לנשמע יצתה בת קול ואמרה להן מי גילה לבני רז זה שמלאכי השרת משתמשין בו דכתיב (תהילים קג) ברכו ה' מלאכיו

גבורי כח עושי דברו לשמוע בקול דברו ברי־ שא עשי והדר לשמע א״ר חמא ברבי חנינא מ״ד (שיר השירים ב) כתפוח בעצי היער וגו׳ למה נמשלו ישראל לתפוח לומר לך מה תפוח זה פריו קודם לעליו אף ישראל הקדי־ מו נעשה לנשמע ההוא מינא דחזייה לרבא דקא מעיין בשמעתא ויתבה אצבעתא דידיה תותי כרעא וקא מייץ בהו וקא מבען אצבע־ תיה דמא א״ל עמא פזיזא דקדמיתו פומייכו לאודנייכו אכתי בפחזותייכו קיימיתו ברישא איבעי׳ לכו למשמע אי מציתו קבליתו ואי לא לא קבליתו א״ל אנן דסגינן בשלימותא כתיב בן (משלי יא) תומת ישרים תנחם הנך אינשי דסגן בעלילותא כתיב בהו (משלי יא) וסלף בוגדים ישדם:

R. Eleazar said: When the Israelites gave precedence to 'we will do' over 'we will hear,' a Heavenly Voice went forth and exclaimed to them, Who revealed to My children this secret, which is employed by the Ministering Angels ...?

There was a certain Sadducee who saw Raba engrossed in his studies while the finger[s] of his hand were under his feet, and he ground them down, so that his fingers spurted blood. 'You rash people,' he exclaimed, 'who gave precedence to your mouth over your ears: you still persist in your rashness. First you should have listened, if within your powers, accept; if not, you should not have accepted.' Said he to him, 'We who walked in integrity, of us it is written (Proverbs 11): "The integrity of the upright shall guide them." But of others, who walked in perversity, it is written (Proverbs 11): "but the perverseness of the treacherous shall destroy them."





- These texts praise the Israelites for saying Naaseh v'Nishmah and accepting the Torah before they heard everything that it contained. Do you think their action was praiseworthy?
- Think about the driving activity we did together at the beginning of this session. What does closing your eyes while someone drives you around, have to do with Na'aseh v'Nishmah?
- What kind of relationship do you need to have with someone in order to say Na'aseh v'Nishmah?

Reflective Questions

Students should write down their answers to the following reflective questions. If you wish, you can end the class here; or you may wish to then group students in pairs and give them a few minutes to discuss their reflections together.

- Have you ever had a Na'aseh v'Nishmah relationship with someone? Would you want to?
- How do you think the Jews were capable of having this Na'aseh v'Nishmah relationship with God?
- In your own relationship with God and Judaism, do you have a need for proofs and all the information before you sign on?
- What kind of relationship would you like to have with God and Judaism?







Ritual: What's the Point?

This Activity is Great For



· Group Learning





- **Holidays** · Beit Midrash
 - Passover
- Alternative Service
- Mindfulness

Big Ideas

I. Beginning the Conversation

Put a piece of *matzah* in the center of the table.

Ask participants:

- · Do you eat matzah on campus on Passover?
- If yes, what is it like to eat *matzah* on campus? If not, why not?
- What happens when you see another student on campus eating matzah?
- How is eating matzah on campus on Passover so much more than just eating a cracker?
- Jews have a lot of rituals. What is one word you would use to describe how you feel about Jewish rituals?

II. A Deeper Dive

A. 60-Second Debates

Before this session, write the following debate statements on separate sheets of paper, and then fold them and put them in a container.

Ask for two volunteers. One should stick his/her hand into the container and pull out a statement. Assign one volunteer to argue "for" and the other "against" this statement. Time them so that they each have only one minute to make their points:

- Jewish rituals are not important. What is important is how you feel.
- You should never do a Jewish ritual unless you know everything about it beforehand.
- Rituals are destructive. They let people feel righteous even when they are oppressing other people.
- · Keeping kosher is an outdated ritual.
- [Add whatever statements are relevant to your group and the time of year.]





Na'aseh v'Nishma

NA'ASEH V'NISHMAH

B. Text Study — Why Jewish Rituals?

Ask for a volunteer who can read the following selection in a dramatic fashion. In this text, the Sefer HaChinuch makes the case for why rituals are so important in Judaism:

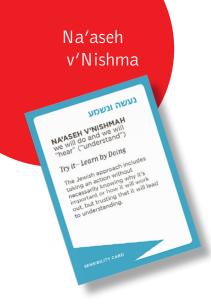
Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 16 (Outward actions have the power to shape character. The *mitzvot* are those actions which will guarantee the improvement of one's character.):

דע, כי האדם נפעל כפי פעולותיו, ולבו וכל מחשבותיו תמיד אחר מעשיו שהוא עוסק בהם. אם טוב ואם רע. ואפילו רשע גמור בלבבו וכל יצר מחשבות לבו רק רע כל היום. אם יערה רוחו וישים השתדלותו ועסקו בהתמדה בתורה ובמצוות, ואפילו שלא לשם שמים, מיד ינטה אל הטוב, ומתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה, ובכוח מעשיו ימית היצר הרע, כי אחרי הפעולות נמשכים הלבבות. ואפילו אם יהיה אדם צדיק גמור ולבבו ישר ותמים, חפץ בתורה ובמצוות, אם יעסוק תמיד בדברים של דופי - דרך משל, שהכריחו המלך ומינהו באומנות רעה, באמת אם כל עסקו תמיד כל היום באותה אומנות - ישוב בזמן מן הזמנים מצדקת לבו להיות רשע גמור. כי ידוע הדבר ואמת. שכל אדם נפעל כפי פעולותיו.

A person is influenced by his actions, and one's heart and thoughts follow the acts he or she does whether they are good or bad. Even one who is a completely wicked person, who constantly thinks of doing bad deeds, if s/he is inspired for the better and puts time into fulfilling Torah and mitzvot, even if it is not for the sake of Heaven, s/he will turn to the good and he will overcome his/her Evil Inclination through the power of these actions, since the heart follows the actions a person does. Similarly, even if one is a completely righteous person who desires Torah and mitzvot but always involves himself or herself in bad deeds . . . after a certain amount of time s/he will become a wicked person, for we know, and it is true, that every person is affected by his or her actions.

(Credit: The Mitzvot and Why They Are Detailed, Morasha Syllabus, http://www.morashasyllabus.com/class/The%20Mitzvot.pdf, p. 3.)

- According to the Sefer HaChinuch, what is the point of rituals and mitzvot (commandments)?
- Do you agree that ultimately that "the heart follows the actions a person does"? Is it what you do that determines what kind of person you are?



C. Step Into the Circle Discussion

Invite the group to stand in a circle.

Ask:

Have you ever had a time when a Jewish festival, object, or practice had an impact on you? Describe what happened.

- Anyone who would like to share an answer should step into the middle of the circle.
- If many people step forward, after each person has said their piece they step back to join the rest of the group.
- If others want to comment, they should step forward into the middle of the circle at any point.
- The discussion ends when everyone has stepped back to join the rest of the group.

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Year of Living Jewishly

Abigail Pogrebin is a journalist who decided to embark on an experiment: she was going to celebrate every Jewish holiday - major and minor, famous and obscure - for a full year. Watch this video as she begins her "year of living Jewishly": https://vimeo.com/104432639



- Have you ever tried out a Jewish holiday or ritual that you had never done before? What was the experience like?
- Is there a Jewish holiday or ritual that would like to try? What would you need in order to give it a go?

Soul Session:

Following In the Footsteps of Ruth Taking the Next Step

Na'aseh v'Nishma

נעשה ונשמע

NA'ASEH V'NISHMAH

This Activity is Great For







Service

· Group Learning Shavuot





I. Beginning the Conversation

Soul sessions are based on the work of Parker Palmer, specifically his development of the "circle of trust" and his emphasis on drawing out the soul and giving it a safe space. In these soul sessions, we will use a piece of text or artwork connected to a sensibility, and give ourselves the time and safe space to fully experience the text and discover our relationship to it. Our goals in these sessions are: (1) to get in touch with the wisdom that we have within; (2) to have real, meaningful encounters with Jewish ideas; and (3) to create a welcoming community that nurtures true, honest and kind communication.

For more information about Parker Palmer, the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the principles and procedures of Circles of Trust, see http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/.

Note to Facilitator: As the facilitator, your role is to help the circle participants create a secure space where they can meaningfully encounter themselves, each other and the text. As much as possible, try to facilitate and not teach: you should be involved in the discussions, journaling and small discussions like other members of the group. Give the group the space and trust to proceed without telling them what they should think or how they should interpret.







II. A Deeper Dive

A. How to conduct a soul session:

- 1. Set up chairs in a circle, where everyone can see each other.
- 2. Welcome students to the soul session, and explain what a soul session/circle of trust is. You may wish to distribute the Courage and Renewal touchstones, and read each touchstone out loud, in order to set the stage for the work that the group will do together. (http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/CourageRenewal-Circle-of-Trust-Touchstones-(c)2015.pdf)
- 3. Explain that the principle of double confidentiality will apply to this session: What other people mention in this soul session, and in the breakout sessions, is totally confidential. You may not tell anyone what someone else said in this session. In addition, if you see participants from this soul session after the session has concluded, you may not ask them about what they talked about here, unless they specifically invite you to do so.
- 4. Introduce the text: Tell students that we traditionally read the Book of Ruth on the holiday of Shavuot. In our session today, it does not matter whether you have read the Book of Ruth 100 times or if this is your first encounter with the book. What we will do, is read it as if it is the first time, and create the space and atmosphere to have a deep and meaningful personal encounter with the text.
- 5. Ask for two volunteers to read the text out loud, one after the other, so that we can hear the text in two different voices. (See below for text)
- 6. Invite members of the circle to comment on what resonates for them in the piece they just read. You should be involved as a member of the circle, but don't rush to fill the silence — give participants the time and space to comment and reflect. Encourage participants to speak into the middle of the circle, rather than to each other.
- 7. Journaling: Before the session, write out the following questions or any other questions you would like to pose on a large sheet of paper. At this point in the session, post the paper on the wall and read the questions out loud.
- How do you think Ruth is able to make her decision when there is so much that is unknown and scary?
- · Are you more of an Orpah, or a Ruth?
- · Have you ever had a time when you needed to make a big decision? How did it work out? What advice would you give yourself if you had to do it all over again?
- · What are some of the values that are most important to you when taking your next steps? How much information do you need before you leap?

Invite students to spend 10 minutes writing in their journal, or if this session occurs on Shabbat or a holiday, silently reflecting on these questions. They should find a place to sit comfortably, and take their time. Their written reflections will be kept private unless they choose to reveal them.

8. Small Group Discussion: Bring the group back together and explain that you will now separate them into groups of two or three (depending on how much time you have carved out for this session, and your space constraints). Each group will find someplace to gather, and then each individual in the group will have 10 minutes to talk about their reflections on the text and questions, or whatever thoughts the text has prompted in them. Each group should appoint a timekeeper to raise his or her hand when the 10 minutes are up. After each member of the group has had his or her ten minutes, they should return to the circle.



Ground rules for the breakout groups:

- a. Sit in silence and give the individual who is speaking, the space and time to talk at his or her own pace. Do not jump in with questions or comments. Hold the space for them to talk. If they take all 10 minutes to talk, then your job is simply to listen. If they decide they do not want to talk at all, sit in silence with them for 10 minutes. If they have finished what they have to say, and they invite questions before the 10 minutes are up, ask brief, open and honest questions — without introducing your own opinion or offering advice.
- b. Do not give advice your job is not to tell the others what they should do. Your job is to help create a safe, open space where honest, soulful reflection can occur.
- c. The rule of double confidentiality applies. Members of the group may not tell anyone else what they heard in this conversation. In addition, if you see a member of your group later on, you may not ask them about what they talked about, unless they specifically invite you to do so.
- 9. Whole Group Reflection: When everyone returns to the circle, invite participants to share with the whole group something they have discovered (about themselves only - no talking about what others had said) through their journaling and small group discussions, or to reflect on the soul session and its process of reflection and building of safe space. Allow students to sit in silence to reflect; do not rush to close.
- 10. Closing: Thank students for their time and for creating a welcoming, honest, safe space. Remind them again that double confidentiality applies. Tell students that you are always happy to speak with them about some of the issues that have come up for them in this session, but that because of double confidentiality you will not refer back to what they said unless they explicitly and proactively invite you to do so (make sure to let them know that, so no misunderstandings occur).



B. Text study

Ruth Chapter 1

א וַיְהִי, בִּימֵי שְׁפֹּט הַשּׁפְּטִים, וַיְהִי רָעָב, בָּאָרֶץ; וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֶחֶם יְהוּדָה, לָגוּר בִּשְׂדֵי מוֹאָב הוּא וְאִשָׁתּוֹ, וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו.

ב וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִימֶלֶךְ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נָעֲמִי וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי בָנָיו מַחְלוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן, אֶפְרָתִים מִבֵּית לֶחֶם, יִהוּדַה; וַיָּבֹאוּ שָׁדֵי מוֹאָב, וַיַּהִיוּ שָׁם.

ָג וַיָּמָת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ, אִישׁ נָעֲמִי; וַתִּשָּׁאֵר הִיא, וּשָׁנֵי בָנֵיהָ.

ד וַיִּשְׂאוּ לָהֶם, נָשִׁים מֹאֲבִיּוֹת שֵׁם הָאַחַת עָרְפָּה, וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית רוּת; וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם, כְּעֶשֶׂר שׁנִים.

- 1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.
- 2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.
- **3** Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.
- **4** They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

ה וַיָּמֶתוּ גַם שְׁנֵיהֶם, מַחְלוֹן וְכְלְיוֹן; וַתִּשָּׁאֵר, הָאִשָּׁה, מִשְׁנֵי ילדיה, וּמאישׁהּ.

וּ וַתָּקֶם הִיא וְכַלֹּתֶיהָ, וַתָּשָׁב מִשְּׁדֵי מוֹאָב: כִּי שָׁמְעָה, בִּשְׂדֵה מוֹאָב כִּי פָקָד יָהוָה אָת עֲמוֹ, לֶתֵת לֶהָם לָחֶם.

זַ וַתַּצֵא, מִן הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה שָּׁמָה, וּשְׁתֵּי כַלּוֹתֶיהָ, עִמְּהּ; וּתַּצֵא, מִן הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה שָׁמָה, וּשְׁתֵּי כַלּוֹתֶיהָ, עִמְּהּ; וַתַּלַכְנָה בַּדֵּרֵךְ, לָשׁוּב אֵל אֵרֵץ יִהוּדָה.

 חַ וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֲמִי, לִשְׁתֵּי כַלֹּעֶיהָ, לֵכְנָה שֹׁבְנָה, אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אָמָהּ; יעשה (יַעַשׂ) ה׳ עִמֶּכֶם חֶסֶד, כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם עם המתים ועמדי.

ָט יִתֵּן ה׳, לָכֶם, וּמְצֶאן ֶ מְנוּחָה, אִשָּׁה בֵּית אִישָׁהּ; וַתִּשַּׁק לָהֶן, וַתִּשֵּׁאנָה קוֹלָן וַתִּבְכֵּינָה.

ותאמרנה לה: כי אתר נשוב, לעמר.

יא וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֲמִי שֹׁבְנָה בְנֹתַי, לָמֶה תֵלַכְנָה עִמִּי: הַעוֹד לִי בָנִים בְּמֵעַי, וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לַאֲנָשִׁים. **5** Both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

6 When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there.

7 With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

8 Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me.

9 May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud

10 And they said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

11 But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands?

12 Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have

Ruth Chapter 1 (continued)

יב שֹבְנָה בִנֹתַי לֵכְן, כִּי זָקַנִתִּי מִהִיוֹת לְאִישׁ: כִּי אַמַרְתִּי, יֵשׁ לִי תִקְוַה גַּם הַיִיתִי הַלַּיִלַה ַלְאִישׁ, וְגַם יַלַדְתִּי בַנִים.

יג הַלָהֵן תִּשַּׂבּרְנָה, עַד אֲשֵׁר יִגְדַּלוּ, הַלָּהֵן תַעָגֵנָה, לְבַלְתִּי הֵיוֹת לְאִישׁ; אַל בִּנֹתַי, כִּי מַר ַלִי מָאֹד מִכֶּם כִּי יָצְאָה בִי, יַד ה׳.

יד וַתִּשֵּׁנָה קוֹלָן, וַתִּבְכֵּינָה עוֹד; וַתִּשַּׁק עָרְפָּה ַלַחֱמוֹתָהּ, וְרוּת דַּבְקָה בַּהּ.

טוּ וַתֹּאמֶר, הָנֵּה שָׁבָּה יִבְמְתֶּךְ, אֱל עַמַּהּ, וְאֱל אַלֹהֵיהָ; שׁוּבִי, אַחֲרֵי יִבְמִתַּךְ.

טז וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת אַל תִּפְגִּעִי בִי, לְעַזְבֵךְ לַשׁוּב מַאַחַרָיִךְ: כִּי אֵל אֲשֵׁר תַּלְכִי אֱלֵךְ, וּבַאֲשֵׁר תַּלִינִי אַלִין עַמֶּךְ עַמִּי, וֵאלֹקַיִךְ אֱלֹקַי.

יז בַּאַשֵּׁר תַּמוּתִי אַמוּת, וְשַׁם אַקַּבֵּר; כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה ה׳ לִי, וְכֹה יוֹסִיף כִּי הַמָּוֶת, יַפְּרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵךְ. another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—

- 13 Would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has turned against me!"
- 14 At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.
- 15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."
- 16 But Ruth replied, "Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.
- 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."

Na'aseh v'Nishma

נעשה ונשמע NA'ASEH V'NISHMAH Try it-Learn by Doing





Just for Hillel Professionals: Trusting in Your Work

This Activity is Great For



I. Beginning the Conversation

As Hillel professionals, we invest so much in our students, teaching them and caring about them. Sometimes we may feel that we are throwing away our efforts, and that nothing is taking hold. At those times, it may be helpful to hold onto the Na'aseh v'Nishmah sensibility — we do our best, and have faith that it will yield returns.

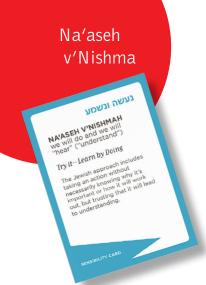
Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of na'aseh v'nishmah into your teaching and relationships with students:

- 1. When do you feel that your teaching and work with students is successful?
- 2. Have you ever thought that you did not have an impact with your teaching or work, and find out later that you did?
- 3. What are some tools you could use to bolster yourself when you work hard, but you do not see the effects?
- 4. Think about some of your role models. Have you let them know how much they have meant in your life?









Trusting to Learn and Learning to Trust

Shemot (Exodus) 24

ג וַיַבֹא מֹשֶׁה וַיִּסַפֵּר לַעָם אֵת כַּל דְּבָרֵי ה׳ ואת כּל המשׁפּטים ויַען כּל העם קוֹל אחד וַיֹּאמָרוּ כָּל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר ה' נַעֲשֵׂה.

ד וַיִּכָתֹב משֵׁה אֶת כַּל דִּבְרֵי ה׳ וַיַּשְׁכֵּם בַּבּקֵר וַיָּבֵן מִזְבֵּחַ תַּחַת הָהַר וּשָׁתֵּים עֲשָׂרֵה מַצֶּבָה לשנים עשר שבטי ישראל.

ז וַיִּקַח סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם וַיֹּאמְ־ רוּ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר דְּבֵּר ה׳ נַעֲשֶׂה וְנָשְׁמַע.

- 3 And Moses came and recounted to the people all the Lord's words and the laws, and the people answered with a single voice and said, "all the words that the Lord has spoken we will do" (na'aseh).
- 4 And Moses wrote down all the Lord's words, and he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the tribes of Israel ...
- 7 And [Moses] took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people, and they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear" (na'aseh v'nishmah).

(Translation adapted from Robert Alter, The Five Books of Moses)

Shabbat 88a-b

דרש ר' סימאי בשעה שהקדימו ישראל נעשה לנשמע באו ששים ריבוא של מלאכי השרת לכל אחד ואחד מישראל קשרו לו שני כתרים אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע

אמר רבי אלעזר בשעה שהקדימו ישראל נעשה לנשמע יצתה בת קול ואמרה להן מי גילה לבני רז זה שמלאכי השרת משתמשין בו דכתיב (תהילים קג) ברכו ה' מלאכיו

גבורי כח עושי דברו לשמוע בקול דברו ברישא עשי והדר לשמע א״ר חמא ברבי חנינא מ״ד (שיר השירים ב) כתפוח בעצי היער וגו׳ למה נמשלו ישראל לתפוח לומר לך מה תפוח זה פריו קודם לעליו אף ישראל הקדימו נעשה לנשמע ההוא מינא דחזייה לרבא דקא מעיין בשמעתא ויתבה אצבעתא דידיה תותי כרעא וקא מייץ בהו וקא מבען אצבעתיה דמא א״ל עמא פזיזא דקדמיתו פומייכו לאודנייכו אכתי בפחזותייכו קיימיתו ברישא איבעי׳ לכו למשמע אי מציתו קבליתו ואי לא לא קבליתו א״ל אנן דסגינן בשלי־ מותא כתיב בן (משלי יא) תומת ישרים תנחם הנך אינשי דסגן בעלילותא כתיב בהו (משלי יא) וסלף בוגדים ישדם: Rabbi Simla lectured: When the Israelites gave precedence to 'we will do' over 'we will hear,' six hundred thousand ministering angels came and set two crowns upon each man of Israel, one as a reward for 'we will do,' and the other as a reward for 'we will hear'....

R. Eleazar said: When the Israelites gave precedence to 'we will do' over 'we will hear,' a Heavenly Voice went forth and exclaimed to them, Who revealed to My children this secret, which is employed by the Ministering Angels ...?

There was a certain Sadducee who saw Raba engrossed in his studies while the finger[s] of his hand were under his feet, and he ground them down, so that his fingers spurted blood. 'You rash people,' he exclaimed, 'who gave precedence to your mouth over your ears: you still persist in your rashness. First you should have listened, if within your powers, accept; if not, you should not have accepted.' Said he to him, 'We who walked in integrity, of us it is written (Proverbs 11): "The integrity of the upright shall guide them." But of others, who walked in perversity, it is written (Proverbs 11): "but the perverseness of the treacherous shall destroy them."



Ritual: What's the Point?

Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 16 (Outward actions have the power to shape character. The mitzvot are those actions which will guarantee the improvement of one's character.):

דע, כי האדם נפעל כפי פעולותיו, ולבו וכל מחשבותיו תמיד אחר מעשיו שהוא עוסק בהם, אם טוב ואם רע. ואפילו רשע גמור בלבבו וכל יצר מחשבות לבו רק רע כל היום, אם יערה רוחו וישים השתדלותו ועסקו בהתמדה בתורה ובמצוות, ואפילו שלא לשם שמים, מיד ינטה אל הטוב, ומתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה, ובכוח מעשיו ימית היצר הרע, כי אחרי הפעולות נמשכים הלבבות. ואפילו אם יהיה אדם צדיק גמור ולבבו ישר ותמים, חפץ בתורה ובמצוות, אם יעסוק תמיד בדברים של דופי - דרך משל, שהכריחו המלך ומינהו באומנות רעה, באמת אם כל עסקו תמיד כל היום באותה אומנות - ישוב בזמן מן הזמנים מצדקת לבו להיות רשע גמור. כי ידוע הדבר ואמת, שכל אדם נפעל כפי פעולותיו.

A person is influenced by his actions, and one's heart and thoughts follow the acts he or she does whether they are good or bad. Even one who is a completely wicked person, who constantly thinks of doing bad deeds, if s/he is inspired for the better and puts time into fulfilling Torah and mitzvot, even if it is not for the sake of Heaven, s/he will turn to the good and he will overcome his/her Evil Inclination through the power of these actions, since the heart follows the actions a person does. Similarly, even if one is a completely righteous person who desires *Torah* and *mitzvot* but always involves himself or herself in bad deeds ... after a certain amount of time s/he will become a wicked person, for we know, and it is true, that every person is affected by his or her actions.

(Credit: The Mitzvot and Why They Are Detailed, Morasha Syllabus, http://www.morashasyllabus.com/class/The%20Mitzvot.pdf, p. 3.)





Soul Session: Following in the Footsteps of Ruth — Taking the Next Step

Ruth Chapter 1

א ויהי, בימי שפט השפטים, ויהי רעב, בַּאַרֵץ; וַיֵּלֵךְ אִישׁ מִבֶּית לֵחֶם יָהוּדַה, לַגוּר בְּשָׂדֵי מוֹאַב הוּא וְאִשָּׁתּוֹ, וּשָׁנֵי בַנַיו.

ב וָשֶׁם הַאִישׁ אֱלִימֵלֶךְ וָשֶׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נַעֲמִי וָשֶׁם בַּ שׁני בניו מחלוֹן וכליוֹן, אפרתים מבּית לחֵם, יָהוּדַה; וַיַּבֹאוּ שָּׁדֵי מוֹאַב, וַיָּהִיוּ שֶׁם.

ָג וַיַּמַת אֵלִימֵלֶךְ, אִישׁ נַעֲמִי; וַתִּשַּׁאֵר הִיא, וּשָׁנֵי בָנֵיהָ.

ד וַיִּשָּׁאוּ לַהֶּם, נַשִּׁים מֹאֲבִיּוֹת שֶׁם הַאַחַת עַרְפָּה, וִשֵּׁם הַשָּׁנִית רוּת; וַיֵּשָׁבוּ שָׁם, כְּעֲשֵׂר שַׁנִים.

1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.

2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

3 Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.

4 They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

הַ וַיַּמִתוּ גַם שִׁנִיהֵם, מַחְלוֹן וְכְלִיוֹן; וַתִּשַּׁאֵר, הַאִּשָּׁה, מִשְׁנֵי יַלדִיה, וּמַאִישׁהּ. 5 Both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

וּ וַתַּקָם הִיא וְכַלֹּתֵיהַ, וַתַּשָּׁב מִשָּׁדֵי מוֹאַב: כִּי שָׁמְעָה, בְּשָּׁדֵה מוֹאַב כִּי פַקַד יִהוַה אֵת עַמוֹ, לַתֵּת לַהֶם לַחֶם. 6 When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there.

ז ותצא, מן המקום אשר היתה שמה, ושתי כלותיה, עמה; וַתַּלַכִנָה בַדֵּרֵךְ, לָשׁוּב אֵל אֵרֵץ יִהוּדָה.

7 With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

ח וַתֹּאמֶר נַעֲמִי, לְשָׁתֵּי כַלֹּתֵיהַ, לֵכְנַה שַּׁבְנַה, אֲשָׁה לְבֵית אָמַהּ; יעשה (יַעַשׂ) ה׳ עִמַּכֶם חֱסֶד, כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֵם עִם הַמֵּתִים וְעִמַּדִי.

8 Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me.

ָט יָתֶן ה׳, לַכֶם, וּמְצֵאן, מְנוּחָה, אָשָּׁה בֵּית אִישָׁהּ; וַתִּשַּׁק לַהֶן, וַתִּשָּׂאנַה קוֹלַן וַתִּבְכֵּינַה.

9 May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud

יַוַתֹּאמַרְנָה לַּהּ: כִּי אָתַּךְ נַשׁוּב, לְעַמֶּךְ.

10 And they said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

יא וַתֹּאמֶר נַעֲמִי שֹׁבְנַה בִנֹתַי, לַמַּה תֵלַכְנַה עִמִּי: הַעוֹד לִי בנים בּמעי, והיוּ לכם לאנשים.

> 11 But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands?

Soul Session: Following in the Footsteps of Ruth — Taking the Next Step (continued)

Ruth Chapter 1 (continued)

יב שֹבְנָה בְנֹתֵי לֵכְן, כִּי זַקַנְתִּי מִהְיוֹת לְאִישׁ: כִּי אַמַרְתִּי, יֵשׁ לִי תִקְוַה גַּם הַיִיתִי הַלַּיִלַה ָלְאִישׁ, וְגַם יַלַדְתִּי בָנִים.

יג הַלַהֶן תַּשַּׂבֵּרְנַה, עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדַּלוּ, הַלַהַן ֹתַעַגֵנַה, לְבַלְתִּי הֵיוֹת לְאִישׁ; אַל בִּנֹתַי, כִּי מַר ַלִי מָאֹד מִכֶּם כִּי יָצָאָה בִי, יַד ה׳.

יד וַתִּשֶּׁנָה קוֹלַן, וַתִּבְכֵּינָה עוֹד; וַתִּשָּׁק עַרְפַּה לַחֲמוֹתָהּ, וְרוּת דָּבִקָּה בָּהּ.

טו וַתֹּאמֶר, הָנֵּה שָׁבַה יִבְמִתֶּךְ, אֱל עַמַּהּ, וְאֱל ָאֱלֹהֶיהָ; שׁוּבִי, אַחֲרֵי יִבְמְתֵּךְ.

טז וַתֹּאמֵר רוּת אַל תִּפְגָּעִי בִי, לְעַזְבֵּךְ לַשוּב מַאַחֶרַיִּךְ: כִּי אֵל אֲשֶׁר תַּלְכִי אֶלֶךְ, וּבַאֲשֶׁר ּתָלִינִי אָלִין עַמֵּךְ עַמִּי, וֵאלֹקַיִךְ אֱלֹקָי.

יז בַּאַשֵּׁר תַּמוּתִי אַמוּת, וְשַׁם אַקַּבֵּר; כֹּה יַעֲשֵׂה ה׳ לִי, וְכֹה יוֹסִיף כִּי הַמָּוֵת, יַפְּרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵךְ. 12 Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons-

13 Would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has turned against me!"

14 At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

16 But Ruth replied, "Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.

17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."

Na'aseh v'Nishma

נעשה ונשמע NA'ASEH V'NISHMAH



Lech



Lech Lecha

LECH LECHA
take yourself and go

Take the Next Step
The Jewish approach promotes
destination, a journey, not a

Take action and

On One Foot: Lech Lecha

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"And God said to Abram, 'Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.'" — $Breishit\ 12:1-2$

"Abram will be 'shown' to himself and will become visible to others." — Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, *Meshech Chochmah* on *Breishit* Chapter 12

"During [these] seven days you should live in (*sukkot*). Everyone included in Israel should live in *sukkot*. This is so that future generations will know that I had the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt." — *VaYikra* 23:42-43

"The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom." — Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays, New York: Touchstone, 1988, p. 101

The Implications

We will look at Lech Lecha in the context of:

- Lech Lecha: Dare Greatly 38
- Welcome to College: Dive On In! 42
- Graduation Havdalah 46
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Try Something New 50
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Lech Lecha יר לך LECH LECHA

Lech Lecha: Dare Greatly

This Activity is Great For





 Rosh Chodesh · Group Learning



Coffee Dates



Self-Worth



Identity & Relationships

Group Dynamics

Student Leaders

Big Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies:

Printouts of Amy Poehler and Brene Brown Zen Comics strips, large sheet of paper, tape, pens, comic template handout, and colored pencils.

Amy Poehler: http://zenpencils.com/comic/157-amy-poehler-great-people-do-things-before-theyre-ready/

Brene Brown: http://zenpencils.com/comic/139-brene-brown-the-woman-in-the-arena/

"Words by Amy Poehler/Brené Brown. Illustrated by Gavin Aung Than. www.zenpencils.com"

Print out and hang up the Amy Poehler and Brene Brown comic strips on the walls (you may wish to cut out each frame and tape to the wall so the students will have to walk all around the room), and have students walk around the room and read the comics. Following the last page of the comic, hang up a large sheet of paper with pens nearby, with the question: "When did you dare greatly?" Students should write their answers on the paper, and read others' responses.



II. A Deeper Dive

Read together Breishit (Genesis) 12:1-5, when God tells Abram (before he becomes Abraham) to leave everything he has ever known and go to a new land.

א ויֹאמֵר ה׳ אֵל אַבָּרָם לֵךְ לְךָּ מֶאַרְצְךָּ וּמְמּוֹלַדְתָּךָ וּמְבֶּית אַבִיךָּ אֵל הַאַרֵץ אֲשֶׁר אַרִאֶּךָ. 1 And God said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

ַ וִאֵעשִׂךְ לִגוֹי גָּדוֹל וַאֲבָרֵכָךְ וַאֲגַדְּלָה שְׁמֵךְ וֵהְיֵה בְּרָכָה. 2 I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing.

ג וַאַבָּרְכָה מִבָּרְכֵיךְ וּמִקַלֵּלְךְּ אָאֹר וִנְבַּרְכוּ בִּךְּ כֹּל מִשָּׁפָּחֹת הָאֱדָמָה.

3 I will bless those who bless you And curse him that curses you; And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you."

דֹ וַיֵּלֵךְ אַבָּרָם כַּאֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר אֵלָיו ה׳ וַיֵּלֵךְ אָתּוֹ לוֹט וָאַבְרָם בֵּן חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשָׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בָּצֵאתוֹ מֵחָרָן.

4 Abram went forth as the Lord had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

הַ וַיָּקַח אַבָרַם אַת שַׂרַי אָשָׁתּוֹ וְאֵת לוֹט בָּן אָחִיו וָאֵת כָּל רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֵׁר רָכָשׁוּ וָאֵת הַנֵּפֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר עֲשׂוּ בָחַרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לַלֵּכֶת אַרְצָה כִּנַעַן ַוַיָּבאוּ אַרְצָה כָּנָעַן.

5 Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. And they arrived in the land of Canaan.

Translation adapted from http://www.taggedtanakh.org/Chapter/Index/ english-Gen-12.

TALK IT OUT

- Did you find it difficult to leave home when you started college?

Lech Lecha





Now read together the following text from Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk's (1843-1926) commentary on the Torah, Meshech Chochmah. http://www.alexisrael.org/#!lech-lecha---abrahams-journey/cfyu

Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, Meshech Chochmah on Breishit 12:

אל הארץ אשר אראך: יתכן לפרש כי צווהו לילך לארץ מקום המיועד לעבודה . . . ושם יפרסם אלקות ויקדיש שמו . . . ויראה את הכחות הטמונים בסתר לבבו אשר מצא נאמן לפניו. וזה שאמר "אראך" פועל יוצא שיראה את הטמון בלב אברהם לאחרים . . . והנה לפי זה אברהם יתראה ויהיה הנראה לאחרים.

To the land which I will show you: We might suggest that Abram was commanded to go to the place earmarked for divine service... there he was to publicize the idea of God and sanctify His name... and demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart and his commitment to God. This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you". It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart.... thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself and will become visible to others.

Note to Facilitator: In this text, the Meshech Chochmah understands the command for Abram to leave everything he has ever known, and go to a new place as an opportunity for Abram to discover for himself, and show to the world, what he is truly capable of doing. Abram will no longer just have the potential; now he will activate "that which hitherto lay hidden in [his] heart."

This is an important concept in Jewish thought: that we are given opportunities to actualize our potential and show to ourselves and others the incredible things of which we are capable. Otherwise, we might never know what we are capable of doing.

Discuss this text with students, asking them when they have confronted situations when they had to actualize who they truly are. Ask them to compare the Meshech Chochmah with the Amy Poehler and Brene Brown comics they read in the beginning of the session.

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

The following activity would be good for a Rosh Chodesh group, or a group of students who are artistic/creative. In the Amy Poehler and Brene Brown comics, the artist took the women's words and illustrated them with his own

thoughts of how they play out in life. In this activity, challenge students to do the same with the words of the Meshech Chochmah. They should illustrate the words of the Meshech Chochmah using their own life — either something they have done before, or something they wish to do.

Give students colored pencils and the comic template below, and give them time to apply the words of the *Meshech* Chochmah by illustrating the comic. When done, ask students to hang up their work (if they are willing to share what they have created), and invite everyone to walk around and view the comics. Alternatively, ask for volunteers to share their comic and explain what they illustrated.



This is the meaning Abram was to demonstrate the potential which Lecha of the phrase "which I lay latent in his heart... will show you". LECH LECHA take yourself and go It means that God will exhibit publicly that which thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart... and will become visible to others.

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Lech Lecha של לך LECH LECHA Take the Next Step

Welcome to College: Dive on In!

This Activity is Great For



Learning



Pastoral • Group Learning Counseling



Academic Calendar







Identity & Relationships

• Welcome Week

Student Leaders

This is an especially good session for the beginning of the school year.

Suggested setting: In a *sukkah*, or as part of a *sukkah* building or decorating activity.

I. Beginning the Conversation

Walking and Talking

- Ask students to find someone they don't know in the group, and take a three-minute stroll with them and try to find three things they have in common with that person.
- Call "switch" after 3 minutes, and tell students to find someone else they don't know well with whom to stroll and find three commonalities.

TALK IT OUT

- Now that we are at the beginning of the school year, what are some things that you might like to do this year —





II. A Deeper Dive

Depending on your audience, either read this source together or summarize for students: According to the Torah, we are commanded to sit in the sukkah on the holiday of Sukkot because we lived in huts in the wilderness after God saved us from Egypt.

VaYikra (Leviticus) 23

לט אַרְ בַּחֵמִשָּׁה עַשָּׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֵשׁ הַשָּׁבִיעִי בַּאַסִפְּכֵם אֶת תִּבוּאַת הַאַרֵץ תַּחֹגוּ אֶת חַג ה׳ שָׁבָעַת יַמִים בַּיּוֹם הַרָאשׁוֹן שַׁבַּתוֹן וּבַיּוֹם ַהַשָּׁמִינִי שַׁבַּתוֹן.

מ וּלְקַחָתָּם לַכָם בַּיּוֹם הַרָאשׁוֹן פָּרִי עֵץ הַדַּר ַכַּפּת תִּמָרִים וַעֲנַף עֵץ עַבת וְעַרְבֵי נַחַל וּשְׁמַ־ חַתֵּם לִפְנֵי ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיכֵם שָׁבְעַת יָמִים.

מא וְחַגֹּתֵם אֹתוֹ חַג לַה׳ שָׁבְעַת יַמִּים בַּשַּׁנַה חַקָּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בַּחֹדֵשׁ הַשָּׁבִיעִי תַּחֹגוּ אֹתוֹ.

מב בַּסִכֹּת תֵּשָׁבוּ שָׁבְעַת יַמִים כַּל הַאֶּזְרַח בַּיִשָּׁרָאֵל יֵשָׁבוּ בַּסִּכֹּת.

מג לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דרֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בַּסִּכּוֹת הוֹשַּבְתִּי אָת בָּנֵי יִשָּׂרָאֵל בָּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתַם מֵאֶרֵץ מִצְרַיִם אַנִי ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיכֶם.

39 On the 15th of the seventh month, when you harvest the land's grain, you shall celebrate a festival to God for seven days. The first day shall be a day of rest, and the eighth day shall be a day of rest.

40 On the first day, you must take for yourself a fruit of the citron tree, an unopened palm frond, myrtle branches, and willows [that grow near] the brook. You shall rejoice before God for seven days.

41 During these seven days each year, you shall celebrate to God. It is an eternal law for all generations that you celebrate Ethis festival] in the seventh month.

42 During [these] seven days you should live in thatched huts (sukkot). Everyone included in Israel should live in such thatched huts (sukkot).

43 This is so that future generations will know that I had the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt. I am God your Lord.

Translation adapted from Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, A Living *Torah*, http://bible.ort.org/books/ pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&B00K= 3&CHAPTER=23

Ask students: In the Torah, God does so many miracles for us. Why have a whole holiday to commemorate sitting in huts? What was so special about living in huts for 40 years?

Note: There are many possible answers to this question. In this session, we will look at Rabbi Yitz Greenberg's answer as a way to help students think security and insecurity, in their college years.

Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, in his book The Jewish Way, explains the significance of the commandment to dwell in the sukkah. As you read this text with students, focus on Rabbi Greenberg's idea of sukkah as a way of helping us get in touch with, and deal with our own vulnerability.







Rabbi Irving Greenberg, The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays, New York: Touchstone, 1988, pp. 99-101:

The sukkah, the booth, is the central symbol of the ancient Israelites' trust and hope for forty years in the desert. The Hebrews left the protection of man-made thick walls to place themselves under the protection of God. Exposed to dangerous natural conditions and hostile roving bands, they placed their confidence in the divine concern, which is the only true source of security. Their act of faith remains a source of merit for the people of Israel and a continuing support for the covenantal commitment. By eating, learning, and sleeping in the booth so that the sukkah becomes one's home for a week, we re-enact their original act of faith.

The most important part of the *sukkah*, halachically, is the *s'chach*, materials of vegetable origin such as evergreen branches or marsh rushes that form the roof.

The s'chach is meant to teach something about the true nature of protection. Human beings instinctively strive to build solid walls of security. People shut out life; they heap up treasures and power and status symbols in the hope of excluding death and disaster and even the unexpected. The search for "solid" security all too often leads to idolatry, to the worship of things that give security. People end up sacrificing values and even loved ones to obtain the tangible sources of security. The *sukkah* urges people to give up this pseudo-safety.

The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom. Participants open up to the world, to the unexpected winds, to the surprise setback as well as the planned gain. The joy of Sukkot is a celebration of the privilege of starting on the road to freedom, knowing that to finish the task is not decisive, but failure to start is.

Divide students into *chavrutah* pairs to discuss the following questions:

- What do you think Rabbi Greenberg means when he says, "The move into the sukkah is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom."?
- As you begin the school year, what are the "solid walls of security" that you have built for yourself?
- · How would you like to move beyond your comfort zone this school year? What would your life look like if you did?
- · What is holding you back?



Lech

Lecha

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Step In/Step Out Activity

Adapted from https://www.trainingforchange.org/tools/step-step-out-using-

In this activity, students will begin to think concretely about new experiences that they can have in the upcoming school year.

Use rope — or if possible, some extra s'chach — and make three concentric circles/square with enough room for the all the participants to comfortably stand in any of the circles.

Tell students that you will call out different activities. If they are not interested at all in participating in the activity, they should stand in the outermost circle. If they are absolutely interested and plan to do the activity without hesitation, they should stand in the innermost circle. If they are interested but hesitant about doing the activity, they should stand in the middle circle.

Some sample activities you might call out, include: take a course that you hear is great but really difficult, try a new sport, go to a college activity by yourself, take a class that you know nothing about, sit down at a table in the cafeteria by yourself, join a group of people sitting in the cafeteria who you don't know very well, go on an alternative break trip, stop a friend from gossiping, tell people you are Jewish, tell people you support the State of Israel, go on a Birthright trip, write a letter to the school newspaper, ask an acquaintance to go out for coffee, etc.

Tell students to find one of the people they walked around with at the beginning of the session (groups of 3 are fine too). Choose one activity that you would like to do this school year, and brainstorm with the other students in your group how you can encourage yourself to do those things, even if they might feel initially uncomfortable.

End by going around the room and asking students:

What is one thing that you commit to yourself to doing this semester even though it is outside your comfort zone?





Lech Lecha



Graduation Havdalah

This Activity is Great For



Academic Calendar

- End of the Year Celebration
 - Graduation

q Ideas

A havdalah service that celebrates the graduates and marks graduation in a Jewish way.

This ceremony is adapted from the Chai Ceremony created by Rabbi Julie Danan — http://www.myjewishlearning.com/ article/chai-ceremony/4/#.

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies: *Havdalah* supplies

- multi-wicked candle (or two candles held with flames together)
- cup of grape juice or wine
- spices
- printouts of the havdalah service

Preparation:

The week before the havdalah service, send an email to your soon-to-be graduates letting them know that there will be a special *Havdalah* ceremony honoring their graduation, and asking them to come prepared to answer the following questions in 1-2 sentences:

- · How have you grown in your time here? Who or what are you thankful for?
- How do you want to be a light to your friends/family/community/the world, as you move on beyond college?

At the havdalah service:

Bring the soon-to-be graduates to the center of the circle, and give them the havdalah candle(s) to hold. The other students should form concentric circles around them.





Introduce the havdalah service:

- Explain that Judaism has rituals that mark the transition from one time to another. Havdalah marks the transition from the peace of Shabbat to the rest of the week. Tonight, we will also mark another transition with our havdalah: the graduation of our friends from this university as they go forward on new paths. Transitions can be difficult because there is so much that is unknown, but it is also an opportunity to reflect on who we are and how we've grown, to give thanks to the people who have helped us on the way until now, and to clarify to ourselves what kind of person we would like to be, and the impact we want to have, as we embark on new opportunities.
- Ask the graduating students in the middle of the circle to say one or two sentences about how they have grown in their college years, or to offer hakarat hatov —
- Lech Lecha LECH LECHA
- Introduce the opening paragraph of the havdalah, if it is your custom to recite/sing it. Explain that this first paragraph is about the fear that comes with transition, and that it expresses faith that God is with us so we should not fear.
 - Sing together the opening paragraph.

gratitude, to those who have helped them in their college experience.

- Introduce the next three blessings: on the wine/grape juice, the besamim (spices), and the fire. Explain that we smell the spices on Saturday night as the Shabbat is leaving, to console us that the Shabbat has left us. Similarly, we are sad to see the graduates go. The light/fire represents creativity, and all the ways that human beings can impact the world.
- Ask graduates to explain in one sentence how they hope to be a light to others as they move forward past college.
 - Sing together the rest of the *havdalah* service.
- Ask students to observe a moment of silence to think of the graduates and wish them health and happiness in all that comes next for them. End with songs and snacks. You may also wish to give graduates a gift of Jewish ritual objects (kiddush cup, candle sticks, havdalah candle, besamim (spices), menorah, etc.) for them to take with them to use in their new homes and circumstances.

Lech Lecha של לך LECH LECHA Take the Next Step

הַבְדַלָה Havdalah

Recited at the departure of *Shabbat, Havdalah* is traditionally said over a cup of wine. The concept of *havdalah*, literally "separation," is learned from the commandment to "remember the Sabbath," in this case referring to the ritual differentiation of Shabbat from the other days of the week. A multi-wicked candle and aromatic spices are used in addition to the cup of wine. As the Sabbath day ends, the additional soul that was placed on every Jew during the Sabbath departs. Smelling the pleasant odor of teh spices was established to diminish the sorrow felt after the soul departs. The blessing on the candle was established to commemorate the creation of fire in the Garden of Eden at the end of Adam's first Sabbath on earth. At the departure of a weekday holiday, the first paragraph and the blessing over the candle and spices are omitted. From The Penn Shiron, Hillel at the University of Pennsylvania, 2000. Edited by Uriel Cohen, Ethan Isenberg and Lytal Kaurman. Much of the translation has been adapted, with permission, from the Judaica Press Tanach and the Shabbat and Festival Shiron, edited by Robert Ives. Many of the explanations and source notes have been adapted from Ives, as well as from The Z'mirot Anthology, edited by Neil Levin and Zemirot I'Shabbat HaMevuarot, by S. Vaknin.

ָהָנָה אֱל יִשׁוּעַתִּי אֱבְטַח וִלֹא אֱפְחַד, Hineih Eil yeshu'ati evtach velo efchad, ָכִי עַזִי וִזְמְרַת יַהּ ה׳, Ki ozi vezimrah Yah Adonai, ויהי לי לישועה. Vayhi li lishu'ah. ושאבתם מים בששון, Ush'avetem mayim besason, ממעיני הישועה. Mima'ayenei hayshu'ah. ַלַה׳ הַיִּשׁוּעַה, Ladonai hayshu'ah, על עַמָּךְ בִרְכַתֵּךְ סֵלָה. Al amekha virkhatekha selah. ה׳ צבאוֹת עמנוּ, Adonai tzeva'ot imanu, ַמִשָּׁגָב לַנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה. Misgav lanu Elohei Ya'akov selah. ָה׳ צְבַאוֹת, Adonai tzeva'ot, ָאַשָּׁרֵי אַדַם בּטֵחַ בַּךְ. Ashrai adam botei'ach bakh. ה׳ הוֹשִׁיעַה, Adonai hoshi'ah, ַהַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנָנוּ בִיוֹם קַרְאֵנוּ. Hamelekh ya'aneinu veyom kor'einu. ליָהוּדים הַיָּתָה אוֹרָה ושׁמחה, Layehudim haytah orah vesimchah, ּוְשָׂשׂוֹן וִיקָר, כֵּן תִּהְיֶה לָנוּ. Vesason vikar, kein tihyeh lanu. כּוֹס יָשׁוּעוֹת אֱשָׂא, וּבִשֶּׁם ה׳ אֱקְרַא. Kos yeshu'ot esa, uvsheim Adonai ekra.

Behold! God is my salvation, I shall trust and not fear. For God is my might and my praise, and He was a salvation for me. You can draw water with joy, from the springs of salvation. Salvation is God's, upon Your people is Your blessing, selah. God, Master of legions, praised is the man who trusts in You. God save! May the King answer us on the day we call. For the Jews there was light, gladness, joy, and honor; so may it be for us. I will raise a cup of salvations, and I shall invoke the Name of God.

Havdalah הַבְדַלָה (continued)

At the end of a holiday begin here (omitting the blessings of the candle and the spices):

ַסַבְרִי מַרַנַן וַרַבַּנַן וַרַבּוֹתַי: Savri maranan verabanan verabotai: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה׳ Barukh atah Adonai

אַלֹהֵינוּ מֵלֵךְ הָעוֹלָם, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, בּוֹרֵא פָּרִי הַגָּפֵן. Borei peri hagafen.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the fruit of the vine.

After the following blessing smell the spices:

בַּרוּךְ אַתַּה ה׳ Barukh atah Adonai אַלהֵינוּ מֵלֵךְ הַעוֹלַם, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam. בּוֹרֵא מִינֵי בְּשָׂמִים. Borei minei vesamim.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of species of fragrance.

After the following blessing hold your fingers up to the flame to see the reflected light:

בַּרוּךְ אַתַּה ה׳ Barukh atah Adonai אַלֹהֵינוּ מֵלֵךְ הָעוֹלָם, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, בּוֹרֵא מָאוֹרֵי הַאֵשׁ. Borei me'orei ha'eish.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the illuminations of fire.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה׳ Barukh atah Adonai אַלהֵינוּ מֵלֵךְ הָעוֹלָם, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, הַמַּבִּדִיל בֵּין קֹדֵשׁ לְחֹל, Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol, ָבֵין אוֹר לָחֹשֵׁךְ, בֵּין יִשִּׂרָאֵל לָעַמִּים, Bein or lechoshekh, bein Yisra'eil la'amim, בֵּין יוֹם הַשָּׁבִיעִי Bein yom hashevi'i

ַלִשָּׁשָׁת יִמֵי הַמַּעֲשָׂה. Lesheishet yemei hama'aseh. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה׳, Barukh atah Adonai,

הַמַבִּדִיל בֵּין קֹדֵשׁ לְחֹל. Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the universe, Who separates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and the other nations, between the seventh day and the six days of labor. Blessed are You, God, Who separates between holy and secular.







Just for Hillel Professionals: Try Something New

This Activity is Great For



I. Beginning the Conversation

Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of Lech Lecha into your personal and professional lives:

- 1. When have you tried something new in your personal life? What was the result?
- 2. When have you tried something new in your professional life? What was the result?
- 3. Are you naturally someone who charges forward with a new idea, or do you normally hold yourself back?
- 4. What is something that you would love to try if you knew that it would be successful?

Try It Out:

What are three things you commit to trying this week in your personal and professional

Textsheets for Students On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you!



Lech Lecha: Dare Greatly

Breishit (Genesis) 12:1-5:

א וַיֹּאמֵר ה׳ אֵל אַבָּרָם לֵךְ לִךְ מֵאַרִצְךְּ וממולדתר ומבית אביר אל הארץ אשר אַרִאֵּךָ.

1 And God said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

ב ואַעשׂר לְגוֹי גַּדוֹל וַאַבַרֶכָר וַאַגַּדְלַה שִׁמֶּךְ וֵהְיֵה בְּרָכָה. 2 I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing.

גַואַבָּרְכָה מִבָּרְכֵיךְ וּמִקַּלֵּלְךְ אָאֹר וִנְבִּרְכוּ בִּךְ כֹּל מִשָּׁפָּחֹת הָאֵדָמָה.

3 I will bless those who bless you And curse him that curses you; And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you."

וַיֵּלֵךְ אַבָּרָם כַּאֲשֵׁר דְּבֵּר אֶלָיו ה׳ וַיַּלֵךְ אִתּוֹ דְּוַלֵּךְ אַתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וִשְּׁבִעִים שַׁנַה בָּצֵאתוֹ מֶחַרַן.

> 4 Abram went forth as the Lord had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

ה ויַקח אברם את שרי אשתו ואת לוט בּן אַחִיו וָאֵת כַּל רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רַכָּשׁוּ וָאֵת הַנַּפֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר עֲשׂוּ בָחַרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לַלֱכֶת אַרְצַה כָּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אַרְצָה כָּנָעַן.

5 Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. And they arrived in the land of Canaan.

Translation adapted from http://www.taggedtanakh.org/Chapter/Index/ english-Gen-12.

Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, Meshech Chochmah on Breishit 12:

http://www.alexisrael.org/#!lech-lecha---abrahams-journey/cfyu

אל הארץ אשר אראך: יתכן לפרש כי צווהו לילך לארץ מקום המיועד לעבודה . . . ושם יפרסם אלקות ויקדיש שמו . . . ויראה את הכחות הטמונים בסתר לבבו אשר מצא נאמן לפניו. וזה שאמר "אראך" פועל יוצא שיראה את הטמוו בלב אברהם לאחרים . . . והנה לפי זה אברהם יתראה ויהיה הנראה לאחרים.

To the land which I will show you: We might suggest that Abram was commanded to go to the place earmarked for divine service... there he was to publicize the idea of God and sanctify His name... and demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart and his commitment to God. This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you". It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart.... thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself and will become visible to others.



Abram was to demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart	This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you". Lech Lecha Lecha
It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart	thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself
and will become visible to others.	

Lech Lecha



Textsheets for Students

Welcome to College: Dive on In!

VaYikra (Leviticus) 23

לט אַרְ בַּחֵמִשָּׁה עַשָּׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֵשׁ הַשָּׁבִיעִי בָּאַסְפָּכֶם אֶת תָבוּאַת הַאַרֵץ תַּחֹגוּ אֶת חַג ה׳ שבעת יַמים בּיּוֹם הראשוֹן שׁבּתוֹן וּביּוֹם השׁמיני שׁבּתוֹן.

מ וּלְקַחָתֵּם לַכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַרָאשׁוֹן פָּרִי עֵץ הַדַּר כַּפּת תַּמַרִים וַעֲנַף עֵץ עֲבֹת וְעַרְבֵי נַחַל וּשְׁמַ־ חתם לפני ה׳ אלקיכם שבעת ימים.

מא וְחַגֹּתֶם אֹתוֹ חַג לַה׳ שָׁבְעַת יַמִים בַּשָּׁנַה חָקָּת עוֹלַם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בַּחֹדֵשׁ הַשָּׁבִיעִי תַּחֹגוּ

מב בַּסִכֹּת תֵּשָׁבוּ שָׁבְעַת יַמִים כַּל הַאֶּזְרַח בישראל ישבוּ בּסּכֹּת.

מג למען יֵדעוּ דרתִיכֶם כִּי בַּסִכּוֹת הוֹשַבְתִּי את בּני יִשׂראל בּהוֹציאי אוֹתם מארץ מצריַם אַנִי ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיכֶם.

- 39 On the 15th of the seventh month, when you harvest the land's grain, you shall celebrate a festival to God for seven days. The first day shall be a day of rest, and the eighth day shall be a day of rest.
- 40 On the first day, you must take for yourself a fruit of the citron tree, an unopened palm frond, myrtle branches, and willows [that grow near] the brook. You shall rejoice before God for seven days.
- **41** During these seven days each year, you shall celebrate to God. It is an eternal law for all generations that you celebrate [this festival] in the seventh month.
- 42 During [these] seven days you should live in thatched huts (sukkot). Everyone included in Israel should live in such thatched huts (sukkot).
- 43 This is so that future generations will know that I had the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt. I am God your Lord.

Translation adapted from Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, A Living Torah, http://bible.ort.org/ books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage& BOOK=3&CHAPTER=23



Welcome to College: Dive on In!

Lech Lecha

LECH LECHA

Rabbi Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*, New York: Touchstone, 1988, pp. 99-101:

The sukkah, the booth, is the central symbol of the ancient Israelites' trust and hope for forty years in the desert. The Hebrews left the protection of man-made thick walls to place themselves under the protection of God. Exposed to dangerous natural conditions and hostile roving bands, they placed their confidence in the divine concern, which is the only true source of security. Their act of faith remains a source of merit for the people of Israel and a continuing support for the covenantal commitment. By eating, learning, and sleeping in the booth so that the *sukkah* becomes one's home for a week, we re-enact their original act of faith.

The most important part of the *sukkah*, halachically, is the *s'chach*, materials of vegetable origin such as evergreen branches or marsh rushes that form the roof.

The s'chach is meant to teach something about the true nature of protection. Human beings instinctively strive to build solid walls of security. People shut out life; they heap up treasures and power and status symbols in the hope of excluding death and disaster and even the unexpected. The search for "solid" security all too often leads to idolatry, to the worship of things that give security. People end up sacrificing values and even loved ones to obtain the tangible sources of security. The *sukkah* urges people to give up this pseudo-safety.

The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom. Participants open up to the world, to the unexpected winds, to the surprise setback as well as the planned gain. The joy of Sukkot is a celebration of the privilege of starting on the road to freedom, knowing that to finish the task is not decisive, but failure to start is.

- · What do you think Rabbi Greenberg means when he says, "The move into the sukkah is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom."?
- As you begin the school year, what are the "solid walls of security" that you have built for yourself?
- How would you like to move beyond your comfort zone this school year? What would your life look like if you did?
- What is holding you back?





הבדלה Havdalah

Recited at the departure of Shabbat, Havdalah is traditionally said over a cup of wine. The concept of havdalah, literally "separation," is learned from the commandment to "remember the Sabbath," in this case referring to the ritual differentiation of Shabbat from the other days of the week. A multi-wicked candle and aromatic spices are used in addition to the cup of wine. As the Sabbath day ends, the additional soul that was placed on every Jew during the Sabbath departs. Smelling the pleasant odor of teh spices was established to diminish the sorrow felt after the soul departs. The blessing on the candle was established to commemorate the creation of fire in the Garden of Eden at the end of Adam's first Sabbath on earth. At the departure of a weekday holiday, the first paragraph and the blessing over the candle and spices are omitted. From *The Penn Shiron*, Hillel at the University of Pennsylvania, 2000. Edited by Uriel Cohen, Ethan Isenberg and Lytal Kaurman. Much of the translation has been adapted, with permission, from the Judaica Press Tanach and the Shabbat and Festival Shiron, edited by Robert Ives. Many of the explanations and source notes have been adapted from Ives, as well as from *The* Z'mirot Anthology, edited by Neil Levin and Zemirot I'Shabbat HaMevuarot, by S. Vaknin.

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Behold! God is my salvation, I shall trust and not fear. For God is my might and my praise, and He was a salvation for me. You can draw water with joy, from the springs of salvation. Salvation is God's, upon Your people is Your blessing, selah. God, Master of legions, praised is the man who trusts in You. God save! May the King answer us on the day we call. For the Jews there was light, gladness, joy, and honor; so may it be for us. I will raise a cup of salvations, and I shall invoke the Name of God.



Havdalah הַבְדַלָה (continued)

At the end of a holiday begin here (omitting the blessings of the candle and the spices):

ּסַבְרִי מַרָנַן וְרַבָּנַן וְרַבּוֹתַי: Savri maranan verabanan verabotai:

ברוּרְ אַתַּה ה׳ Barukh atah Adonai אֱלֹהֶינוּ מֱלֶךְ הַעוֹלַם, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, בּוֹרֵא פָּרִי הַגַּפֵן. Borei peri hagafen.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the fruit of the vine.

After the following blessing smell the spices:

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After the following blessing hold your fingers up to the flame to see the reflected light:

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Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the illuminations of fire.

בַרוּךְ אַתַּה ה׳ Barukh atah Adonai ָאֱלֹהֵינוּ מֵלֵךְ הָעוֹלָם, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, הַמַבִּדִיל בֵּין קֹדֵשׁ לְחֹל, Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol, בֵּין אוֹר לָחֹשֵׁךְ, בֵּין יִשִּׂרָאֵל לָעַמִּים, Bein or lechoshekh, bein Yisra'eil la'amim, בֵּין יוֹם הַשָּׁבִיעִי Bein yom hashevi'i ַלְשֵׁשֶׁת יִמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. Lesheishet yemei hama'aseh. ַבָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה׳, Barukh atah Adonai,

> ַהַמַבִּדִיל בֵּין קֹדֵשׁ לְחֹל. Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol.

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B'Tzelem Elohim

בצלם אלוקים

B'TZELEM ELOHIM

(all people are made) in the divine image

Value the Humanity in Each Person

The Jewish approach requires us to protect the life of every person, and ensure dignity and justice for all people.

SENSIBILITY CARD



B'Tzelem Elohim

STZELEM ELOHIM

(all people ELOHIM

In the divine are made)

Value the Humanity in

The Javish approach requires

Justice, and the life of requires

On One Foot: B'Tzelem Elohim

IMPORTANT TEXTS

And God said: "Let us make Adam in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." And God created Adam in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

- Breishit (Genesis) 1:26-27

Rabbi Akiva would say: "Beloved is humanity for we were made in the image of God. And doubly beloved are we for God made it known to us that we are made in his image."

Mishnah Avot 3:14

"We are holy people – and all of us are holy – and our worth to others is ultimately going to derive from how we act." — Rabbi Joseph Telushkin



The Implications

We will look at B'Tzelem Elohim in the context of:

- The Elephant in the Room: Talking About God 54
- Live Like a Boss 55
- Service: It's Divine! 59
- Bring Everyone to the Table 62
- Who Do You See in the Mirror?: Self Worth and Body Image 64
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Inclusion 67
- Textsheets for Students 68



The Elephant in the Room: Talking About God

This Activity is Great For







 Alternative Service

I. Beginning the Conversation

When talking about the concept of *Tzelem Elohim*, some students may not be able to get past the God language. Use this as an opportunity to meet with the student one on one and start to unpack some of his or her uncomfortable feelings around talking about God.

Below are some suggested questions to get the conversation started. You may want to jump right in and start talking with the student, or have the student quietly reflect on these questions and write down some answers before you start your discussion. Feel free to use only one of these questions, or a selection that you like best.

Note: These questions are broad and inclusive enough that they transcend the setting. Keep these questions in mind when "the God questions" comes up in conversation with a student.

- What thoughts and emotions are coming up for you when talking about God?
- How often do you get the chance to talk about God?
- Is there a way of talking about God that feels more comfortable to you?
- Do you ever talk to God?
- · How did you think about God in your childhood? How do you think about God now? Were there any times in your life that impacted your ideas or relationship with God?
- · A wise religious person once said: "The God you don't believe in, I don't believe in either." What are some of the ways that people talk about God that make you uncomfortable? List them.
- · Can you redefine how you think about God to exclude those elements?
- . If talking in God terms still doesn't work for you, how might you reformulate the concept of "created in the image of God" in terms that will work for you?



Live Like a Boss

This Activity is Great For



Beit Midrash Group

Learning



Justice Service **Projects**



Identity & Relationships

> Art and Creative Play



B'Tzelem **Elohim**

Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Ask students:

- Have you ever heard it said that we are all created in God's image?
- What does that phrase mean to you?

II. A Deeper Dive

A. The Creation of Humankind

The Torah relates the creation of the world in Breishit (Genesis) Chapter 1. On the 6th day of Creation, God creates human beings- and the *Torah* tells us that Adam is created in the image of God.

Breishit (Genesis) 1:26-27

כו וַיֹּאמֵר אֱלֹהִים, נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ; וְיִרְדּוּ ַבְדָגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֵץ, וּבְכָל-הָרֶ ַמֵשׂ, הַרֹּמֵשׂ עַל-הַאַרֵץ.

כז וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֱת-הָאָדָם בִּצַלְמוֹ, בִּצֵלֵם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ: זַכָּר וּנְקֶבָה, בַּרַא אֹתָם. 26 And God said: 'Let us make Adam in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

27 And God created Adam in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

- Give students some modeling clay and ask them to shape the clay to represent what it might mean to be created "in the image of God."
- Go around and have students explain what they have created, how it relates to their understanding of God, and what it means to be created in God's image





TALK IT OUT

- What do you think it means to be created in someone's image? Does being created in someone's image mean that you are the same as they are? Think "image" relate to the original?
- If you could choose someone whose image you would want to be in, who would it
- Why do you think the Torah tells us that Adam (and by extension his descendants
- Does the phrase B'Tzelem Elohim/ "in the image of God" speak to you? Why or

If you have a little more time, and sense that students might be interested in more text study, go on to the next source. If you wish to skip the next source, go to Section C.

B. Letting Us In On the Secret

Read together the following source from *Mishnah Avot* 3:14:

הוא היה אומר, חביב אדם שנברא בצלם .חבה יתרה נודעת לו שנברא בצלם, שנאמר (בראשית ט), כי בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם.

Rabbi Akiva would say: "Beloved is humanity for we were made in the image of God. And doubly beloved are we for God made it known to us that we are made in his image, as it states (Breishit 9): 'In God's image God created humankind.'" (Translation adapted from JustAction, www.justaction.org)



- Do you think it is possible to be created in the image of God and yet not know it?
- Do you agree with Rabbi Akiva that being told that we were created in God's image is a reflection of love?
- Have you ever had someone believe in you and highlight your potential? How did it make you feel? How did you





B'Tzelem Elohim

B'TZELEM ELOHIM (all people are made) In the divine image Value the Humanity in The Jewish approximation of the people are made of the standard of the sta

C. B'Tzelem Elohim In My Life: Natan Sharansky

In the following excerpt, Natan Sharansky talks about his struggle to understand what it means to be created in the image of God. He found that his fear that he would violate the image of God inside of him gave the freedom and strength to resist the KGB (the state military police force in Soviet Russia).

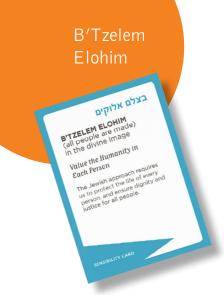
Natan Sharansky is one of the most famous former Soviet refusniks and an Israeli politician, author and human rights activist. Sharansky was born and raised in the Ukraine, then part of the Soviet Union, and became associated with the Soviet human rights movement, and one of the foremost dissidents and spokesmen for the Soviet Jewry movement. He was arrested in 1977, and convicted of treason and spying on behalf of the United States, and was sentenced to thirteen years imprisonment in a Siberian forced labor camp. For the first 16 months of his sentence he was held in Moscow's Lefortovo prison, frequently in solitary confinement and in a special "torture cell," before being transferred to a notorious prison camp in the Siberian gulag.

Years after his release, Sharansky stressed the need he maintained throughout his imprisonment to remain emotionally independent. He attributed his survival of the lengthy incarceration and the brutal conditions to his resistance to any sort of emotional surrender. Hence Sharansky's expression of the paradox that while an ordinary Russian, he was in fact a slave to the system; but that once he discovered his Jewish roots and was restricted for his allegiance to them, he was in reality a free man. Sharansky's memoirs of his years as a prisoner of Zion are described in his book *Fear No Evil* (paraphrased from: www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org).

Sharansky talks about how the concept of B'Tzelem Elohim/"in the image of God" gave him strength and resolve during his imprisonment.

A few days before my arrest, an American tourist gave me a small book of Psalms from my wife, along with a letter she had written. In it Avital explained that she had carried the Psalms with her all year, during her travels around the world to fight for my freedom and for the freedom of Soviet Jewry. Now, she wrote, I feel that you should have it so I am sending it to you. Back then, my Hebrew was in no way adequate to read that book. After I was arrested, the book, along with all my other belongings, was confiscated. Then I began to think about the Psalms and about the note from Avital. The book soon took on an almost mythical meaning for me. I started to fight to have it returned, a battle that continued for three years.

I finally received the book along with the news that my father had passed away. I tried to read it, but I still understood little. I had to work my way through it slowly, page by page, comparing different lines, trying to recognize patterns and connect words to each other. The first lines I understood were those of Psalm 23: "Although I walk through the valley of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."



Natan Sharansky (continued)

I noticed that in the Psalms, the word fear kept appearing. On the one hand, fear was something to be overcome, such as not fearing evil. But as *yirat hashem*, or the *fear of* God, it had a positive connotation. It took me time to understand what this fear of God meant. My understanding was at first very vague and uncertain. But at some moment it occurred to me, seeing it many times, that this fear was connected not simply to God the Creator but to the image of God in which man was created. Mankind was created to be worthy of that image and to be true to it. This required me to go forward in an honest and direct way, without compromising principles. This fear, the fear of not being worthy of the divine image, not the fear of death, was what I was most afraid of in my interrogations with the KGB. I was afraid to lose the world of inner freedom I had found, to fail to stay true to my inner self, to no longer conduct myself in a way that was worthy of the divine image.

Natan Sharansky with Shira Wolosky Weiss, Defending Identity: Its Indispensable Role in Protecting Democracy, pp.24-25.

TALK IT OUT

- What fear did Sharansky have while he was imprisoned by the KGB?
- What opportunities do you have coming up that will test your principles whether in social, family or communal situations?
- How can the freedom and responsibility of being created B'Tzelem Elohim (in the image of God) help inform

Service: It's Divine!

This Activity is Great For





- · Challah for Hunger
- Service Projects

q Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

If you are at a service project, go around the room and ask participants to say 1-3 words (only!) that explain why they are here today. If at a coffee date: 1-3 words on why you engage in service.

Ask participants: Would you be surprised if the answer I would give you today about why I am here is "Be like God"?

The *Talmud* tells us that if we want to be like God, we need to engage in acts of kindness and service.

II. A Deeper Dive

Read this source from Babylonian Talmud Sotah 14a together with a learning partner (chavruta) and then discuss the following questions:

ואמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא מאי דכתיב (דברים יג) אחרי ה' אלהיכם תלכו וכי אפשר לו לאדם להלך אחר שכינה והלא כבר נאמר (דברים ד) כי ה׳ אלהיך אש אוכ־ לה הוא אלא להלך אחר מדותיו של הקב״ה מה הוא מלביש ערומים דכתיב (בראשית ג) ויעש ה׳ אלהים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבישם אף אתה הלבש ערומים הקב״ה ביקר חולים דכתיב (בראשית יח) וירא אליו ה' באלוני ממרא אף אתה בקר חולים הקב״ה ניחם אבלים דכתיב (בראשית כה) ויהי אחרי מות אברהם ויברך אלהים את יצחק בנו אף אתה נחם אבלים הקב״ה קבר מתים דכתיב (דברים לד) ויקבר אותו בגיא אף אתה קבור מתים:

And Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said, "What is the meaning of the verse, 'After *Hashem*, your God, shall you walk (Deuteronomy 13:5)'? Is it possible for a person to walk after the divine presence? For isn't it already stated, 'For Hashem your God is a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24)'?

B'Tzelem **Elohim**

בצלם אלוקים

TZELEM ELOHIM

Rather, to follow the character traits of God. "Just as He clothes the naked, as it is written, 'And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife cloaks of leather, and he clothed them (Genesis 3:21); so too you shall clothe the naked. The Holy One, Blessed be He, visited the sick, as it is written, 'And he appeared in *Ailonei Mamrei* [while Avram was in pain] (Genesis 18:1);' so too you shall visit the sick. The Holy One, Blessed be He, comforted mourners, as it is written, 'And it was, after the death of Abraham, and God blessed his son Isaac (Genesis 25:11);' so too you shall comfort mourners. The Holy One, Blessed be He, buried the dead, as it is written, 'And he buried him in the valley (Deuteronomy 34:6);' so too, you shall bury the dead." (Translation adapted from Sefaria, www.sefaria.org)







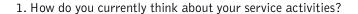
TALK IT OUT

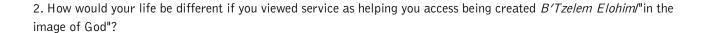
- Is this the image of God that you are accustomed to seeing?

- Consider this quote attributed to Australian Aboriginal activist Lila Watson. "If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come
- fulfillment? How do you relate to Watson's statement?

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Answer these reflective questions in writing, privately:





3. What piece of advice would you give yourself the next time you engage in service to another?





B'Tzelem **Elohim** בצלם אלוקים TZELEM ELOHIM

Follow-up

Challenge students to respond to one need/engage in one act of service once a day for a week. Come back after a week and discuss:

- Which of the acts of service from this past week felt most satisfying to you?
- Did any of your acts of service feel more difficult than others?
- Reflecting on your week of service why do you think the rabbis of the Talmud saw acts of service as Godly? Did you ever get that feeling when you were engaged in service?
- What other acts of service will you commit to over the course of the next week?

Additional Resources:

Watch this YouTube video of Rabbi David Aaron speaking about the connection between self-worth and service. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGdjYNis5zs



Bring Everyone to the Table: Seeing Others as Created in God's Image

This Activity is Great For





- Inclusion
- Group Dynamics
- Team Building

g Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Ask students: When you look at others, what do you see? Their appearance? Their new sweater? OR Ask students to turn to each other and really look at each other —- for an uncomfortably long time (30 seconds to one minute), and then tell each other what they see.

- What was it like for you to look at someone else in this way?
- What was it like for you to be looked at in this way?

Today we are going to talk about looking at others carefully, and what we can see if we look at them closely and carefully.

II. A Deeper Dive

A. Read the following story together:

There is an old *Hasidic* story about Reb Nahman Kossover, a friend of the Ba'al Shem Tov. Reb Nahman believed that the proper way to remain close to God was to constantly contemplate the four-letter name Y-H-W-H, to see the letters of God's name ever before him. He was a preacher, and when he looked out at his audience, he was able to see God's name in every face. But then times changed; the preacher was forced to become a merchant in order to survive. In the marketplace, with the rapid pace of all the buying and selling, he found it harder to always concentrate on the name of God. So we are told that he hired a special assistant to follow him wherever he went. The person's only job was to be a reminder. Whenever he looked at his assistant's face, he would remember the name of God.

What do you think the person (almost surely a man) looked like? Given the values of traditional Jewish society, he was probably not especially beautiful. Might he have been exceptionally tortured? Was a it a tormented face that reminded





the rabbi of God? Or was it something less dramatic, what in Yiddish might be called eydelkeyt, a combination of gentleness, warmth, and nobility? We'll never know, of course. Maybe it was just an ordinary human face, another person made in God's image. But he was there to serve as a reminder, and that was quite enough. (Rabbi Arthur Green, Judaism's Ten Best Ideas: A Guide for Seekers, pp.14-15)

TALK IT OUT

- When is it more difficult for you to see the image of God in other people?

B'Tzelem Elohim

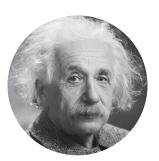


B. Look at the following images. Which images are easiest for you to perceive as being created in the image of God? Which are more difficult?













TALK IT OUT





Who Do You See in the Mirror?: Self Worth and Body Image

This Activity is Great For





Group Learning



Inclusion

Art and Creative Play



Career Development

Big Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Bring in an assortment of magazines — women's fashion magazines, Sports Illustrated, People, etc. Have students look through them and ask: what is the ideal man/ woman according to the media? (They will probably focus on: appearance, wealth, skin color, family situation, career.)

TALK IT OUT

- In what ways do these media and cultural images of the "ideal" affect you?
- Do you find yourself associating your self-worth with your appearance, intelligence, economic situation or
- Do you know anyone who does not?

Ask: Did you know that even models can't conform to the level of physical attractiveness in the media?

Ask students if they would like to rid themselves of these media and cultural images. Invite them to tear up the





B'Tzelem **Elohim**

בצלם אלוקים TZELEM ELOHIM

II. A Deeper Dive

A. The Creation of Humans

The *Torah* has a different understanding of what makes a person special. Read over the description of the creation of humankind. What was special about them?

Breishit (Genesis) 1:26-27

כו וַיֹּאמֵר אֱלֹהִים, נַעֲשֵׂה אָדַם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ ּכָּדְמוּתֵנוּ; וִיִרְדוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאַרֵץ, וּבְכָל-הַרֵמֶשׂ, הַרֹמֵשׂ עַל-הַאַרֵץ.

כז וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַאַדָם בִּצַלְמוֹ, בְּצֵלֶם אַלהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ: זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה, בַּרָא אֹתָם. 26 And God said: "Let us make Adam in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

27 And God created Adam in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

B. Rabbi Joseph Telushkin on Self-Worth

This excerpt is paraphrased from Rabbi Telushkin's talk at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXH-9FQWF4E. In it, he talks about the fallacy of associating your worth with how much money you have, and emphasizes the Jewish perspective that our self-worth comes from being created in the image of God.

Note: This excerpt specifically focuses on equating self-worth with money. If students are focused on beauty, help them see the broader message of Rabbi Telushkin's words: that our worth derives from being created in the image of God.

My father Shlomo Telushkin a"h (of blessed memory) worked in the 1930s for Rabbi Meir Berlin who headed the Religious Zionists, Mizrachi. Berlin learned English as an adult, and many times when someone learns a language as a second language they have a hard time learning the idioms.

So Rabbi Berlin was puzzled by an idiom that he heard Americans use, and it eventually came to infuriate him. And that was the expression "so and so is worth". When he heard it said of a certain man, and this was during the Depression when people were far poorer, "So and so is worth \$300,000" he didn't think much of the man, so he said "Yes, that's what he is worth and not one penny more."

The real question of worth though is: what are we worth to the people around us? What is our value as a human being? if we continue to associate worth only with money, we are setting ourselves up for misery. If you hear somebody say I am worth \$10 million, what happens to that person when his investments collapse, and he's then worth 2 million dollars, and then if he loses everything, what is he worth - nothing?





Our value is ultimately derived from the fact that we are created in God's image We are holy people - and all of us are holy - and our worth to others is ultimately going to derive from how we act.

- Does this text speak to you? Why or why not?
- · How might Rabbi Telushkin's father have responded to the messages in the magazine images you cut out?

C. Reflect and Craft

Students will engage in a reflection activity and collage-making to reflect on what makes them created in God's image.

Tell students: We have seen that our self-worth comes from being created in God's image. When you think about yourself, what do you think are your special virtues those parts of you that can be thought of as the parts of you that are in God's image? Write them down — no one else will see this.

Now go back to the magazines and choose words or images that reflect the real you and how you are created in the image of God. Cut out the words and images, and paste them onto this sheet of paper to illustrate the image of God inside you, and what truly makes you special.

- Are they talents?
- Ways of connecting?
- · Ways of giving to others?

TALK IT OUT

• How can you remember this "real you" created in the image of God, when you are confronted by images and expectations that measure your worth in false and destructive ways?

Just for Hillel Professionals: **Inclusion**

This Activity is Great For



Elohim בצלם אלוקים

B'Tzelem

I. Beginning the Conversation

If everyone is created in the image of God, then we have the responsibility to make sure that everyone – even if they are differently abled — has equal opportunity to participate, and feel accepted, at Hillel and campus events.

Use these questions to reflect upon inclusion, and to make sure that your Hillel events embrace the concept of B'Tzelem Elohim and include everyone with dignity.

- · What kinds of disabilities are you most comfortable dealing with? What kinds of disabilities are harder for you to deal with? Who can you talk to about becoming more comfortable with these issues?
- Think about the Hillel events that you have run so far this year. Were there students with disabilities at these events? Can you check in with them to find out what their experience at the event was like, and what suggestions they have for you? If there were no students with overt disabilities there, what can you do to find out why they did not attend?
- What are 3 actions that you can take immediately at campus events and interactions to include others with dignity?

Here are some ideas for inclusion:

- When advertising Hillel events, always include a contact name and number for questions about accessibility.
- Create a student working group on disability to advise you.
- Proactively make sure that all students are included in conversation and activities at student meals and events.
- · If you are serving a student with a disability, and you don't know what he or she needs, ask! You will both be happy you did.



Textsheets for Students B'Tzelem Elohim On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you!



Live Like a Boss

Breishit (Genesis) 1:26-27

כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, נַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ ָּכָּדְמוּתֵנוּ; וַיִּרְדוּ בִדְגַת הַיַּם וּבְעוֹף הַשְּׁמַיִם, וּבַבִּהֶמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֵץ, וּבְכַל-הַרֶמֶשׁ, הַרֹמֵשׁ על-הַאַרֵץ.

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27 And God created Adam in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

B'Tzelem **Elohim**



Mishnah Avot 3:14:

הוא היה אומר, חביב אדם שנברא בצלם .חבה יתרה נודעת לו שנברא בצלם, שנאמר (בראשית ט), כי בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם.

Rabbi Akiva would say: Beloved is humanity for we were made in the image of God. And doubly beloved are we for God made it known to us that we are made in his image, as it states (Breishit 9): "In God's image God created humankind." (Translation adapted from JustAction, www.justaction.org)

Natan Sharansky

In the following excerpt, Natan Sharansky talks about his struggle to understand what it means to be created in the image of God. He found that his fear that he would violate the image of God inside of him gave the freedom and strength to resist the KGB (the state military police force in Soviet Russia).





Textsheets for Students

Live Like a Boss (continued)

Natan Sharansky (continued)

In the following excerpt, Sharansky talks about how the concept of tzelem Elohim/"in the image of God" gave him strength and resolve during his imprisonment.

A few days before my arrest, an American tourist gave me a small book of Psalms from my wife, along with a letter she had written. In it Avital explained that she had carried the Psalms with her all year, during her travels around the world to fight for my freedom and for the freedom of Soviet Jewry. Now, she wrote, I feel that you should have it so I am sending it to you. Back then, my Hebrew was in no way adequate to read that book. After I was arrested, the book, along with all my other belongings, was confiscated. Then I began to think about the Psalms and about the note from Avital. The book soon took on an almost mythical meaning for me. I started to fight to have it returned, a battle that continued for three years.

I finally received the book along with the news that my father had passed away. I tried to read it, but I still understood little. I had to work my way through it slowly, page by page, comparing different lines, trying to recognize patterns and connect words to each other. The first lines I understood were those of Psalm 23: "Although I walk through the valley of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

I noticed that in the Psalms, the word fear kept appearing. On the one hand, fear was something to be overcome, such as not fearing evil. But as *yirat hashem*, or the *fear of* God, it had a positive connotation. It took me time to understand what this fear of God meant. My understanding was at first very vague and uncertain. But at some moment it occurred to me, seeing it many times, that this fear was connected not simply to God the Creator but to the image of God in which man was created. Mankind was created to be worthy of that image and to be true to it. This required me to go forward in an honest and direct way, without compromising principles. This fear, the fear of not being worthy of the divine image, not the fear of death, was what I was most afraid of in my interrogations with the KGB. I was afraid to lose the world of inner freedom I had found, to fail to stay true to my inner self, to no longer conduct myself in a way that was worthy of the divine image.

Natan Sharansky with Shira Wolosky Weiss, Defending Identity: Its Indispensable Role in Protecting Democracy, pp.24-25.



Service: It's Divine!

Read this source from Babylonian Talmud Sotah 14a together with a learning partner (chavruta) and then discuss the following questions:

ואמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא מאי דכתיב (דברים יג) אחרי ה' אלהיכם תלכו וכי אפשר לו לאדם להלך אחר שכינה והלא כבר נאמר (דברים ד) כי ה' אלהיך אש אוכ־ לה הוא אלא להלך אחר מדותיו של הקב״ה מה הוא מלביש ערומים דכתיב (בראשית ג) ויעש ה׳ אלהים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבישם אף אתה הלבש ערומים הקב״ה ביקר חולים דכתיב (בראשית יח) וירא אליו ה׳ באלוני ממרא אף אתה בקר חולים הקב"ה ניחם אבלים דכתיב (בראשית כה) ויהי אחרי מות אברהם ויברך אלהים את יצחק בנו אף אתה נחם אבלים הקב״ה קבר מתים דכתיב (דברים לד) ויקבר אותו בגיא אף אתה קבור מתים:

And Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said, "What is the meaning of the verse, 'After *Hashem*, your God, shall you walk (Deuteronomy 13:5)'? Is it possible for a person to walk after the divine presence? For isn't it already stated, 'For Hashem your God is a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24)'?

Rather, to follow the character traits of God.

"Just as He clothes the naked, as it is written, 'And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife cloaks of leather, and he clothed them (Genesis 3:21);' so too you shall clothe the naked. The Holy One, Blessed be He, visited the sick, as it is written, 'And he appeared in Ailonei Mamrei [while Avram was in pain] (Genesis 18:1); so too you shall visit the sick. The Holy One, Blessed be He, comforted mourners, as it is written, 'And it was, after the death of Abraham, and God blessed his son Isaac (Genesis 25:11);' so too you shall comfort mourners. The Holy One, Blessed be He, buried the dead, as it is written, 'And he buried him in the valley (Deuteronomy 34:6); 'so too, you shall bury the dead." (Translation adapted from Sefaria, www.sefaria.org)





Textsheets for Students

Bring Everyone to the Table: Seeing Others As Created in God's Image

There is an old Hasidic story about Reb Nahman Kossover, a friend of the Ba'al Shem Tov. Reb Nahman believed that the proper way to remain close to God was to constantly contemplate the four-letter name Y-H-W-H, to see the letters of God's name ever before him. He was a preacher, and when he looked out at his audience, he was able to see God's name in every face. But then times changed; the preacher was forced to become a merchant in order to survive. In the marketplace, with the rapid pace of all the buying and selling, he found it harder to always concentrate on the name of God. So we are told that he hired a special assistant to follow him wherever he went. The person's only job was to be a reminder. Whenever he looked at his assistant's face, he would remember the name of God.

What do you think the person (almost surely a man) looked like? Given the values of traditional Jewish society, he was probably not especially beautiful. Might he have been exceptionally tortured? Was a it a tormented face that reminded the rabbi of God? Or was it something less dramatic, what in Yiddish might be called eydelkeyt, a combination of gentleness, warmth, and nobility? We'll never know, of course. Maybe it was just an ordinary human face, another person made in God's image. But he was there to serve as a reminder, and that was quite enough.

(Rabbi Arthur Green, Judaism's Ten Best Ideas: A Guide for Seekers, pp.14-15)















Textsheets for Students

Who Do You See in the Mirror?: **Self Worth and Body Image**

Breishit (Genesis) 1:26-27

כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, נַעֲשֶׂה אַדַם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ ּכָּדְמוּתֵנוּ; וִיִרְדוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכַל-הַאַרֵץ, וּבְכַל-הַרֵמֶשׁ, הַרֹמֵשׂ ַעַל-הָאָרֵץ.

כז וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַאַדַם בְּצַלְמוֹ, בְּצֵלְם אַלהִים בָּרָא אתוֹ: זָכָר וּנְקַבָּה, בַּרָא אֹתָם. 26 And God said: 'Let us make Adam in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

27 And God created Adam in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.



Paraphrased from Rabbi Telushkin's talk on Self Worth at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXH-9FQWF4E:

My father Shlomo Telushkin a"h (of blessed memory) worked in the 1930s for Rabbi Meir Berlin who headed the Religious Zionists, Mizrachi. Berlin learned English as an adult, and many times when someone learns a language as a second language they have a hard time learning the idioms.

So Rabbi Berlin was puzzled by an idiom that he heard Americans use, and it eventually came to infuriate him. And that was the expression "so and so is worth". When he heard it said of a certain man, and this was during the Depression when people were far poorer, "So and so is worth \$300,000" he didn't think much of the man, so he said "Yes, that's what he is worth and not one penny more."

The real question of worth though is: what are we worth to the people around us? What is our value as a human being? if we continue to associate worth only with money, we are setting ourselves up for misery. If you hear somebody say I am worth \$10 million, what happens to that person when his investments collapse, and he's then worth 2 million dollars, and then if he loses everything, what is he worth — nothing?

Our value is ultimately derived from the fact that we are created in God's image.

We are holy people — and all of us are holy — and our worth to others is ultimately going to derive from how we act.



Elu v'Elu

אלו ואלו

ELU V'ELU

(both) these and those

Wield a "Both/And" Perspective

The Jewish approach includes recognizing that there are multiple sides of an issue, being open to hearing views that are not your own, and grappling with the complexities of life.

SENSIBILITY CARD



Elu v'Elu

ELU V'ELU (both) these and those אלו ואלו Wield a "Both/And"

On One Foot: Elu v'Elu

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"The teachings of both are the words of the living God, but the law is in agreement with the school of Hillel." — Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 13b

"But [it was asked] since both are words of the living God, for what reason was the School of Hillel entitled to have the law determined according to its rulings? Because they were kindly and humble, and because they studied their own rulings and those of the School of Shammai, and even mentioned the teachings of the School of Shammai before their own." — Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 13b

"Rabbi Yochanan said: 'Are you like the son of Lakish? When I said something, the son of Lakish would ask me twenty-four questions, and I would respond with twenty-four answers. As a result, learning increased. And you tell me a *Tannaitic* support. Do I not know that I say good ideas?" — Talmud Bavli, Bava Metzia 24a[YL1]



We will look at Elu v'Elu in the context of:

- Working With Different Types of People 72
- Argue Like A Jew: The School of Hillel 75
- Argue Like A Jew: How Not to Argue 78
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Working with Colleagues and Students Who are Very Different from You 81
- Textsheets for Students 82



Elu v'Elu: Working with Different Types of People

This Activity is Great For



Identity & Relationships

- Team Building
- Student Leaders
 - Inclusion



- Career Development
 Career Development
 - Self-Worth
 - Relationships



Big Ideas

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies Needed: Popsicle Sticks; Pace Palette and Score Cards.

The Pace Palette and Score Cards can be ordered from the Pace Corporation at 858-449-7223. Mention that you are a non-profit, for a 20% discount. You may alternatively choose to use a different personality test (see below for more information).

In this session, students will use the Pace Color Palette to understand their own, and others' personality types. They will then work on how to take advantage of the strengths of everyone on the team to work together most effectively and get the most successful results. If you are not able to access the Pace Color Palette, feel free to use any other appropriate personality test, such as the Myers Briggs, Strengths Finder, A Buzzfeed Quiz on which Disney character represents you, etc.

Separate students into groups of 3 and 4. Give them 20-30 popsicle sticks and ask them to build the tallest structure they can, in 5 minutes. They are not allowed to use tape or glue, but they may use anything else in the room. After 5 minutes have elapsed, students should walk around and view what everyone has created. Then take a few minutes to unpack the group dynamics that were in play.







- How did the people in your group decide how to build the structure?



II. A Deeper Dive

Tell students:

Working together in a group can be very effective, but it can also be confusing - because we are not all alike, and other people's styles can be so different from ours. In order to work together effectively, we need to understand each other, and work on capitalizing on everyone's unique style.

We have a Jewish teaching called "Elu v'Elu" — or to be a little longer — "Elu v'elu divrei Elohim Chayim" — these and these are the words of the living God. Jews believe that there is not only one way to be, or one way that is better than others — all of our different styles are a reflection of the God who made us, and should be respected. In fact, we recite a blessing when seeing a multitude of people, specifically praising God for making us to be so different from one another. Read together and discuss the following source:

Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 58a:

ת״ר הרואה אוכלוסי ישראל אומר ברוך חכם הרזים שאין דעתם דומה זה לזה ואין פרצופיהן דומים זה לזה

Our Rabbis taught: If one sees a crowd of Israelites, he says, "Blessed is the One who discerns secrets," for the mind of each is different from that of the other, and the face of each is different from that of the other.

- What kind of diversity does this blessing focus on?
- Why do you think we have a blessing for diversity?



Today we are going to use a team-building tool developed by the Pace Corporation to understand what "color" we are and how to appreciate and relate to people who are different colors. This will help us live out in our group interactions (and beyond) the important teaching of Elu v'Elu. (This session is crafted for team building; however, you may also wish to use the Pace Palette when working with students on self-esteem and career counseling.)

- 1. Give out the Pace Palettes and Score Cards. Give students a few minutes to take the Pace Palette assessment (on the Score Card) and add up the numbers in each of the vertical columns.
- 2. Tell students what color they are, based on which column they scored highest: first column on the left = red, second column= yellow, third column= blue; fourth column= green.
- 3. Ask students to read the card with the description of their color.
- 4. Tell students to talk to someone else in the room who is a different color than they are. Students should explain to each other what makes them the color that they are.
- 5. Come back together in a group. Introduce an upcoming project and event. Ask students to brainstorm what each color would be good at doing, in order to make this a successful project/event.
- 6. Group together in chavruta, students who are very different from each other, and may have a difficult time working with each other. Tell them to give their color card to their chavruta, and to read how to communicate with each other. Then have them continue the discussion about the project or event, while using the color-appropriate communication tools for the person they are with.

Come back together and reflect on what they have learned.

TALK IT OUT

- How does understanding your own color help you think about how to work with this group?
- activities/Hillel Board Meetings in the future?

Argue Like A Jew

Part 1: The School of Hillel

This Activity is Great For











 Team Building Inclusion

Ideas

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies Needed: Enough soccer sized balls for every 2-3 people in the room. Sticky labels with words or phrases that lend themselves to different opinions, for example: political party; gun policy; health care; minimum wage; mechitzah; Mac or PC; animal shelter or pet store.

Attach a label to different places on the ball, so that the entire ball is covered with the labels.

Separate students into groups of two or three. Give each group a labeled ball (see above) and tell them to toss it back and forth. When they catch the ball, they should look down and see which label their thumb is touching and announce their position about that issue, and then toss it to the next person, who should do the same thing. So, for example, A tosses to B. B's thumb is on "political party" and she says "Independent" and then tosses it to C, whose thumb lands on "mechitzah" and she says "never." This activity is adapted from http://www.training-wheels.com/.

Continue tossing the ball around for a few minutes.



- Did you mostly agree or disagree with your friend's opinions?
- What do you do when you disagree with someone else?





II. A Deeper Dive

Hillel and Shammai were Jewish scholars who lived in the first century BCE, in the Land of Israel, and had many disputes about Jewish law. (If you are leading this session around Chanukah time, tell students about one of their best-known disputes: the order of lighting Chanukah candles. Hillel believed that we should light one candle on the first night, two on the second night, etc. Shammai believed that we should light eight candles on the first night, seven on the second night, etc.) Hillel, of course, is the namesake of Hillel International and campus Hillels, and when asked to teach the entire *Torah* on one foot, he responded: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation of this--go and study it!" (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a)

Read together and discuss the following excerpt from the Babylonian Talmud about the way that the schools of Hillel and Shammai conducted their disputes, and Rabbi Joseph Telushkin's commentary in The Book of Jewish Values:

Babylonian Talmud, Eruvin 13b

שלש שנים נחלקו ב״ש וב״ה הללו אומרים הלכה כמותנו והללו אומרים הלכה כמותנו יצאה בת קול ואמרה אלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים הן והלכה כב״ה וכי מאחר שאלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים מפני מה זכו ב״ה לקבוע הלכה כמותן מפני שנוחין ועלובין היו ושונין דבריהן ודברי ב״ש ולא עוד אלא שמקדימין דברי ב״ש לדבריהן

For three years, there was a dispute Eactually, many disputes] between the School of Shammai and the School of Hillel, the former asserting, "The law (halacha) is according to our view, and the latter asserting, "The law is according to our view." Then a voice issued from heaven announcing, "The teachings of both are the words of the living God, but the law is in agreement with the school of Hillel." But [it was asked] since both are words of the living God, for what reason was the School of Hillel entitled to have the law determined according to their rulings? Because they were kindly and humble, and because they studied their own rulings and those of the School of Shammai, and even mentioned the teachings of the School of Shammai before their own."

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, The Book of Jewish Values: A Day-By-Day Guide to Jewish Living, New York: Random House, 2000, pp. 186-7:

Significantly, the heavenly voice ruled in favor of Hillel and his disciples, even in areas of ritual dispute, for moral reasons: he and his followers were "kindly and humble."

The wording of the passage suggests that Shammai's followers had grown somewhat arrogant. Certain that they possessed the truth, they no longer bothered to listen to, or discuss the arguments of, their opponents. Their overbearing self-confidence led them to become morally less impressive (the language of the Talmud suggests by implication that they were not "kindly and humble") and probably led them to become intellectually less insightful (after all, how insightful can you be if you are studying only one side of the issue?)

Because the School of Hillel studied their opponent's arguments, when they issued a ruling, they were fully cognizant of all the arguments to be offered against their own position. Thus, their humility not only led to their being more pleasant people, but also likely caused them to have greater intellectual depth.

We can all learn a lesson from the behavior of Hillel and his followers: Don't read only books and publications that agree with and reinforce your point of view. If you do so, and many people do, you will never learn what those who disagree with you believe (at best, you will hear a caricature of their position, presented by people who, like you, disagree with it). It would be a good thing in Jewish life if Jews in the different denominations, or in different political camps, started reading newspapers and magazines of the groups with which they disagree, on a regular basis.

If you seldom hear, read, or listen to views that oppose your own, and if almost everyone you talk to sees the world just as your do, your thinking will grow flabby and intolerant. That is often the case with ideologues on the right and left, both in religion and in politics.

As this text teaches us, humble people are not only more pleasant human beings, but in the final analysis, they may well be the only ones who will have something eternally important to teach.

- What resonates with you in this description of the way that the Hillel argued?
- How can you apply these practices in your own life?

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Students should return to their original ball-playing groups. Have them each choose an issue or issues on which they disagreed, and about which they feel fairly passionate. Tell students:



Elu

v'Elu

ese and those

ELU V'ELU (both) these

- Try to follow in the footsteps of the School of Hillel as you discuss this issue. Before you present your position, try to understand the other person's point of view and articulate it. Once you have explained the other position to the other party's satisfaction, present your own point of view.
- Regroup and discuss: What was the effect of listening to and repeating the other person's point of view? How did it affect you? How did it impact your own point of view? How did it affect the dynamic in the room?

Assign "Life homework" to everyone in the room: At some point over the next week, when you are having a discussion or argument with someone else, pause and articulate their point of view (to their satisfaction) before presenting your own. Watch and see how this shifts the dynamic of your conversation.





Argue Like A Jew Part 2: How Not to Argue

This Activity is Great For





- Team Building
- Student Leaders

Big Ideas

Note to Facilitator: In the first session, we talked about how to argue with those who have positions or ideas different from your own. We practiced arguing like the School of Hillel: by first listening to, and then repeating the other's position before presenting our own position. In this session, which can be done either as a stand-alone or together with the first session, we will discuss the benefits of listening to the ideas of someone who is very different from us, and investigate what is fair play, and what is not, in discussions and arguments.

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies Needed: Body Part Deluxe bag from Training Wheels (http://www.trainingwheelsgear.com/products/bodypart-deluxe) or use your own Mr./ Ms. Potato Head with all accessories (or simply print out images of body parts); poster board and markers.

Use the Body Part Deluxe bag (see above) or Mr./Ms. Potato Head or your printouts, and spread the body parts and accessories on a table.

Ask students to choose one body part or other accessory that describes how they behave in a heated discussion or at a meeting. (For example, a student may choose a foot because these discussions always make her want to run away, or a heart because she always acts very emotionally in these kinds of discussions.) Go around and have students explain why they picked each body part.





II. A Deeper Dive

Gather together and read the Talmudic story of the relationship between Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish, two great sages who lived in the Land of Israel in the 3rd Century CE:

Babylonian Talmud, Bava Metzia 84a

יומא חד הוה קא סחי ר' יוחנן בירדנא חזייה ריש לקיש ושוור לירדנא אבתריה אמר ליה חילך לאורייתא אמר ליה שופרך לנשי א״ל אי הדרת בך יהיבנא לך אחותי דשפירא מינאי קביל עליה בעי למיהדר לאתויי מאניה ולא מצי הדר אקרייה ואתנייה ושוייה גברא רבא יומא חד הוו מפלגי בי מדרשא הסייף והסכין והפגיון והרומח ומגל יד ומגל קציר מאימתי מקבלין טומאה משעת גמר מלאכתן ומאימתי גמר מלאכתן רבי יוחנן אמר משיצרפם בכבשן ריש לקיש אמר משיצחצחן במים א״ל לסטאה בלסטיותיה ידע אמר ליה ומאי אהנת לי התם רבי קרו לי הכא רבי קרו לי אמר ליה אהנאי לך דאקרבינך תחת כנפי השכינה חלש דעתיה דרבי יוחנן חלש ריש לקיש אתאי אחתיה קא בכיא אמרה ליה עשה בשביל בני אמר לה (ירמיהו מט) עזבה יתומיך אני אחיה עשה בשביל אלמנותי אמר לה (ירמיהו מט) ואלמנותיך עלי תבטחו נח נפשיה דר' שמעון בן לקיש והוה קא מצטער ר' יוחנן בתריה טובא אמרו רבנן מאן ליזיל ליתביה לדעתיה ניזיל רבי אלעזר בן פדת דמחדדין שמעתתיה אזל יתיב קמיה כל מילתא דהוה אמר רבי יוחנן אמר ליה תניא דמסייעא לך אמר את כבר לקישא בר לקישא כי הוה אמינא מילתא הוה מקשי לי עשרין וארבע קושייתא ומפריקנא ליה עשרין וארבעה פרוקי וממילא רווחא שמעתא ואת אמרת תניא דמסייע לך אטו לא ידענא דשפיר קאמינא הוה קא אזיל וקרע מאניה וקא בכי ואמר היכא את בר לקישא היכא את בר לקישא והוה קא צוח עד דשף דעתיה [מיניה] בעו רבנן רחמי עליה ונח נפשיה

One day Rabbi Yochanan was swimming in the Jordan. Reish Lakish saw him and jumped into the Jordan after him. He (Rabbi Yochanan) said: "You should use your strength for Torah." He (Reish Lakish) said: "You should use your good looks for

women." He said: "If you return to Torah, I

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Elu

אלו ואלו

nese and those

v'Elu

ELU V'ELU (both) thesi

Wield a "Both/And"

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TALK IT OUT

- Why does Rabbi Yochanan recruit Reish Lakish and become his learning partner in the beginning of the story? Doesn't he have plenty of other candidates who are Torah scholars why does he choose a bandit?
- It seems that Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish were successful learning partners for many years. What finally breaks their relationship?
- What was so awful for Rabbi Yochanan about learning with Rabbi Elazar ben Pedat?

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Choose one or both of the following activities depending upon your group:

- 1. Separate into groups of 3 or 4. Give out poster boards and markers. Ask students to create symbols that illustrate the rules of discourse they wish to have in their committee/board meetings. What kind of discussion do they want to encourage? What kind of comments are out of bounds? What symbols could they use in their board meetings to quickly remind everyone when discussions become too much like Rabbi Elazar ben Pedat, or too personally hurtful like the exchange between Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish?
- 2. Lay out the Training Wheels or Potato head body parts again on the table or floor. Ask students to choose a body part or accessory that symbolizes something they will do as a result of the discussion today. Go around and have students explain in a line or two what they chose and why? (E.g. someone may choose an ear because they will listen closer before speaking, someone may choose eyes because they will truly look at the other person and consider their vulnerabilities, before tossing off a comment that may be hurtful).

Just for Hillel Professionals: Working with Colleagues and Students Who are Very Different from You

This Activity is Great For





I. Beginning the Conversation

Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of Elu v'Elu into your relationships with colleagues and students:

- 1. Which of your colleagues do you work with the most? Is there a colleague who you are hesitant to work with because he or she is so different from you? What is an upcoming project in which that person's perspective would be helpful?
- 2. Do you ever hold back from expressing your opinion when it is not the same as your colleagues'? What can you do to feel secure and open enough to express those opinions?
- 3. What do you do to encourage the free flow of ideas in your events and classes? How can you create an environment in which everyone in the groups you work with, will feel secure and open enough to express their true opinions?
- 4. How do you react when a student has a very different worldview than your own? Do you try to change their mind? When is it appropriate to try to win another over to your own worldview, and when should you help them continue on their own individual path?

Textsheets for Students Elu v'Elu

אלו ואלו

ELU V'ELU (both) these and those

Wield a "Both/And"

On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you!



Elu v'Elu: Working With Different Types of People

Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 58a:

ת״ר הרואה אוכלוסי ישראל אומר ברוך חכם הרזים שאין דעתם דומה זה לזה ואין פרצופיהן דומים זה לזה

Our Rabbis taught: If one sees a crowd of Israelites, he says, "Blessed is the One who discerns secrets," for the mind of each is different from that of the other, and the face of each is different from that of the other.





Textsheets for Students

Argue Like A Jew: Part 1: The School of Hillel

Babylonian Talmud, Eruvin 13b

שלש שנים נחלקו ב"ש וב"ה הללו אומרים הלכה כמותנו והללו אומרים הלכה כמו־ תנו יצאה בת קול ואמרה אלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים הן והלכה כב״ה וכי מאחר שאלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים מפני מה זכו ב״ה לקבוע הלכה כמותן מפני שנוחין ועלובין היו ושונין דבריהן ודברי ב״ש ולא עוד אלא שמקדימין דברי ב״ש לדבריהן

For three years, there was a dispute [actually, many disputes] between the School of Shammai and the School of Hillel, the former asserting, "The law (halacha) is according to our view, and the latter asserting, "The law is according to our view." Then a voice issued from heaven announcing, "The teachings of both are the words of the living God, but the law is in agreement with the school of Hillel." But [it was asked] since both are words of the living God, for what reason was the School of Hillel entitled to have the law determined according to their rulings? Because they were kindly and humble, and because they studied their own rulings and those of the School of Shammai, and even mentioned the teachings of the School of Shammai before their own."

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, The Book of Jewish Values: A Day-By-Day Guide to Jewish Living, New York: Random House, 2000, pp. 186-7:

Significantly, the heavenly voice ruled in favor of Hillel and his disciples, even in areas of ritual dispute, for moral reasons: he and his followers were "kindly and humble."

The wording of the passage suggests that Shammai's followers had grown somewhat arrogant. Certain that they possessed the truth, they no longer bothered to listen to, or discuss the arguments of, their opponents. Their overbearing self-confidence led them to become morally less impressive (the language of the Talmud suggests by implication that they were not "kindly and humble") and probably led them to become intellectually less insightful (after all, how insightful can you be if you are studying only one side of the issue?)

Because the School of Hillel studied their opponent's arguments, when they issued a ruling, they were fully cognizant of all the arguments to be offered against their own position. Thus, their humility not only led to their being more pleasant people, but also likely caused them to have greater intellectual depth.

We can all learn a lesson from the behavior of Hillel and his followers: Don't read only books and publications that agree with and reinforce your point of view. If you do so, and many people do, you will never learn what those who disagree with you believe (at best, you will hear a caricature of their position, presented by people who, like you, disagree with it). It would be a good thing in Jewish life if Jews in the different denominations, or in different political camps, started reading newspapers and magazines of the groups with which they disagree, on a regular basis.

If you seldom hear, read, or listen to views that oppose your own, and if almost everyone you talk to sees the world just as your do, your thinking will grow flabby and intolerant. That is often the case with ideologues on the right and left, both in religion and in politics.

As this text teaches us, humble people are not only more pleasant human beings, but in the final analysis, they may well be the only ones who will have something eternally important to teach.



Argue Like A Jew: Part 2: How Not to Argue

Babylonian Talmud, Bava Metzia 84a

יומא חד הוה קא סחי ר' יוחנן בירדנא חזייה ריש לקיש ושוור לירדנא אבתריה אמר ליה חילך לאורייתא אמר ליה שופרך לנשי א״ל אי הדרת בך יהיבנא לך אחותי דשפירא מינאי קביל עליה בעי למיהדר לאתויי מאניה ולא מצי הדר אקרייה ואתנייה ושוייה גברא רבא יומא חד הוו מפלגי בי מדרשא הסייף והסכין והפגיון והרומח ומגל יד ומגל קציר מאימתי מקבלין טומאה משעת גמר מלאכתן ומאימתי גמר מלאכתן רבי יוחנן אמר משיצרפם בכבשן ריש לקיש אמר משיצחצחן במים א״ל לסטאה בלסטיותיה ידע אמר ליה ומאי אהנת לי התם רבי קרו לי הכא רבי קרו לי אמר ליה אהנאי לך דאקרבינך תחת כנפי השכינה חלש דעתיה דרבי יוחנן חלש ריש לקיש אתאי אחתיה קא בכיא אמרה ליה עשה בשביל בני אמר לה (ירמיהו מט) עזבה יתומיך אני אחיה עשה בשביל אלמנותי אמר לה (ירמיהו מט) ואלמנותיך עלי תבטחו נח נפשיה דר' שמעון בן לקיש והוה קא מצטער ר' יוחנן בתריה טובא אמרו רבנן מאן ליזיל ליתביה לדעתיה ניזיל רבי אלעזר בן פדת דמחדדין שמעתתיה אזל יתיב קמיה כל מילתא דהוה אמר רבי יוחנן אמר ליה תניא דמסייעא לך אמר את כבר לקישא בר לקישא כי הוה אמינא מילתא הוה מקשי לי עשרין וארבע קושייתא ומפריקנא ליה עשרין וארבעה פרוקי וממילא רווחא שמעתא ואת אמרת תניא דמסייע לך אטו לא ידענא דשפיר קאמינא הוה קא אזיל וקרע מאניה וקא בכי ואמר היכא את בר לקישא היכא את בר לקישא והוה קא צוח עד דשף דעתיה [מיניה] בעו רבנן רחמי עליה ונח נפשיה

One day Rabbi Yochanan was swimming in the Jordan. Reish Lakish saw him and jumped into the Jordan after him. He (Rabbi Yochanan) said: "You should use your strength for Torah." He (Reish Lakish) said: "You should use your good looks for women." He said: "If you return to Torah, I

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Shevirah

שבירה

SHEVIRAH

brokenness

Embrace Imperfection

The Jewish approach makes room for both the joys and sorrows of life, and acknowledges that we are shaped by our struggles and losses as much as by our victories.

In order to be whole, one must also experience brokenness.

SENSIBILITY CARD





On One Foot: Shevirah

IMPORTANT TEXTS

- "The tablets as well as the broken pieces of the tablets were placed in the Ark."
- Babylonian Talmud Bava Batra 14b
- "There is nothing more whole than a broken heart"
- Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk (1787-1859)
- "If you believe that it is possible to break, believe that it is possible to repair."
- Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, (1772-1810)



We will look at Shevirah in the context of:

- Beit Midrash: Broken and Whole 86
- What Becomes of the Brokenhearted? 91
- Tikkun Olam: Can We Repair a Broken World? 95
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Vulnerability in Leading and Teaching 100
- Textsheets for Students 101



Beit Midrash: **Broken and Whole**

This Activity is Great For



Learning

Beit Midrash

Dvar Torah



Identity & Relationships

Note: This session can be used as a straightforward Beit Midrash session, with intensive text study, or you can choose to tell the story of Moses and the tablets and focus more on the inclusion message. Mix and match the sources as you see fit.

Ideas

I. Beginning the Conversation

Set the stage for students — be as dramatic as possible to capture their attention. Briefly remind students of the Passover story, culminating in the Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. (Challenge yourself to do this in 3 minutes or less.) End by telling students: "and they lived happily ever after" — until just a few days later. Let's read together what happened next."

Exodus 32: 1-19

אַ וַיַּרָא הַעָם כִּי בֹשֵשׁ מֹשֶׁה לַרֵדֶת מָן הַהַּר וַיִּקְהֵּל הַעָם עַל ּ אַהַרן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶלַיו קוּם עֲשֶׂה לַנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֶלְכוּ לְפַנֵינוּ פִּי זָה מֹשָה הַאִישׁ אַשֶּׁר הָעַלַנוּ מֵאֶרֵץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יַדַענוּ מֵה

ַב וַיֹּאמֵר אֵלֵהֵם אַהַרֹן פָּרָקוּ נִזְמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֵׁר בִּאָזְנֵי נִשֵּׁיכֵם בַ בָּנֵיכֶם ובָנתֵיכֶם וָהַבִּיאוּ אֵלַי.

גַּיִּתְפַּרָקוּ כַּל הָעָם אֶת נִזְמֵי הַזַּהַב אֱשֵׁר בְּאַזְנֵיהֶם וַיַּבִיאוּ גַּיַ אַל אַהַרֹן.

- 1 When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."
- 2 Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me."
- 3 So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron.





Exodus 32: 1-19 (continued)

ד וַיַּקַח מִיַדַם וַיַּצַר אֹתוֹ בַּחֵרֵט וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ עֲגֵל מסכה ויאמרו אלה אלהיר ישראל אשר הַעַלוּךְ מֵאֶרֵץ מִצְרַיִם.

הַ וַיַּרָא אַהַרֹן וַיָּבֵן מִזְבֵּח לְפָנִיו וַיִּקְרָא אַהַרֹן ַוּיֹאמַר חַג לַה׳ מַחַר.

ו וַיַשָּׁכִּימוּ מִמְּחֲרַת וַיַּעֲלוּ עלת וַיַּגִּשׁוּ שָׁלַמִים וַיַשֶׁב הַעָם לָאֲכֹל וִשָּׁתוֹ וַיַּקְמוֹ לְצַחֵק. {פּ

ז וַיִּדַבֵּר ה׳ אֵל מֹשֵׁה לֵךְ רֵד כִּי שָׁחֵת עַמִּךְ אשר העלית מארץ מצרים.

חַ סַרוּ מַהֶּר מִן הַדֵּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צְוִיתָם עֲשׂוּ לַהֶּם חַ עגל מסכה וישתחוו לו ויזבחו לו ויאמרו אלה אַלהַיך יִשְּׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָעֵלוּךְ מָאֶרֵץ מִצְרַיִם.

ָט וַיֹּאמֵר ה׳ אֵל מֹשֶׁה רַאִיתִי אֵת הַעָם הַזָּה וָהָנֵּה עַם קשָׁה עֹרֵף הוּא.

י ועַתַּה הַנִּיחָה לִּי וִיחַר אַפִּי בַהֶם וַאַכַלֵּם י ואעשה אותר לגוי גדול.

יא וַיִּחַל משָׁה אֶת פָּנֵי ה׳ אֱלֹקַיו וַיּאמֶר לַמַה ה׳ יַחַרה אפּרָ בּעמַרָ אשׁר הוֹצאת מאַרץ מִצְרֵיִם בַּכֹחַ גַּדוֹל וּבְיֵד חַזַקַה.

יב לַמַּה יֹאמָרוּ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר בְּרַעָה הוֹצִיאַם לַהַרג אתם בַּהַרִים וּלְכַלֹתַם מֵעַל פָּנֵי הַאָדַמַה שוב מחרון אפר והנחם על הרעה לעמר.

יג זכר לאברהם ליצחק ולישראל עבדיך אַשֶּׁר נִשְׁבַּעִתַּ לַהֶּם בַּרְ וַתִּדַבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם אַרְבָּה אָת זַרעַכֶם כָּכוֹכָבֵי הַשַּׁמִיִם וְכַל הַאָרֵץ הַזֹּאת אַשֶּׁר אַמַרְתִּי אֶתֵּן לְזַרְעֲכֶם וְנַחֲלוּ לְעֹלַם.

יד ויַנַּחם ה׳ על הרעה אשׁר דבּר לעשׂוֹת לִעַמּוֹ.

טו ויַפן ויַרד משה מן ההר וּשׁנִי לחת העדת בַּיַדוֹ לָחֹת כָּתָבִים מִשְׁנֵי עַבְרֵיהֶם מְזֵה וּמְזֵה הם כתבים.

- 4 He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."
- 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord."
- 6 So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.
- 7 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt.
- 8 They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'
- 9 "I have seen these people," the Lord said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people.
- 10 Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation."
- 11 But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God. "Lord," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?
- 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people.
- 13 Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever."
- 14 Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.
- 15 Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back.







Exodus 32: 1-19 (continued)

טז וָהַלָּחת מַעֲשֶׁה אֱלֹהִים הַמַּה וְהַמְּכָתַב מְכָתַב אֱלֹהִים הוּא חַרוּת עַל הַלְּחֹת.

יז וַיִּשָּׁמֵע יִהוֹשָּׁעַ אֶת קוֹל הַעַם בְּרֵעֹה וַיֹּאמֵר אל משה קול מלחמה במחנה.

יח ויאמר אין קול ענות גבורה ואין קול ענות חַלוּשָה קוֹל עַנּוֹת אַנֹכִי שֹּמֵע.

יט וַיָּהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר קַרַב אֱל הַמַּחֵנֶה וַיַּרָא אֶת הָעֵגֵל וּמְחֹלֹת וַיִּחַר אַף מֹשֵׁה וַיַּשָּׁלֵךְ מִיָּדָו אֵת הלחת וישבר אתם תחת ההר.

- 16 The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.
- 17 When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of war in the camp."
- 18 Moses replied: "It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear."
- 19 When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.



- What are some of the things in this story that are broken?
- Is Moses caught by surprise when he sees the people worshipping the Golden Calf? Why do you think he reacts

II. A Deeper Dive

A. Bibliodrama

Ask for volunteers to engage in Bibliodrama: Narrate the story that we read above from the perspective of Moses (using the pronoun "I"). Explain what you feel as you stand at the mountain receiving the Law, your reaction to God's telling you about the actions of your people, your conversation with Joshua, and the breaking of the tablets.

Note: ask for several volunteers to engage in the Bibliodrama, as they may each have a different perspective.





- What new insights did you get into the story when you put yourself in Moses's
- What new insights did you get into your own moments of brokenness when you



B. Where do broken tablets go?

In this activity, students will reflect on the Talmudic statement that the broken tablets were kept in the Ark along with the whole tablets, and will write and share their own commentaries on why it was important to preserve the broken tablets, and to keep them right next to the whole tablets. This will set the stage for them to think about the value of inclusion — and its benefits to the entire group.

Tell students (or read together Exodus 35:1-4, 27-28) that God forgives the people, and then Moses goes back up to Mount Sinai and receives a second set of tablets. This time, though, Moses chisels the stone and writes the words of the Ten Commandments on the tablets himself.

Now that we have the new tablets, what happens to the old ones? Read together the text from the Babylonian *Talmud*, Bava Batra 14b:

Talmud Bavli Bava Batra 14b:

דתני רב יוסף (דברים י) אשר שברת ושמתם מלמד שהלו־ חות ושברי לוחות מונחין בארון

Rabbi Joseph learned: [The verse states: "the tablets] that you broke and put them" (Deuteronomy 10): [the juxtaposition of these words I teaches us that the tablets as well as the broken pieces of the tablets were placed in the Ark."

Why were the broken tablets kept in the Ark? What was so valuable about them that required them to be kept in the Ark?

Write your own commentary in the space below to explain this perplexing statement.

Go around the room and have students read their commentaries and reflect upon them.





OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

The Talmud in Tractate Berachot uses the example of the tablets to teach a general lesson of inclusion. Read the text together, and then talk it out. (Note to teacher: Make sure not to refer to people with disabilities as "broken" but to instead embrace the general idea of the metaphor).

Talmud Bavli Berachot 8b

ר' יהושע בן לוי לבניה . . . הזהרו בזקן ששכח תלמודו מחמת אונסו דאמרינן לוחות ושברי לוחות מונחות בארון

Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said to his children . . . Be careful regarding how you treat an elderly individual who has forgotten his learning due to an extenuating circumstance (Rashi: as a result of sickness or struggle to make a livelihood, be careful to honor him), as we say, "The tablets as well as the broken pieces of the tablets were placed in the Ark."



- How does the *Talmud* apply the case of the broken tablets to interpersonal relationships?
- How can true inclusion of others who have different challenges, or appear different on the outside, enhance our



What Becomes of the **Brokenhearted?**

This Activity is Great For





- Relationships
- Self-Worth
- Team Building
- Group Dynamics



Big Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Divide students into two groups for a "sing-down" using the word "broken". Students will compete to see how many songs they can think of, and sing, that use the word broken. (Information about sing-down activities can be found at http://extension.psu.edu/youth/intergenerational/curricula-and-activities/handouts/other-activities/sing-down.) Students will discover that brokenness is usually associated with despair. This activity will set the stage for them to discover that Judaism sees brokenness as a natural part of life that can lead to opportunity and growth.



After students have finished singing all the songs they know with the word "broken", reflect with them on the

- According to these songs, how does one deal with brokenness? Do you agree with this perspective?





II. A Deeper Dive

Read together the following excerpt from Jewish educator Erica Brown about the Jewish attitude toward brokenness. (Erica Brown, Commentary, Voices and Visions at https://www.voices-visions.org/content/poster/collection-poster-rabbi-menachemmendel-kotzk-michael-peters)

"Many experiences in life try to break us: illness, loneliness, the death of those we love, rejection, insecurity, loss. But such experiences also make us more whole as human beings. They expand our range of consciousness and compassion. They enlarge our capacity for inclusion. They make us stronger and help us reach out to others with greater empathy and concern. When we acknowledge that we are broken, we enter a universe where we are not measured by perfection but by our willingness to repair ourselves and the world. We stop judging others only when we can recognize our own inadequacies."

Before you begin to discuss this paragraph together, give students the time and space to reflect on the ideas presented here. Each student should have a copy of this paragraph in the student handout, as the only text on the page. Ask each student to underline the sentence in this text that speaks to them the most, and then write a line or two underneath with their response or reaction to the underlined sentence. Students should then pass their papers on to the person to the right, who should write a line or two in response to the first student's comments. Continue to have students comment and pass on, until each student has had a chance to comment 4 or 5 times. Return the papers to the original commenters, and give them time to read the comments.



- What can be positive about brokenness?
- Were there any comments on your paper that gave you another way of thinking about brokenness?

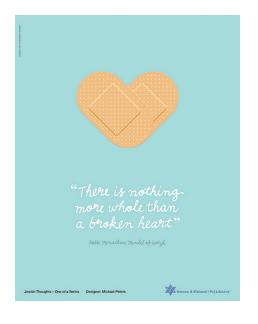
III. Reflect and Craft

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, also known as the Kotzker Rebbe (1787-1859), was a Hasidic rabbi known for withering self-analysis and high standards. He spent the last twenty years of his life in solitude.

In the following activity, students have the opportunity to reflect on the Kotzker Rebbe's observation that "there is nothing more whole than a broken heart" through art. They will see how one artist illustrated this observation, and will have the opportunity to illustrate the quote in their own way. Know your audience - for some groups, 5 minutes to illustrate the quote will be enough, others may need a full half-hour.

Introduce the Kotzker's saying, and share the following illustration from Michael Peters. Use the illustration to understand how a broken heart can be whole. Then give students the opportunity to create their own illustrations.







- How can a broken heart be considered whole?
- How can something be "more whole" than another?
- Do you agree with the artist's illustration of this idea?

Bring in paper, glue, scissors, pencils and "broken" materials (for example, scraps of fabric, discarded containers, rejection letters -- be creative!) for students to use to illustrate the Kotzker Rebbe's quote. When students are done, go around the table and give them the opportunity to explain their artwork and how it reflects on the relationship between brokenness and wholeness.

Watch and Talk

As an alternative or in addition to the art activity, show students Phil Hansen's incredible Ted Talk, Embrace the Shake https://www.ted.com/talks/phil_hansen_embrace_the_shake. Questions for chavruta discussion:

- 1. How can embracing limitations help us?
- 2. What are your "shakes"? How can you embrace your shakes/brokenness to become more whole, giving, creative and purposeful?





OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

· How do you currently think about brokenness in your own life?



- · How would your life be different if you viewed brokenness as an opportunity for growth and wholeness?
- What is holding you back?
- What piece of advice would you give yourself the next time you experience brokenness?



Tikkun Olam: Can We Repair a Broken World?

This Activity is Great For



- Service Projects
- · Challah for Hunger

Big Idea

Shevirah SHEVIRAH

I. Beginning the Conversation

Arrange the room beforehand if possible so that students can sit in comfortable chairs. Dim the lights and light candles. This will help students focus on the session, and will get them in the mood for some Kabbalah later on in this session.:)

 Play Leonard Cohen's song Anthem (www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDTph7mer3I) and give out the lyrics (see Textsheets for Students).

TALK IT OUT

• In the beginning of the song, Cohen sings of all the things that are wrong with the world, and the evil that people do to one another. But then he sings:

But they've summoned, they've summoned up and they're going to hear from me.

What does he mean by that? What can one person do about this broken world?









Ring the bells that still can ring

What is important about the cracks in the world? What is the relationship between cracks and light?

• Do you feel that there are things in the world that are seriously broken? What is

II. A Deeper Dive

In this section, we will look at repair as a possibility, opportunity and responsibility.

A. Rabbi Nachman's Saying

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810, Ukraine) was a Hasidic rabbi, mystic and storyteller. His teachings are still powerful; one of his famous teachings is:

אם אתה מאמין שאפשר לקלקל, תאמין שאפשר לתקן.

If you believe that it is possible to break, believe that it is possible to repair.



- Do you agree with Rabbi Nachman? What is the relationship between breaking and repairing?
- Is it easier for you to believe that something can be broken, or that something can be repaired? Why do you think that is?

Print or write Rabbi Nachman's teaching on stickers/labels. Bring in newspapers (including the campus

• How did it feel to place these stickers on articles about situations that needed repair? How did it affect how you looked at the article or thought about the issue?





B. Rabbi Nachman's Chair

Tell students the story about Rabbi Nachman's chair:

About Rebbe Nachman's Chair, http://www.breslov.org/about-rebbe-nachmans-chair/ Shortly before Rosh Hashanah 1808, one of Rebbe Nachman's followers, the shochet (ritual slaughterer) of Teplik, brought the Rebbe an exquisitely handcrafted chair. The Rebbe asked the shochet how long it had taken him to make the chair, and he replied that he had worked an hour a day for the previous six months. The Rebbe said, "Then for half a year, you spent an hour each day thinking of me."

During the Cossack raids against the Jews in the Ukraine in the early 1920s, the chair was dismantled and cut into small pieces by Reb Tzvi Aryeh Lippel. He carried it from Tcherin to Kremenchug, some twenty miles (thirty-two kilometers) distant, running nearly the entire time. The chair was deposited with the Rosenfeld family of Kremenchug.

In 1936 Reb Moshe Ber Rosenfeld brought the chair to Jerusalem. In 1959 it was restored by craftsmen from the Israel Museum. In 1984 the chair was again refinished, by Katriel's of Jerusalem, and placed on display in the Breslov synagogue in the Meah Shearim neighborhood of Jerusalem, where it can be seen today.



- How can you take part in rebuilding those broken things?
- Have you ever thought about the social action work you do as holy repair work?









C. Tikkun Olam is Holy Work

(Note to teacher: Know your students! You may wish to spend 5 minutes on this, 50 minutes on it, or skip it entirely.)

Tell students that one of the earliest uses of the phrase "Tikkun Olam" was in Kabbalah. Briefly tell students the story of the creation of the world according to Lurianic Kabbalah:

When the world was first created, God created space for a world, and set up vessels to hold the divine light. But the divine light was so powerful that the vessels broke, scattering fragments of light throughout the world. Our job is *tikkun*, gathering up and restoring the light, and restoring harmony to creation.

OR read together:

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, To Heal A Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility:

"[T] he world is a broken place, literally a broken vessel, and our human task is to put those fragments together — to repair the brokenness.

There are certain questions that, once asked, seem obvious, yet it takes a special genius to formulate them for the first time. That was the case with Rabbi Luria [Rabbi Isaac ben Solomon Luria, 1534-72]. He posed a question, seemingly naïve in its simplicity, yet far-reaching in its consequences: If God exists, how does the world exist? If God is infinite, filling the world with his presence and every place with his glory, how is there room — physical or metaphysical — for anything else? Two things cannot coexist at a single time in a single space. Infinity must always crowd out finitude. How then is there a universe?

Luria's radical answer was the doctrine known as tzimzum, a word that means contraction, self-effacement, withdrawal or concealment. God, he said, contracted into himself, to leave a space for the world. The universe that unfolded day by day during six phases of Genesis 1 was necessarily only the second stage of creation. The first was the act of divine selfeffacement, a withdrawal into himself on the part of God. The Hebrew word for "universe" and "eternity" — olam comes from the root *I-m* which also means "hiding" or "concealment". Only when God is hidden can the universe exist.

To this must be added a second idea, *shevirat ha-kelim* ("breaking of the vessels"), a catastrophe theory of creation. God, in making the world, could not leave it void of His presence. He therefore sent forth rays of his light (strangely, this is not unlike the "background radiation" discovered by scientists in 1965 which eventually proved the Big Bang theory of the birth of the universe). The light was, however, too intense for its containers, which thereby broke, scattering fragments of light throughout the world. It is our task to gather up these fragments, wherever they are, and restore them to their proper place. Hence the third idea: tikkun, healing a fractured world. Each religious act we do has an effect on the ecology of creation. It restores something of lost harmony to the cosmos."





- have heard this phrase?
- How could thinking of yourself as restoring the light change the way you look at everyday situations?



OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Give students some more labels with Rabbi Nachman's teaching to take home with them. Ask them to place the stickers on places that need repair, and to try to approach those places or situations with the belief that it is possible to repair. Students should come back next time prepared to report on how the labels impacted how they viewed, and responded, to the situation.





Just for Hillel Professionals: Vulnerability in Leading and Teaching

This Activity is Great For



I. Beginning the Conversation

As educators, we often feel that we have to appear 100% confident and unwavering in order to attract students to Judaism. How can expressing vulnerability in our teaching and leadership enhance our practice?

Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of *shevirah* into your teaching:

- 1. Do you think that you need to appear absolutely sure or joyful so that students will view Judaism in the most positive light?
- 2. How much of your own vulnerability do you share in your teaching?
- 3. Think about some of your role models. In what ways do they show their vulnerability?
- 4. What is appropriate sharing of vulnerability, and what is TMI?

Try it out: find a time in your teaching to let some vulnerability through. How does this change your teaching and interaction with your students?





Textsheets for Students



Beit Midrash: Broken and Whole

Exodus 32: 1-19

- א וַיַּרָא הַעָם כִּי בֹשֵׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לַרֶדֶת מָן הַהַּר וַיִּקְהֵל הַעָם עַל אַהֵרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלַיו קוּם עשה לַנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ לְפַנֵינוּ כִּי זָה משה הַאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלַנוּ מֱאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יַדַענוּ מֶה הָיָה לוֹ.
- ב וַיֹּאמֵר אֱלֶהֶם אַהַרֹן פַּרְקוּ נִזְמֵי הַזַּהַב ב אַשֶּׁר בָּאַזְנֵי נָשֵׁיכֶם בַּנֵיכֶם וּבַנֹתֵיכֶם וַהַבִּיאוּ אלי.
 - גַוּיִתְפַּרָקוּ כַּל הַעָם אֵת נִזְמֵי הַזַּהַב אֵשֶׁר 🗎 בָּאַזְנֵיהֶם וַיַּבִיאוּ אֱל אַהֶּרֹן.
- וַיַּצָר אֹתוֹ בַּחֶרֵט וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ עֵגֵל ד וַיָּקַח מִיָּדָם וַיַּצַר אֹתוֹ מַסֶּכָה וַיֹּאמָרוּ אֱלֶה אֱלֹהֶיךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הַעַלוּךְ מָאָרֵץ מִצְרַיִם.
- הַ וַיַּרָא אַהַרֹן וַיִּבֵן מִזְבֵּחַ לְפָנָיו וַיִּקְרָא אַהַרֹן ויׂאמר חג לה׳ מחר.
- ו וַיַשָּׁכִּימוּ מִמְּחֲרַת וַיַּעֵלוּ עלת וַיַּגִּשׁוּ שָׁלַמִים וַיַשֶׁב הַעָם לֵאֱכֹל וִשָּׁתוֹ וַיַּקְמוּ לְצַחֶק. (פּ
- זַ וַיִדַבֶּר ה׳ אֵל מֹשֵה לֵךְ רֵד כִּי שָׁחֶת עַמְּךְ אַשֵּׁר הֶעֱלֵיתַ מֶאֶרֵץ מִצְרַיִם.
 - חַ סָרוּ מַהֵּר מִן הַדֵּרֵךְ אֲשֵׁר צִוִּיתִם עַשׂוּ לַהָּם עָגֵל מַסֶּכָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֵווּ לוֹ וַיִּזְבַּחוּ לוֹ וַיֹּאמָרוּ אֵלֶה אֱלֹהֵיךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלוּךְ מֵאֶרֵץ מִצְרַיִם.
 - ט וַיֹּאמֵר ה׳ אֵל מֹשֶׁה רָאִיתִי אֵת הַעָם הַזָּה וְהָנֵּה עֲם קשָׁה עֹרֵף הוּא.
 - י וְעַתַּה הַנִּיחָה לִּי וְיִחַר אַפִּי בַהֶּם וַאֲכַלֵּם יִ וָאֶעֱשָׂה אוֹתָךְ לְגוֹי גַּדוֹל.

- When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."
- 2 Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me."
- 3 So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron.
- 4 He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf. fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."
- 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord."
- 6 So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.
- 7 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt.
- 8 They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'
- 9 "I have seen these people," the Lord said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people.
- 10 Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation."



Beit Midrash: Broken and Whole (continued)

Exodus 32: 1-19 (continued)

יא וַיָחַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת פָּנֵי ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיו וַיֹּאמֶר לַמַה ה׳ יֵחֵרֵה אַפּּךְ בִּעַמֵּךְ אֵשֵׁר הוֹצֵאתָ מֵאֵרֵץ מצרים בכח גדול וביד חזקה.

יב למה יאמרו מצרים לאמר ברעה הוֹצִיאַם לַהַרֹג אֹתַם בָּהַרִים וּלְכַלֹּתַם מֵעַל פָּנֵי הָאַדָמָה שׁוּב מֵחֵרוֹן אַפַּךְ וִהִנַּחֵם עַל ָהַרָעָה לְעַמֶּךְ.

יג זְכֹר לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַבָּ־ דִיךְ אֲשֵׁר נִשָּׁבַּעִתָּ לָהֵם בָּךְ וַתִּדַבֵּר אֱלֵהֵם אַרבַּה אֵת זַרעַכֶם כָּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם וְכָל הַאָרֵץ הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אַמַרְתִּי אֱתֵּן לְזַרְעֲכֶם וְנָחֲלוּ לְעֹלָם.

יד וַיִּנַחֶם ה׳ עַל הַרַעַה אֲשֶׁר דְּבֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת

טו וַיִּפֶן וַיֵּרֶד מֹשֶׁה מִן הַהַּר וּשְׁנֵי לְחֹת ָהָעֶדָת בְּיָדוֹ לְחֹת כָּתֻבִים מִשָּׁנֵי עַבְרֵיהַם מזַה וּמַזָּה הֶם כָּתַבִּים.

טז וְהַלְּחֹת מַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים הֶמָּה וְהַמְּכְתַּב מְכָתַב אֱלֹהִים הוּא חַרוּת עַל הַלְּחֹת.

יז וַיִּשָּׁמַע יִהוֹשָּׁעַ אֶת קוֹל הַעַם בְּרֵעֹה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵל מֹשֶׁה קוֹל מִלְחַמַה בַּמַּחַנֵה.

יח וַיֹּאמֶר אֵין קוֹל עַנוֹת גִּבוּרֵה וְאֵין קוֹל ענות חלושה קול ענות אנכי שמע.

יט וַיִּהִי כַּאֵשֶׁר קָרַב אֵל הַמַּחֵנֶה וַיַּרְא אֵת העגל ומחלת ויחר אף משה וישלר מידו אָת הַלָּחֹת וַיִּשְׁבֵּר אֹתַם תַּחַת הַהַר.

- 11 But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God. "Lord," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?
- 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people.
- 13 Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever."
- 14 Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.
- 15 Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back.
- 16 The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.
- 17 When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of war in the camp."
- 18 Moses replied: "It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear."
- 19 When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.





Textsheets for Students

Beit Midrash: Broken and Whole (continued)

Talmud Bavli Bava Batra 14h:

דתני רב יוסף (דברים י) אשר שברת ושמתם מלמד שהלוחות ושברי לוחות מונחין בארון

Rabbi Joseph learned: [The verse states: "the tablets] that you broke and put them" (Deuteronomy 10): [the juxtaposition of these words] teaches us that the tablets as well as the broken pieces of the tablets were placed in the Ark."

Talmud Bavli Berachot 8b

ר׳ יהושע בן לוי לבניה . . . הזהרו בזקן ששכח תלמודו מחמת אונסו דאמרינן לוחות ושברי לוחות מונחות בארון Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said to his children ... Be careful regarding how you treat an elderly individual who has forgotten his learning due to an extenuating circumstance (Rashi: as a result of sickness or struggle to make a livelihood, be careful to honor him), as we say, "The tablets as well as the broken pieces of the tablets were placed in the Ark."

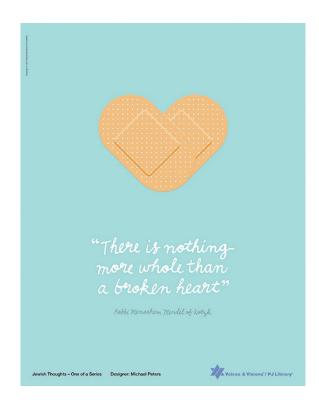
What Becomes of the Brokenhearted?

Shevirah

SHEVIRAH brokennah

Erica Brown about the Jewish attitude toward brokenness. (Erica Brown, Commentary, Voices and Visions at https://www.voices-visions.org/content/poster/collection-poster-rabbimenachem-mendel-kotzk-michael-peters):

"Many experiences in life try to break us: illness, loneliness, the death of those we love, rejection, insecurity, loss. But such experiences also make us more whole as human beings. They expand our range of consciousness and compassion. They enlarge our capacity for inclusion. They make us stronger and help us reach out to others with greater empathy and concern. When we acknowledge that we are broken, we enter a universe where we are not measured by perfection but by our willingness to repair ourselves and the world. We stop judging others only when we can recognize our own inadequacies."







Textsheets for Students

Tikkun Olam: Can We Repair A Broken World?

Anthem **Leonard Cohen**

The birds they sang at the break of day Start again I heard them say Don't dwell on what has passed away or what is yet to be. Ah the wars they will be fought again The holy dove She will be caught again bought and sold and bought again the dove is never free.

Ring the bells that still can ring Forget your perfect offering There is a crack in everything That's how the light gets in.

We asked for signs the signs were sent: the birth betrayed the marriage spent Yeah the widowhood of every government signs for all to see.

I can't run no more with that lawless crowd while the killers in high places say their prayers out loud. But they've summoned, they've summoned up a thundercloud and they're going to hear from me.

Ring the bells that still can ring Forget your perfect offering There is a crack in everything That's how the light gets in.

You can add up the parts but you won't have the sum You can strike up the march, there is no drum Every heart, every heart to love will come but like a refugee.

Ring the bells that still can ring Forget your perfect offering There is a crack, a crack in everything That's how the light gets in.

Ring the bells that still can ring Forget your perfect offering There is a crack, a crack in everything That's how the light gets in. That's how the light gets in. That's how the light gets in.



Tikkun Olam: Can We Repair A Broken World? (continued)

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810, Ukraine):

אם אתה מאמין שאפשר לקלקל, תאמין שאפשר לתקן.

If you believe that it is possible to break, believe that it is possible to repair.



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, To Heal A Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility:

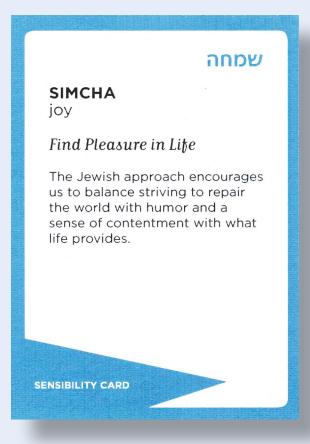
"[T] he world is a broken place, literally a broken vessel, and our human task is to put those fragments together — to repair the brokenness.

There are certain questions that, once asked, seem obvious, yet it takes a special genius to formulate them for the first time. That was the case with Rabbi Luria [Rabbi Isaac ben Solomon Luria, 1534-72]. He posed a question, seemingly naïve in its simplicity, yet far-reaching in its consequences: If God exists, how does the world exist? If God is infinite, filling the world with his presence and every place with his glory, how is there room — physical or metaphysical — for anything else? Two things cannot coexist at a single time in a single space. Infinity must always crowd out finitude. How then is there a universe?

Luria's radical answer was the doctrine known as tzimzum, a word that means contraction, self-effacement, withdrawal or concealment. God, he said, contracted into himself, to leave a space for the world. The universe that unfolded day by day during six phases of Genesis 1 was necessarily only the second stage of creation. The first was the act of divine selfeffacement, a withdrawal into himself on the part of God. The Hebrew word for "universe" and "eternity" — olam comes from the root *I-m* which also means "hiding" or "concealment". Only when God is hidden can the universe exist.

To this must be added a second idea, *shevirat ha-kelim* ("breaking of the vessels"), a catastrophe theory of creation. God, in making the world, could not leave it void of His presence. He therefore sent forth rays of his light (strangely, this is not unlike the "background radiation" discovered by scientists in 1965 which eventually proved the Big Bang theory of the birth of the universe). The light was, however, too intense for its containers, which thereby broke, scattering fragments of light throughout the world. It is our task to gather up these fragments, wherever they are, and restore them to their proper place. Hence the third idea: tikkun, healing a fractured world. Each religious act we do has an effect on the ecology of creation. It restores something of lost harmony to the cosmos."

Simcha







On One Foot: Simcha

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"It is a great mitzvah to always be in a state of joy." — Rabbi Nachman of Breslov

"Who is rich? Those who rejoice in their own lot." — Avot 4:1

"God said, 'It is not good for Man to be alone." — Genesis 2:18

"Rava said: 'One is obligated to become fragrant [with wine] on Purim until he cannot tell the difference between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai."" —TB *Megillah* 7b)



We will look at Simcha in the context of:

- Loving Your Life 104
- Relationship Workshop: Jewish Insights to Strengthen Your Relationships 107
- Purim Edition: Jews and Booze 111
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Keeping the Joy Alive 115
- Textsheets for Students 116





Loving Your Life

This Activity is Great For





 End of the Year Celebration





Big Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Have a Marie Kondo- style party, in which participants bring bags of "stuff" (including clothing, books, chotchkes, etc.) that has been cluttering their dorm rooms and that they have been meaning to go through. Kondo parties are gatherings based on Marie Kondo's best-selling books *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up and Spark Joy*, and encourage participants to declutter by figuring out whether their belongings give them joy. Brings donation bags or boxes with you for any items that are unwanted and in good condition. (For more background about Marie Kondo, her popular decluttering method, and her best-selling books, see her website www.tidyingup.com.)

As you have students go through their items, they should hold each item and ask: "Does this spark joy?" If it does, they should keep it; if not, they should say "thank you" to the object for the joy it has given them in the past, and then put it in a donation box so it can bring joy to others.

About midway through the process you may wish to read the following story to students:

Whenever Rabbi Menachem Mendel, the Kotzker Rebbe, replaced a pair of worn-out shoes, he would neatly wrap up the old ones in newspaper before placing them in the trash, and would declare, "How can I simply toss away such a fine pair of shoes that have served me so well these past years!?"

(http://www.jewishpathways.com/mussar-program/gratitude)





After students have gone through this decluttering, reflect with them:

- What were some of the items that sparked joy in you? What was it about them that brought you joy?
- What are some other things or experiences that bring you joy in your life?
- How did it feel to say thank you to a shirt or a belt?
- What elements of the decluttering process that we just did were very Jewish?



II. A Deeper Dive

A. Can we experience more joy?

Ask students if they have heard of the field of positive psychology. Positive psychology concerns itself with the question of how people can lead their best lives, and how they can flourish. (Interestingly, quite a few of the significant figures in the positive psychology field are Jewish, and are children of Holocaust survivors.) Martin Seligman, the founder of positive psychology, discovered that there are five elements, which he calls PERMA for short, that are crucial to human flourishing: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. (For more information, see https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/perma-model/). Today we will focus on the first element: positive emotions. Seligman found that the ability to be positive and optimistic (positive emotions) are crucial to human well-being. We are all genetically programmed to have varying levels of positivity and optimism.

Place a piece of paper that says "Extremely negative and pessimistic" on one side of the room, and another piece of paper that says "Always sunny, positive and optimistic" on the other. Ask students to position themselves somewhere between these two signs based on how they experience the world.

Then ask them to position themselves where they would like to be on the continuum.

Tell students: Jewish tradition tells us that: "Mitzvah gedolah lihiyot b'simcha tamid" — it is a great mitzvah to always be in a state of happiness.

- Does this sound like a Jewish idea to you? Does it sound like a *mitzvah*?
- How can you be happy, positive and optimistic if that is just not who you are?

B. The Role of Gratitude in Happiness

Seligman has shown that it is possible to become more positive and optimistic -- that your baseline positive emotions that you were born with, can be improved. Through extensive experimentation, he found that incorporating a gratitude practice can cause lasting improvement in our happiness.





Gratitude — Hakarat hatov in Hebrew, is an important Jewish practice. Give the following excerpt to students to read together and discuss:

Alan Morinis, Gratitude: Hakarat HaTov

Alan Morinis, Gratitude: Hakarat HaTov, Jewish Pathways, http://www.jewishpathways. com/mussar-program/gratitude:

When you open up to the trait of gratitude, you see clearly how much good there is in your life. Gratitude affirms. Of course there will be things you are still lacking, and in reaching for gratitude no one is saying you ought to put on rose-colored glasses to obscure those shortcomings. But most of us tend to focus so heavily on the deficiencies in our lives that we barely perceive the good that counterbalances them.

This condition is especially common among we who live in a world permeated by advertising that constantly reveals to us all the things we don't have -- and tells us how satisfied we would be with ourselves and our lives, if only we would buy their product. There is no limit to what we don't have, and if that is where we focus, then our lives are inevitably filled with endless dissatisfaction. This is the ethos that lies behind the great Talmudic proverb which asks, "Who is rich?" and then answers, "Those who rejoice in their own lot." (Avot 4:1)

If you have time: bring in *siddurim* and read the *birkot hashachar* (morning blessings) together. Discuss: which of these blessings resonates with me? How could incorporating these blessings of gratitude in my mornings influence my entire day?

III. Putting Gratitude into Practice

A. Gratitude Practice

- 1. Write down 20 things for which you are grateful.
- 2. Think of some difficulties in your life right now write down some things you are grateful for even in the midst of these difficulties.

B. Gratitude Journal Challenge

Challenge students: For the next 2 weeks, keep a gratitude journal and every night, write down three good things that happened in your day, and how those things happened. Reconvene students after two weeks — in-person if possible, and discuss how their gratitude journals have impacted their daily lives.



Relationship Workshop Jewish Insights to Strengthen Your Relationship

This Activity is Great For







Big Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

According to Martin Seligman and other positive psychologists, healthy relationships are essential to well-being. In this workshop, we will learn Jewish ideas about love and relationships, and how to use these insights to improve our relationships. We will not talk about how to choose the right person for you; rather this session is meant to present and practice some basic Jewish insights about how to act in a serious relationship once we have chosen to commit to another (traditionally discussed in the context of marriage). Students will reach a deeper understanding of Judaism's ideal of committed relationships, and the holy task of moving beyond one's self-interest to embrace another.

II. A Deeper Dive

A. We, Not Only Me

According to the Torah, how did the world's first couple meet? And what does the Torah mean to tell us through this story?

Read together or in chavruta (study partners) Adam and Eve's "meet cute" story told in Breishit (Genesis) 2: 18-24:

יח וַיֹּאמֵר ה׳ אֱלֹקִים לֹא טוֹב הֵיוֹת הַאַדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֱעֲשֶׂה לּוֹ עַזֵר כָּנֵגִדּוֹ. 18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

יט וַיִּצֵר ה׳ אֱלֹקִים מִן הָאֶדָמָה כָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֵה וְאֵת כָּל עוֹף הַשַּׁמִיִם וַיַּבֵא אֱל הָאָדָם לְרָאוֹת מַה יִּקְרָא לוֹ וִכֹל אֱשֶׁר יִקְרָא לוֹ הַאַדַם נֵפֶשׁ חַיַּה הוּא שָׁמוֹ. 19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.







Breishit (Genesis) 2: 18-24 (continued):

יַּקָרָא הָאָדָם שַׁמוֹת לְכָל הַבִּהֵמָה וּלְעוֹף בַּוּיִקְרָא הָאָדָם שַׁמוֹת לְכָל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכֹל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֵה וּלְאַדַם לֹא מַצָא עזַר כּנֵגִדּוֹ.

ָכא וַיַּפֶּל ה׳ אֱלֹקִים תַּרְדֵּמָה עַל הַאַדַם וַיִּישַׁן וַיִּקַח אַחַת מְצַלְעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֹּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתֵּנָה.

כב וַיִּבֶן ה׳ אֱלֹקִים אֶת הַצֶּלַע אֲשֵׁר לַקַח מְן האדם לאשה ויבאה אל האדם.

כג וַיֹּאמֶר הַאַדָם זֹאת הַפַּעַם עֵצֵם מֵעַצַמִי וּבַשַּׂר מִבְּשַּׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקּרֵא אָשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לַקְחַה זֹאת.

כד עַל כֵּן יַעַזַב אִישׁ אֵת אַבִּיו וְאֵת אָמּוֹ וְדַבַק בָּאִשָּׁתּוֹ וָהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֱחָד.

- 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.
- 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh.
- 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.
- 23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."
- 24 Therefore a man should leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- · Ask students what surprises them about this story. Make a list of all the strange elements of the story. (For example, what was "not good" about Man being alone? Why does God create Woman by taking part of Man? Why didn't God create Man and Woman as separate human beings from the beginning - why go through this process?)
- After students have brainstormed their questions, and suggested some answers, tell students that Judaism looks at this story as a model for relationships. According to Jewish thought, one of the most important tasks in a person's life is to enter into a healthy, committed relationship with another person, where they can come together and become one (1+1=1). It is "not good" for a person to be alone; instead we are encouraged to come together as one and choose to merge our life with someone else's. We are used to taking care of our own needs above all else; creating a life with another requires, two separate human beings to work hard to give to each other, to see other's interests as their own, and strive to reach oneness. (Note: Emphasize that of course people in a relationship should not forfeit their own selfhood; there is a difference between creating a life with someone else, and sacrificing your individuality.)

The following exercises are tools to help students practice "we, not only me" behaviors:

We, Not Only Me: Exercise #1

Choose volunteers and role-play:

- a) Your partner comes to you and tells you she just got an A on her thesis. What is your response?
- b) Your partner calls you and says that he received an award for his public service work and is going on a two-week trip to South America. What is your response?

Tell students: Shelly Gable and marital researchers at UCLA have found that how you support your partner when good things happen can impact the strength of your relationship. When couples engage in what she calls "active constructive responding", experimenters found increases in love and affection and decreases in divorce.



The chart below shows four kinds of reactions to good news. Act out the different responses (to a partner's promotion) and then practice "active constructive responses" to typical issues that come up.

ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE

"That is great. I know how important that promotion was to you! We shoud go out and celebrate and you can tell me what excites you most about your new job." (Nonverbal communication: Maintaining eye contact, displays of positive emotions, such as genuine smiling, touching, laughing.)

ACTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE

"That sounds like a lot of responsibility to take on. There will probably be more stress involved in the new position and longer hours at the office." (Nonverbal communication: Displays of negative emotions, such as furrowed brow, frowning.)

PASSIVE AND **CONSTRUCTIVE**

"That is good news." (Nonverbal communication: Little to no active emotional expression.)

PASSIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE "What are we doing on Friday night?" (Nonverbal communication: Little to no eye contact, turning

away, leaving room.)



http://positivepsychologynews.com/news/doug-turner/20070515248

We, Not Only Me: Exercise #2

Tell students the story of Rabbi Aryeh Levin (d. 1969), known as "the Tzaddik of Jerusalem" who accompanied his wife to the doctor and said: "Doctor, my wife's foot is hurting us."

Reflective Questions (Have students answer these questions in writing.):

- How do you respond to your partner when he or she is going through a difficult time?
- How could you respond to your partner's pain in a more empathetic way?

B. Giving

Tell students: the word ahava (love) comes from the Aramaic word hav or give. In Jewish thought, giving to another leads to love. Ask students if they know anyone who has recently had a baby. That person is probably sleep-deprived and worn out from constantly feeding, changing, rocking, bathing and burping a little human who can only cry and poop - and yet they are filled with incredible love for the baby. The parent gives everything to the baby - and that giving helps cement their love for the baby.

The Hebrew word for generous giving is *chesed*. Being in a relationship requires us to take a step back from only considering our own interests and give to another person. It also requires us to know how to receive from the other. (Remind students: if someone tells you they love you, and then they mistreat you: this is not love. Love is treating another person with chesed; both partners need to give and receive willingly and unconditionally.)







How can you act with *chesed* toward your partner?

Giving: Exercise #3:

Think about your partner.

What is something that you can do for him or her that will make his or her life easier or more enjoyable? Write down your answers.

Life homework:

For the next week, make sure to do something nice for your partner every day, with no expectation of payback.

Come back in a week and discuss the effect of these actions on yourself as a person, and on your relationship.

C. Gratitude

We often express our gratitude to people we see infrequently, and forget to say "thank you" to the people who are closest to us. This practice of saying thank you is called "hakarat hatov".

Gratitude: Exercise #4

Write a letter to your partner expressing your gratitude for who they are and what they have done for you.



Purim Edition: Jews and Booze

This Activity is Great For









Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Mention names of holidays, and ask students to call out their associations with the holiday. For example: if you say Passover, students might say matzah, seder, cleaning. If you say Rosh Hashana, they might say: brisket, apples and honey, daydreaming in synagogue, etc.

End by saying "Purim" and having students call out words that they associate with the day. Chances are that one of the main associations will be alcohol.

Ask students:

- Has alcohol been part of your Purim celebrations in the past?
- · What was your experience with alcohol on Purim?

Tell students: today we are going to learn about the connection between Purim and alcohol, explore why Hillel is dry on *Purim,* and think about some other ways to celebrate *Purim* on campus.





II. A Deeper Dive

A.The source for drinking alcohol on *Purim* is the Babylonian *Talmud* Tractate Megillah 7b:

אמר רבא מיחייב איניש לבסומי בפוריא עד דלא ידע בין ארור המן לברוך מרדכי רבה ורבי זירא עבדו סעודת פורים בהדי הדדי איבסום קם רבה שחטיה לרבי זירא למחר בעי רחמי ואחייה לשנה אמר ליה ניתי מר ונעביד סעודת פורים בהדי הדדי אמר ליה לא בכל שעתא ושעתא מתרחיש ניסא

Rava said: One is obligated to become fragrant [with wine] on *Purim* until he cannot tell the difference between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordecai". Rabbah and R. Zeira joined together in a Purim feast. They became inebriated, and Rabbah arose and cut R. Zeira's throat. The next day he prayed on his behalf and revived him. Next year he said: Will the master come and we will have the *Purim* feast together. He replied: A miracle does not take place on every occasion.



Ask students:

- · Have you ever gotten drunk to the point where you did not know the difference between a good and wicked person? Was that a holy state to be in?
- Why do you think Rava believes that a person should become drunk on *Purim*?

Consider the Rabbah and Rabbi Zeira story together.

Ask students why that story is included in the text. Is it meant to show that Rabbah and Rabbi Zeira are fulfilling the mitzvah? Or perhaps is it the text's way of countering Rava and telling him that it is a big mistake to tell people to drink?

Note to Facilitator:

during times of drinking; (2) at the end of the *megillah*, Mordechai and Esther establish *Purim* as a day of



B. Drinking on Campus: Sobering Statistics

With the Rabbah and Rabbi Zeira story fresh in student's minds, write the statistics from the NIH about campus drinking (see below) on separate sheets of paper and post them around the room. Give out markers or pens to students, and ask them to make a check mark if they have personally experienced or observed any of these alcohol-related problems on campus. Students should also add comments to the paper, if they wish. After you have given students enough time to go around and annotate the statistics, re-group and discuss the results.

III. Reflect and Design

Divide students into groups, and ask them how they would design a *Purim* event for Hillel in light of the piece of *Talmud* we studied, and the NIH statistics. Give students the sources from Jewish Texts about Drinking (below) to further guide them.

Give out posters and markers for students to write down elements of their *Purim* celebration, including the place of alcohol. After about 10 minutes, each group should present their plan to the others. Use these ideas to help guide your Hillel *Purim* celebration.



NTH Statistics

COLLEGE DRINKING

Virtually all college students experience the effects of college drinking — whether they drink or not.

The problem with college drinking is not necessarily the drinking itself, but the negative consequences that result from excessive drinking.

College drinking problems

College drinking is extremely widespread:

- About four out of five college students drink alcohol.
- About half of college students who drink, also consume alcohol through binge drinking.

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NIH Statistics (continued)

- Academic Problems: About 25 percent of college students report academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers, and receiving lower grades overall.
- Health Problems/Suicide Attempts: More than 150,000 students develop an alcohol-related health problem and between 1.2 and 1.5 percent of students indicate that they tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use.

http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/special-populations-co-occurring-disorders/ college-drinking

Jewish Texts about Drinking

A. Proverbs 23:29-30

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B. Maimonides Mishneh Torah, Hil. Yom Tov 6:20

"When a person eats and drinks on a festival, he should not get pulled into the wine and laughter and frivolity, saying that the more of this, the greater the mitzvah of rejoicing on a festival. For drunkenness and too much laughter and frivolity are not rejoicing, but wild and stupid behavior. We were not commanded to be wild or stupid. We were commanded to rejoice, because this is a way to serve the Creator of all things, as it says (Deuteronomy 28:47), 'Because you did not serve the Lord your God out of joy and with a good heart when you had everything.' This teaches that serving God must be with joy. But it is impossible to serve God in the midst of mockery, frivolity and drunkenness."

C. Maimonides Mishneh Torah, Hil. Megillah 2:17

A final note from Maimonides, near the end of the laws of *Purim* (2:17): "Better that a person should increase his gifts to the poor on *Purim* than to expand his *Purim* feast and gifts of food to his friends. For there is no greater and more beautiful celebration than to make happy the poor, the orphan, the widow and the immigrant. One who rejoices the hearts of these sorrowful people is similar to the Divine Presence, as the prophet says (Isaiah 57:15), 'To revive the spirit of the downtrodden and to revive the heart of the oppressed.""

D. Shaul Kelner, Drink Prey Lust, March 15, 2016 http://www.wexnerfoundation.org/blog/drink-prey-lust

The Vanderbilt rape case is only one of the more egregious instances of something that is happening at universities across the country. In a context where alcohol abuse and alcohol-fueled rape are real problems, *Purim* is a challenging holiday. If Jews on campus use ad de lo yada (until you don't know the difference Ebetween blessed Mordechai and evil Haman]) as a way of infusing *Purim* with the ethos of a frat party, it is part of the problem. What can Jews on campus do instead, to make it part of the solution? . . . These problems will, I fear, remain with us for many years to come. Each year brings a new opportunity for *Purim* to be part of the problem or part of the solution. If Jews on campus make Purim their annual rallying point for consciousness-raising and public activism on the issue, this festival of inversion might help turn a bad situation on its head and bring some light, joy, gladness and honor, not only to Jewish students, but to campus communities that need it very much.



Just for Hillel Professionals: Keeping the Joy Alive

This Activity is Great For





I. Beginning the Conversation

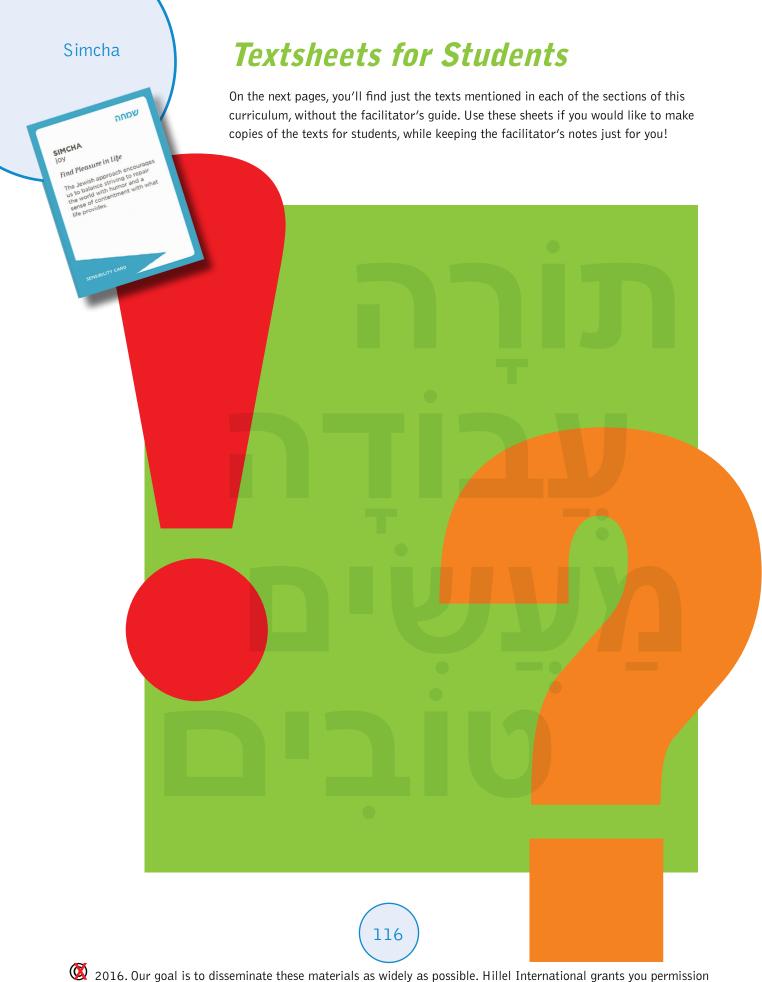
As Hillel professionals, we are dedicated to our students and their pursuit of joy, meaning and fulfillment. Yet, we often are so caught up in our efforts to help others that we forget to look out for our own simcha.

Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of simcha into your teaching and leadership:

- 1. How do you re-charge? How much time do you dedicate to pursuing joy in your own life?
- 2. How do you take joy from your work? How do you make sure to hold on to the joy you feel when you run a successful program, give a great class or have a positive student interaction?
- 3. How do you deal with programs or interactions that did not go as well as you had hoped?

Try it out: Set up an email folder and label it "Work Simcha." Include in it positive emails, flyers from successful programs, and other positive communications. When you need to recharge, scroll through the folder, and remind yourself of your strengths and the impact you have had on others.





Loving Your Life

Alan Morinis, Gratitude: Hakarat HaTov

Alan Morinis, Gratitude: Hakarat HaTov, Jewish Pathways, http://www.jewishpathways. com/mussar-program/gratitude:

When you open up to the trait of gratitude, you see clearly how much good there is in your life. Gratitude affirms. Of course there will be things you are still lacking, and in reaching for gratitude no one is saying you ought to put on rose-colored glasses to obscure those shortcomings. But most of us tend to focus so heavily on the deficiencies in our lives that we barely perceive the good that counterbalances them.

This condition is especially common among we who live in a world permeated by advertising that constantly reveals to us all the things we don't have -- and tells us how satisfied we would be with ourselves and our lives, if only we would buy their product. There is no limit to what we don't have, and if that is where we focus, then our lives are inevitably filled with endless dissatisfaction. This is the ethos that lies behind the great Talmudic proverb which asks, "Who is rich?" and then answers, "Those who rejoice in their own lot." (Avot 4:1)





Relationship Workshop: Jewish Insights to Strengthen **Your Relationship**

Breishit (Genesis) 2: 18-24:

יח וַיֹּאמֶר ה׳ אֱלֹקִים לֹא טוֹב הֵיוֹת הַאַדַם ּלְבַדוֹ אֵעֲשֵׂה לוֹ עֲזֵר כְּנֵגְדּוֹ.

יט וַיִּצֶר ה׳ אֱלֹקִים מְן הַאֱדַמָּה כַּל חַיַּת הַשַּׂדֵה וָאֵת כָּל עוֹף הַשַּׁמַיִם וַיַּבֵא אֱל הָאַדַם לָרְאוֹת מַה יִּקָרָא לוֹ וִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא לוֹ הַאַדַם נֵפֶשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שָׁמוֹ.

כַ וַיָּקָרָא הַאַדָם שָׁמוֹת לְכַל הַבְּהַמָה וּלְעוֹף כ הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכֹל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֵה וּלְאַדַם לֹא מַצַא עזַר כִּנַגִּדּוֹ.

18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

כא וַיַּפֶּל ה׳ אֱלֹקִים תַּרְדֵּמָה עַל הַאַדַם וַיִּישַׁן וַיָּקַח אַחַת ָמְצַלְעֹתַיו וַיִּסְגֹר בַּשָּׁר תַּחְתֵּנַה.

ָכב וַיָּבֵן ה׳ אֱלֹקִים אֶת הַצֶּלָע אֱשֶׁר לָקַח מְן הַאָּדַם לְאִשָּׁה וַיִּבָאֵהַ אֵל הַאַדַם.

כג וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זאת הַפַּעַם עֵצֶם מֵעֲצַמֵי וּבַשָּׁר מִבְּשָּׁרִי ַלזאת יִקָּרֵא אָשָּה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לִקְחַה זֹאת.

כד עַל כַּן יַעַזַב אִישׁ אֶת אַבִיו וְאֵת אָמּוֹ וְדַבַק בָּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהַיוּ לבשׂר אַחַד. 21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh.

22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

24 Therefore a man should leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE

"That is great. I know how important that promotion was to you! We shoud go out and celebrate and you can tell me what excites you most about your new job." (Nonverbal communication: Maintaining eye contact, displays of positive emotions, such as genuine smiling, touching, laughing.)

ACTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE

"That sounds like a lot of responsibility to take on. There will probably be more stress involved in the new position and longer hours at the office." (Nonverbal communication: Displays of negative emotions, such as furrowed brow, frowning.)

PASSIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE

"That is good news." (Nonverbal communication: Little to no active emotional expression.)

PASSIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE

"What are we doing on Friday night?" (Nonverbal communication: Little to no eye contact, turning away, leaving room.)



Purim Edition: Jews and Booze

Babylonian Talmud Tractate Megillah 7b:

אמר רבא מיחייב איניש לבסומי בפוריא עד דלא ידע בין ארור המן לברוך מרדכי רבה ורבי זירא עבדו סעודת פורים בהדי הדדי איבסום קם רבה שחטיה לרבי זירא למחר בעי רחמי ואחייה לשנה אמר ליה ניתי מר ונעביד סעודת פורים בהדי הדדי אמר ליה לא בכל שעתא ושעתא מתרחיש ניסא

Rava said: One is obligated to become fragrant [with wine] on *Purim* until he cannot tell the difference between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordecai". Rabbah and R. Zeira joined together in a Purim feast. They became inebriated, and Rabbah arose and cut R. Zeira's throat. The next day he prayed on his behalf and revived him. Next year he said: Will the master come and we will have the Purim feast together. He replied: A miracle does not take place on every occasion.





Purim Edition: Jews and Booze (continued)

NIH Statistics

COLLEGE DRINKING

Virtually all college students experience the effects of college drinking — whether they drink or not.

The problem with college drinking is not necessarily the drinking itself, but the negative consequences that result from excessive drinking.

College drinking problems

College drinking is extremely widespread:

- About four out of five college students drink alcohol.
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Each year, drinking affects college students, as well as college communities, and families. The consequences of drinking include:

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Shabbat







On One Foot: Shabbat

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. ... For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." — Shemot (Exodus) 20:7-10

"We have to remember to stop because we have to stop to remember." Judith Shulevitz, Bring Back the Sabbath, NY Times Magazine, March 2, 2003

"Observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you... you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or your ass, or any of your cattle, or the stranger in your settlements, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God freed you from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day." — Devarim (Deuteronomy) 5:11-14

We will look at Shabbat in the context of:

- Unplugging: Disconnect to Connect 120
- Shabbat Soul Session: Remembering 125
- Challah for Hunger: Back-Pocket Torah 130
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Resting and Recharging 133
- Textsheets for Students 134





Unplugging: Disconnect to Connect

This Activity is Great For









- Alternative Service
- Mindfulness

Big Ideas

I. Beginning the Conversation

Assign students to walk around campus and take photos of people using their smartphones. (You may choose to assign this a few days prior to the session if possible, or simply send students out at the beginning of the session. If you are pressed for time, take the photos on your own phone and show them to the students.) When students return, view the photos together.

TALK IT OUT

- What do you notice about the people in the photos?
- What happens when you work on your smartphone? What do you notice about yourself?
- Have you ever tried to unplug from your smartphone? What happened?





Note to Facilitator:



II. A Deeper Dive

Show students the "basketball demo" video: http:///www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo. Their job is to count how many times the players in the white shirts pass the basketball, while ignoring the players in the black shirts.

TALK IT OUT

- Did you count the number of passes correctly?
- Did you miss the man in the gorilla suit?

(The majority of people who watch this video miss the man in the gorilla suit — because their attentional system was overloaded.)





Chavruta

Group students in *chavruta*, and have them read the following quotes and discuss:

A. Daniel J. Levitin, The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload, New York: Dutton, 2014, p.7:

Every status update you read on Facebook, every tweet or text message you get from a friend, is competing for resources in your brain with important things like whether to put your savings in stocks or bonds, where you left your passport or how best to reconcile with a close friend you just had an argument with.

B. Sherry Turkle, transcript of *Alone Together* Ted Talk https://www.ted.com/talks/ sherry_turkle_alone_together/transcript?language=en#t-1118000:

[T]echnology appeals to us most where we are most vulnerable. And we are vulnerable. We're lonely, but we're afraid of intimacy. And so from social networks to sociable robots, we're designing technologies that will give us the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship. We turn to technology to help us feel connected in ways we can comfortably control. But we're not so comfortable. We are not so much in control.

- ... These days, those phones in our pockets are changing our minds and hearts because they offer us three gratifying fantasies. One, that we can put our attention wherever we want it to be; two, that we will always be heard; and three, that we will never have to be alone.
 - Ask students to read out loud the line or phrase that resonates most with them. How does this manifest in their lives?

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

A. Ask students to raise their hands if the following statements apply to them:

- 1. I check my phone before I get out of bed in the morning.
- 2. I check my phone before I go to sleep at night.
- 3. I check my phone at least once during class.
- 4. I check my phone at least three times during class.
- 5. If I have to turn off my phone for an hour or more I get anxious.
- 6. If I have to turn off my phone for a half hour or more I get anxious.
- 7. If I have to turn off my phone for 10 minutes or more I get anxious.
- 8. If I have to turn off my phone for any reason I get anxious.





B. Redefine Your Relationship

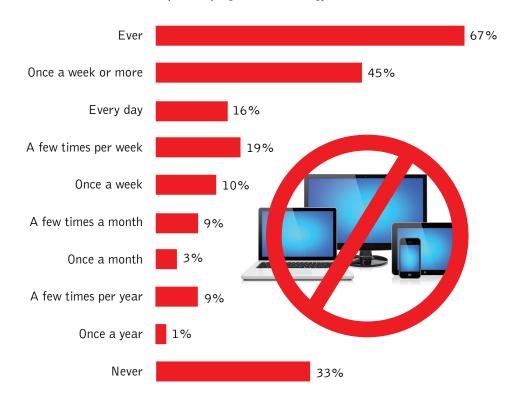
Give out paper and pens. Ask students to draw a stick figure of themselves on the left side of the paper, and a cell phone on the right. Ask them to draw what their relationship with their phones currently looks like. Then ask them to draw the figures again, and to draw what they would like their relationship with their phones to look like.

Go around and have students share their pictures, and then brainstorm how they can achieve this kind of relationship. Write down their answers on a whiteboard or large pad of paper, so you can go back to this list and email it to them.

Shabbat SHABBAT

How Often Do Americans Try To Unplug?

% of Americans who attempt to unplug from technology in 2016 (Forbes statista)



Source: The Harris Poll

http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2016/03/01/how-often-do-americans-try-to-unplug-from-technologyinfographic/#32e767a3a85f





C. Reclaim Shabbat As a Day to Unplug and Consider What Matters

Tell students that even before cell phones were invented, Judaism had a way for us to unplug: Shabbat. Along with the positive commandments of Shabbat, like Kiddush, havdalah and communal prayer, come the negative commandments of Shabbat: all the things we are told not to do. Many traditional Jews do not work or use their computers or phones on Shabbat. Recently, a group of diverse Jews got together and decided to hold back from using technology on Shabbat in order to appreciate the other things in life that they had been missing. They call this project The Sabbath Manifesto.

Read together a description of the Sabbath Manifesto:

Way back when, God said, "On the seventh day thou shalt rest." The meaning behind it was simple: Take a break. Call a timeout. Find some balance. Recharge. Somewhere along the line, however, this mantra for living faded from modern consciousness. The idea of unplugging every seventh day now feels tragically close to impossible. Who has time to take time off? We need eight days a week to get tasks accomplished, not six.

The Sabbath Manifesto was developed in the same spirit as the Slow Movement, slow food, slow living, by a small group of artists, writers, filmmakers and media professionals who, while not particularly religious, felt a collective need to fight back against our increasingly fast-paced way of living. The idea is to take time off, deadlines and paperwork be damned.

In the Manifesto, we've adapted our ancestors' rituals by carving out one day per week to unwind, unplug, relax, reflect, get outdoors, and get with loved ones.

TALK IT OUT

- Do you think you could unplug for one day? What would you need to make it work?
- · Have you ever thought about Shabbat in this way before? How could taking a break from technology every week impact your life?

Encourage students to participate in the National Day of Unplugging (http://nationaldayofunplugging.com/). Encourage using Shabbat as a weekly way to detox from technology, even if it is just for a few hours. Consider challenging students to spend a Shabbat totally unplugged — take out students who successfully complete the challenge for ice cream/ snacks/coffee after Shabbat.



Soul Session: Remembering

This Activity is Great For







Mindfulness





Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

In this session, students will consider why Jewish tradition advocates that we stop working on *Shabbat*, and how to take this opportunity to remember what is important.

Soul sessions are based on the work of Parker Palmer, specifically his development of the "circle of trust" and his emphasis on drawing out the soul and giving it safe space. In these soul sessions, we will use a piece of text or artwork connected to a sensibility, and give ourselves the time and safe space to fully experience the text and discover our relationship to it. Our goals in these sessions are: (1) to get in touch with the wisdom that we have within; (2) to have real, meaningful encounters with Jewish ideas; and (3) to create a welcoming community that nurtures true, honest and kind communication.

For more information about Parker Palmer, the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the principles and procedures of Circles of Trust, see http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/.

Note to Facilitator:







How to conduct a soul session:

- 1. Set up chairs in a circle, where everyone can see each other.
- 2. Welcome students to the soul session, and explain what a soul session/circle of trust is. You may wish to distribute the Courage and Renewal touchstones, and read each touchstone out loud, in order to set the stage for the work that the group will do together. (http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/CourageRenewal-Circle-of-Trust-Touchstones-(c)2015.pdf)
- 3. Explain that the principle of double confidentiality will apply to this session: What other people mention in this soul session and in the breakout sessions, is totally confidential. You may not tell anyone what someone else said in this session. In addition, if you see participants from this soul session after the session has concluded, you may not ask them about what they talked about here, unless they specifically invite you to do so.
- 4. Introduce the text: Tell students that we will read two sources about Shabbat. One is from the Ten Commandments in Exodus, and the second is an excerpt by a contemporary author in the New York Times. In our session today, it does not matter whether you have read these sources 100 times or if this is your first encounter with the texts. What we will do is read them as if it is the first time, and create the space and atmosphere to have a deep and meaningful personal encounter with the text.
- 5. Ask for two volunteers to read the texts out loud, one after the other, so that we can hear the texts in two different voices (the texts can be found on the page right after this facilitation guide)
- 6. Invite members of the circle to comment on what resonates for them in the pieces they just read. You should be involved as a member of the circle, but don't rush to fill the silence - give participants the time and space to comment and reflect. Encourage participants to speak into the middle of the circle, rather than to each other.
- 7. Before the session, write out the following items or any other items you would like to pose on a large sheet of paper. At this point in the session, post the paper on the wall and read out the items:
 - When I stop, I . . .
 - I want to remember . . .
 - I am ...
 - I wish that . . .
 - I want to . . .
 - I regret that . . .
 - I will . . .



8. Small Group Discussion: Bring the group back together and explain that you will now separate them into groups of two or three (depending on how much time you have carved out for this session, and your space constraints). Each group will find someplace to gather, and then each individual in the group will have 10 minutes to complete the items that are written on the paper, or whatever other thoughts the texts have prompted in them. Each group should appoint a timekeeper to raise his or her hand when the 10 minutes are up. After each member of the group has had his or her ten minutes, they should return to the circle.

Ground rules for the breakout groups:

- a. Sit in silence and give the individual who is speaking the space and time to talk at his or her own pace. Do not jump in with questions or comments. Hold the space for them to talk. If they take all 10 minutes to talk, then your job is simply to listen. If they decide they do not want to talk at all, sit in silence with them for 10 minutes. If they have finished what they have to say, and they invite questions before the 10 minutes are up, ask brief, open and honest questions - without introducing your own opinion or offering advice.
- b. Do not give advice your job is not to tell the others what they should do. Your job is to help create a safe, open space where honest, soulful reflection can occur.
- c. The rule of double confidentiality applies. Members of the group may not tell anyone else what they heard in this conversation. In addition, if you see a member of your group later on, you may not ask them about what they talked about, unless they specifically invite you to do so.
- 9. Whole Group Reflection: When everyone returns to the circle, invite participants to share with the whole group something they have discovered (about themselves only - no talking about what others had said) through their journaling and small group discussions, or to reflect on the soul session and its process of reflection and building of safe space. Allow students to sit in silence to reflect; do not rush to close.
- 10. Optional: Invite students to participate in a *Shabbat* meditation.

A Breathing Meditation by Naomi Levy

Naomi Levy, To Begin Again, pp. 212-213, quoted in Noam Zion, The Shabbat Table Celebration Revisited, p. 112.

Take a slow deep breath in. Feel the warmth entering your being. Now breathe out slowly. Imagine that you are releasing all the cares of the week. All the tension. All the worries. All the sadness. Spend the next few minutes taking long, full breaths. Each time you inhale, imagine that you are filling up your every limb with lightness, like a helium balloon, so that with each breath you are gradually floating higher and higher. Each time you exhale, imagine that you are releasing the heavy weight that burdens your soul. ...







Breathe in peace, breathe out anxiety.

Breathe in light, breathe out darkness.

Breathe in joy, breathe out pain.

Breathe in health, breathe out sickness.

Breathe in trust, breathe out fear.

Breathe in rest, breathe out panic.

Breathe in the life breath that comes from God,

breathe out all that we take for granted.

Then take a moment now to thank God for something you forgot to thank God for today.

11. Closing: Thank students for their time and for creating a welcoming, honest, safe space. Remind them again that double confidentiality applies. Tell students that you are always happy to speak with them about some of the issues that have come up for them in this session, but that because of double confidentiality you will not refer back to what they said unless they explicitly and proactively invite you to do so (make sure to let them know that, so no misunderstandings occur).

II. Texts

A. Exodus 20:7-10

זַכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבַּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ.

7 Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

ָח שֵׁשֵׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִּׁיתָ כָּל מְלַאכְתֵּךְ.

8 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

ָט וִיוֹם הַשָּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ לֹא תַעֲשֵׂה כָל מְלָא־ ָכָה אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ וּבְהֶמְתֶּךָ וְגַרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בָּשָׁעָרֵיךָ. 9 but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God: you shall not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, or your cattle, or the stranger who is within your settlements.

י כִּי שֵׁשֵׁת יַמִּים עַשָּׂה ה׳ אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הַאַרֵץ אֶת הַיַּם יַ ָוּאֵת כָּל אֲשֵׁר בָּם וַיָּנַח בַּיּוֹם הַשָּׁבִיעִי עַל כֵּן בֵּרַךְ ה׳ אֵת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְשֵׁהוּ. 10 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (JPS Translation)





B. Judith Shulevitz, Bring Back the Sabbath, NY Times, March 2, 2003:

The story told by the Sabbath is that of creation: we rest because God rested on the seventh day. What leads from God to humankind is the notion of imitatio Dei: the imitation of God. In other words, we rest in order to honor the divine in us, to remind ourselves that there is more to us than just what we do during the week.

. . .

The Sabbath provides two things essential to anyone who wishes to lift himself out of the banality of mercantile culture: time to contemplate, and distance from everyday demands. The Sabbath is to the week what the line break is to poetic language. It is the silence that forces you to return to what came before to find its meaning.

. . .

What was Creation's climactic culmination? The act of stopping. Why should God have considered it so important to stop? Rabbi Elijah of Vilna put it this way: God stopped to show us that what we create becomes meaningful to us only once we stop creating it and start to think about why we did so. The implication is clear. We could let the world wind us up and set us to marching, like mechanical dolls that go and go until they fall over, because they don't have a mechanism that allows them to pause. But that would make us less than human. We have to remember to stop because we have to stop to remember.





Challah for Hunger: **Back-Pocket Torah**

This Activity is Great For



Social Justice



- Service Projects
- Challah for Hunger
- Dvar Torah

g Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Below are three divrei torah to use as "back-pocket Torah" at Challah for Hunger sessions, or to adapt for other social justice and service projects. Deliver them as presented here, or use them as a springboard for a more extensive dvar *Torah*, text study or group activity:

Dvar Torah #1: Why Shabbat?

When you ask most Jews why we have Shabbat, they will probably tell you that God created the world in 6 days and then rested on the seventh, Shabbat. That is the reason given in the Ten Commandments as presented in Shemotl Exodus. But in Devarim/Deuteronomy Chapter 5, when Moshe re-tells the story of Mount Sinai and the Ten **Commandments,** the text tells us:

יב שָׁמוֹר אֵת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ כַּאֲשֵׁר צְוּךְ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ.

יג שֵׁשֶׁת יַמִּים תַּעֲבֹד וְעַשִּׂיתַ כַּל מְלַאכְתֵּךְ.

יד וִיוֹם הַשָּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת לַה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ לֹא תַעֲשֵׂה כָל מִלָּאכָה אַתָּה וּבִנְרָ וּבִתַּרְ וִעַבִּדְרָ וַאֲמָתֵרְ וִשׁוֹרְרָ וַחַמֹּרְרָ וִכָּל בְּהֵמְתֵּרְ ָוגָרָךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשִּׁעֲרֵיךָ לְמַעַן יַנוּחַ עַבִּדְּךָ וַאֲמַתְךָ כַּמוֹךָ.

טוּ וְזָכַרָתָ כִּי עֵבֶד הָיִיתָ בִּאֵרֵץ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּצְאֵךָ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךָ ִמִשָּׁם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרֹעַ נְטוּיַה עַל כֵּן צִוּךְ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבַּת. 12 Observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you.

13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

- 14 but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or your ass, or any of your cattle, or the stranger in your settlements, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do.
- 15 Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God freed you from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. (JPS translation)





The *Torah* tells us that we all need to rest on *Shabbat* —- not just our families, but also our slaves, our animals, and non-Jews who live with us. Why? "So that your male and female slave may rest as you do." We are supposed to remember that we were slaves in Egypt and couldn't rest, and remember to let those who work for us (we can talk about why and what kind of slaves they had another time) rest as well.

This is amazing. At a time when the rest of the world had not started thinking about the rights and dignity of others, the *Torah* is telling us to rest every 7th day so that others can have a break.

Author and journalist Judith Shulevitz writes that Shabbat "invented the idea of social equality."

"The Israelite Sabbath institutionalized an astonishing, hitherto undreamed-of notion: that every single creature has the right to rest, not just the rich and the privileged. Covered under the Fourth Commandment are women, slaves, strangers and, improbably, animals. The verse in Deuteronomy that elaborates on this aspect of the Sabbath repeats, twice, that slaves were not to work, as if to drive home what must have been very hard to understand in the ancient world. The Jews were meant to perceive the Sabbath not only

as a way to honor God but also as the central vehicle of their liberation theology, a weekly reminder of their escape from their servitude in Egypt.

In other words, we have the Sabbath to thank for labor legislation and for our belief that it is wrong for employers to drive their employees until they drop from exhaustion." (Judith Shulevitz, Bring Back the Sabbath, NYTimes, March 2, 2003, http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/02/magazine/bring-back-the-sabbath.html?pagewanted=all)

So, Challah for Hunger is not a new idea. From its very beginnings, *Shabbat* has been about concern for the other especially the other who does not have as much as you do.

Dvar Torah #2: Challah for Hungry ... Priests

When we bake challah today, we are going to do something that looks a little strange before we start braiding. We are going to make a blessing and then remove a small portion of the challah, wrap it up and throw it in the oven.

What is this about?

While we were still in the desert, the *Torah* tells us that we received a commandment: when we got to the land and started making our own bread, we should always separate some and give it to the priest. The priests will not have their own land — they will be working in the Temple — and so we need to remember to look out for them. So, the original "Challah for Hunger" was "Challah for Hungry Priests." The priests ate because the people looked out for them, and shared their food with them.

(From MyJewishLearning: There are a whole host of rules about when one should take challah — it is typically done only when making a large batch of dough, using over 10 cups of flour. It should be done when one bakes a large batch of any kind of bread, not just challah bread. If one is using more than 14 cups of flour, there is a blessing to say immediately before taking challah.

בָּרוּך אַתָּה ה׳ אֱלֹקִינוּ מֱלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֵר קְדְּשָנוּ בִּמְצִוֹתָיו וִצְוָנוּ לְהַפִּרִישׁ חַלָּה מִן הַעְסַּה

Shabbat

Barukh ata adonai eloheinu melekh haolam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu lehafrish challah min ha'issah.

For more information, see: http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/ask-the-expert-taking-challah/.)







This is one of the most important ideas in Judaism — and if you keep your eyes open, you see that it comes up all the time. We are never allowed to think of only our own needs. We always have to think about others. Traditionally, Judaism teaches us that God gave us the gifts we have — whether it is having enough money to buy food and clothing, or the blessing of being able to go to college, or health, or a great voice, or a strong body, and the millions of other gifts we have - so that we can share them with others. We are God's way of giving to others - God gives us the merit of being the way that God takes care of others.

The Lelover Hassidic Rebbe taught: "If people come to you for assistance and you tell them, 'God will surely help you,' then you are acting disloyally to God. For you should understand that God has sent you to help the needy, not to refer the poor back to God." (Quote from Noam Zion, The *Shabbat* Table Celebration Revisited, pp. 3-4)

Dvar Torah #3: A 19th Century Prayer

Before we begin to make our challah, I want to read to you a prayer written by an amazing 19th century Jewish woman. This woman, Fanny Neuda, lived from 1819 to

1894 in Moravia, Czecheslovakia. After her husband died at a young age, Fanny created her own siddur, prayer book. She is thought to be the first Jewish woman to write her own prayer book in German. Fanny's book was called *Prayers* and Supplications: Intimate Devotions, A Book of Prayer and Ethics for Jewish Women and Girls, for Prayer in Public and in Private, for All Occasions in a Woman's Life. It was a bestseller in German-Jewish communities, and was published in English in the US in 1866.

Listen to Fanny's words as she makes her challah for Shabbat. You will see that like you, she too was thinking about the hungry as she prepared her challah:

Our father in heaven: By your holy command I am separating a measure of challah. At the same time, I recall ancient times when, with a willing heart, our forefathers would offer the first of their produce upon your altar. Today, too, our God, we offer up offerings of love -- may they find favor before You. Whenever we satisfy the hunger of those in need, using their distress and their deprivation and relieving their concerns for their sustenance, we are offering a sacrifice before you, father of the poor and the destitute. Our Father in heaven -- accept my gift with mercy and favor and grant me a strong and loyal heart; then even if You demand great and difficult sacrifices of me, I shall offer them up and rejoice in my faith.

Allow us to earn our daily bread with dignity and not in dread. May we eat of it and may it bring us an abundance of blessing and prosperity. With good health and vigor may we rejoice in life and its grace, and with joyful heart and a good spirit, we shall praise You Who are good and Who performs good, and may You send blessing and success to our endeavors.



Just for Hillel Professionals: Resting and Recharging

This Activity is Great For





I. Beginning the Conversation

As Hillel professionals, you are always on the go — teaching a class, having coffee with a student, running a service project, and the million other things that make up an "average" Hillel professional's day. In our Shabbat sessions, we have talked about the idea that we have to remember to stop because we have to stop to remember. Use these questions to reflect on how stopping and remembering can enhance your life and professional practice:

- 1. How much time do you take to rest, reflect and recharge in a typical week?
- 2. How could you incorporate more opportunities to rest and reflect into your schedule?
- 3. Are you always "on" on Shabbat? How can you carve some time into your Shabbat to give yourself the "stopping and remembering" time that you need?

Try It Out: At the beginning and end of your workday, force yourself to take 5 minutes to clear your mind and simply focus on your breathing. Notice the effect of those 5 minutes on the rest of your day.



Textsheets for Students Shabbat On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you! Make Time for Rest and 2016. Our goal is to disseminate these materials as widely as possible. Hillel International grants you permission

Unplugging: Disconnect to Connect

A. Daniel J. Levitin, The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload, New York: Dutton, 2014, p.7:

Every status update you read on Facebook, every tweet or text message you get from a friend, is competing for resources in your brain with important things like whether to put your savings in stocks or bonds, where you left your passport or how best to reconcile with a close friend you just had an argument with.

B. Sherry Turkle, transcript of Alone Together Ted Talk https://www.ted.com/talks/ sherry_turkle_alone_together/transcript?language=en#t-1118000:

[T]echnology appeals to us most where we are most vulnerable. And we are vulnerable. We're lonely, but we're afraid of intimacy. And so from social networks to sociable robots, we're designing technologies that will give us the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship. We turn to technology to help us feel connected in ways we can comfortably control. But we're not so comfortable. We are not so much in control.

... These days, those phones in our pockets are changing our minds and hearts because they offer us three gratifying fantasies. One, that we can put our attention wherever we want it to be; two, that we will always be heard; and three, that we will never have to be alone.

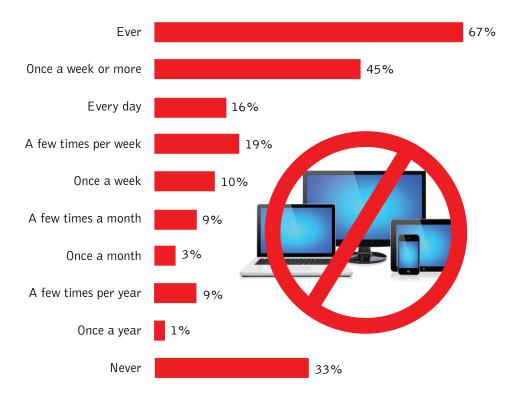




Unplugging: Disconnect to Connect (continued)

How Often Do Americans Try To Unplug?

% of Americans who attempt to unplug from technology in 2016 (Forbes statista)



Source: The Harris Poll

http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2016/03/01/how-often-do-americans-tryto-unplug-from-technology-infographic/#32e767a3a85f

C. Reclaim Shabbat As a Day to Unplug and Consider What Matters The Sabbath Manifesto.

Way back when, God said, "On the seventh day thou shalt rest." The meaning behind it was simple: Take a break. Call a timeout. Find some balance. Recharge. Somewhere along the line, however, this mantra for living faded from modern consciousness. The idea of unplugging every seventh day now feels tragically close to impossible. Who has time to take time off? We need eight days a week to get tasks accomplished, not six.

The Sabbath Manifesto was developed in the same spirit as the Slow Movement, slow food, slow living, by a small group of artists, writers, filmmakers and media professionals who, while not particularly religious, felt a collective need to fight back against our increasingly fast-paced way of living. The idea is to take time off, deadlines and paperwork be damned.

In the Manifesto, we've adapted our ancestors' rituals by carving out one day per week to unwind, unplug, relax, reflect, get outdoors, and get with loved ones.



Shabbat Soul Session: Remembering

A. Exodus 20:7-10

זַכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבַּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ.

ח ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתר.

ט וִיוֹם הַשָּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת לַה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ לֹא תַעֲשֵׂה ַכָל מְלַאכָה אַתַּה וּבִנְךְ וּבְתֵּךְ עַבִּדְּךְ וַאֲמַתְרְ וּבְהֶמְתֶּךְ וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ.

י כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יַמִים עֲשָׂה ה׳ אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת יַ הַאַרֵץ אֵת הַיַּם וָאֵת כַּל אֲשֶׁר בַּם וַיַּנַח בַּיּוֹם ָהַשָּׁבִיעִי עַל כֵּן בָּרַךְ ה׳ אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבַּת וַיִקַדִּשֶׁהוּ.

- 7 Remember the Sabbath day and keep it
- 8 Six days you shall labor and do all your
- **9** but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God: you shall not do any work-you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, or your cattle, or the stranger who is within your settlements.
- 10 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (JPS Translation)



B. Judith Shulevitz, Bring Back the Sabbath, NY Times, March 2, 2003:

The story told by the Sabbath is that of creation: we rest because God rested on the seventh day. What leads from God to humankind is the notion of imitatio Dei: the imitation of God. In other words, we rest in order to honor the divine in us, to remind ourselves that there is more to us than just what we do during the week.

The Sabbath provides two things essential to anyone who wishes to lift himself out of the banality of mercantile culture: time to contemplate, and distance from everyday demands. The Sabbath is to the week what the line break is to poetic language. It is the silence that forces you to return to what came before to find its meaning.

What was Creation's climactic culmination? The act of stopping. Why should God have considered it so important to stop? Rabbi Elijah of Vilna put it this way: God stopped to show us that what we create becomes meaningful to us only once we stop creating it and start to think about why we did so. The implication is clear. We could let the world wind us up and set us to marching, like mechanical dolls that go and go until they fall over, because they don't have a mechanism that allows them to pause. But that would make us less than human. We have to remember to stop because we have to stop to remember.



Teshuvah

תשובה

TESHUVAH

return

Take Responsibility for Your Actions

The Jewish approach recognizes that humans often fail to live up to our best selves, and demands and honors learning from our mistakes.

Change is always possible.

SENSIBILITY CARD





On One Foot: Teshuvah

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"Before anything else, a person is obligated to reflect upon and search out what is his/ her unique mission for the sake of which he/she descended to the world."

— Rabbi Sholom Brezovsky (1911-2000), Netivot Shalom, Vol. 1, Netivei Da'at, Chapter 6:2, p. 30

"The matter then depends upon me alone!" — Babylonian *Talmud, Avoda Zara* 17a

"In the place that a ba'al teshuvah (someone who has conquered his or her flaws) stands, a purely righteous person is not worthy to stand." — Babylonian *Talmud* Berakhot 34b



The Implications

We will look at Teshuvah in the context of:

- Teshuvah: Who Am I? 138
- Change Your Habits, Change Your Life 142
- Teshuvah Soul Session: It Is All Up to Me 146
- Just for Hillel Professionals: Dealing with Failure 150
- Textsheets for Students 151





Teshuvah: Who Am I?

This Activity is Great For



Learning

 Group Learning · Rosh Chodesh



Pastoral Counseling



Holidays High Holidays



Art and Creative Play

Big Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies:

- If using mirrors, 1 mirror for each person (something like https://www.amazon.com/Darice-1633-86-Round-Mirror-6-Inch/dp/B000IM7FB2), and dry erase markers or washable window markers (like https://www.amazon.com/Crayola-Count-Washable-Window-Markers/dp/B001FQKPSU?ie=UTF8&*Version* =1&*entries*=0)
- OR: paper and pen

Ask for a volunteer to read the poem "Zebra Question" by Shel Silverstein. The poem, though whimsical, contains some very deep Jewish wisdom, and can be found at: https://allpoetry.com/Zebra-Question.









- What words would you use to describe who you really are?

Teshuvah TESHUVAH

II. A Deeper Dive

Note to Facilitator:

Many of us are accustomed to thinking about *teshuvah* as repenting from the bad things that we have done. In the following text, Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook, the first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Israel, gives a very different understanding of teshuvah. It is not only — or primarily — about regretting the bad things we have done. Instead, it is about becoming the person we are supposed to be. As we progress on the path of who we are meant to be, we may sin or turn away from our true nature. Teshuvah means "helping [our] inherent character to develop" by returning to our deepest, truest self and expressing it in the world.

- Read the following texts together or in chavruta, and discuss the "obligation" to know who you are and bring your true self out into the world. If you are leading this session on Rosh Hashana or Yom Kippur, note Rabbi Kook's revolutionary understanding of what teshuvah (repentance or return) truly is.
- If the Rabbi Kook text is too dense for your crowd, consider paraphrasing it and instead reading together only the Netivot Shalom text.

A. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hakohen Kook, Orot haTeshuvah 5:6

שלמותם של החיים היא דוקא עם המשך התגלותם על פי טבעם העצמי. וכיון שהטבע היא מצד עצמו אינו בעל הסתכלות והבחנה, הרי החטא מכרח הוא מצד זה. ואין אדם צדיק בארץ אשר יעשה טוב ולא יחטא. ובטול עצם טבעיותם של החיים, כדי שיהיה האדם בלתי-חוטא, זהו עצמו החטא היותר גדול, ״וכפר עליו מאשר חטא על הנפש". על כן התשובה מתקנת את הקלקול ומחזירה את העולם ואת החיים למקורו דוקא בגילוי יסוד עצמיותם העליון, עולם החרות, ועל שם כך מכנים שם ה' אלקים חיים.

A person's life is perfected by developing his inherent character. And since one's still-undeveloped character lacks insight, sin is guaranteed along this path of development. "There is no righteous person in the land who will commit good and not sin." [Kohelet 7:20] On the other hand, eliminating one's natural character in order to prevent sin is itself the greatest sin, [regarding which the *Torah* says of the *nazir* in Bamidbar 6:11,] "He shall atone for his sin against life."

Therefore, *Teshuvah* repairs the damage Ecaused by sin and trying to be someone you are not and restores the world and this person's life to its root, precisely by helping the inherent character to develop. (Translation adapted from: http://rechovot.blogspot.com/2010/08/rav-kook-onteshuvah-healthy-natural.html.)





B. Rabbi Shalom Brezovsky, Netivot Shalom, Vol. 1, Netivei Da'at, Chapter 6:2, p. 30

בראש כל האדם חייב להתבונן היטב ולחקור ולדעת מהי חובתו המיוחדת בעולמו, מהו הענין המיוחד שבשבילו ירד לעולם . . .

Before anything else, a person is obligated to reflect upon and search out what is his/ her unique mission for the sake of which he descended to the world . . .

(Excerpt and translation from Morasha Syllabus, http://www.morashasyllabus.com/ class/Defining%200nes%20Role%20in%20Life.pdf_p. 7.)

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Character Trait Circles

This activity is designed to help students access their true selves and unique mission in the world, using Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe's "Character Trait Circles." (Adapted from: Dina Coopersmith, Four Elements: Jewish Personality Typing_http://www.aish.com/sp/pg/83525102.html.) In his mussar book Alei Shur, Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe advises drawing a character trait circle to help us understand who we are and what are our missions in life.

- If you are using this session as a coffee date, you may wish to simply use paper and pen to complete this exercise.
- . If you are teaching this as a group lesson, and/or to an individual or group that responds to craft activities, you may wish to do this exercise as a mirror craft activity. See above for supplies needed.

Step 1:

Give out the mirrors or paper and pens.

Step 2:

Explain that we will now create a "character trait circle" based on an exercise in Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe's book Alei Shur. If using the mirrors, tell students that every time we look our reflections, we will be reminded of who we really are and what we are truly capable of.





Step 3:

Students should draw the circle, or use the frame around the mirror as their circle. On the top of the circle, write your biggest strength, your best quality. At the bottom of the circle, write your worst flaw. Near the top, write some of your other good traits. As you go lower in the circle, write down some of your other, more neutral traits, and then towards the bottom, write down other challenging qualities you have.

Step 4:

Tell students that we each have a special mission in the world. To discover our mission, we should look to the top of the circle and consider how we can use our best qualities to fulfill our mission. To understand what we need to repair (tikkun), we should look to the bottom of the circle.

Divide students into small groups and ask them to discuss the following questions:

- 1. What are the strengths that you wrote at the top of the circle? What mission could you accomplish that is related to those strengths?
- 2. What is the main challenge that you wrote on the bottom of the circle? How could you use your strengths to help you address your challenge?

Reconvene the group, and ask them to write in the center of the circle, or on a certain spot on the mirror, a mission statement or phrase that they would like to remember based on the discussions they just had. Invite students to share their mission statements. Encourage students to put these mirrors someplace where they will see them every morning. Check in with students after about a week to see if these mirror reminders have led to any changes or impacted their decision-making.



Change Your Habits, Change Your Life

This Activity is Great For



Learning

· Group Learning Rosh Chodesh



Pastoral Counseling

Self-Worth



Holidays · High Holidays



Coffee Dates

I. Beginning the Conversation

Supplies:

Regular index cards, or dissolving paper if you plan to do a symbolic Tashlich

If this session takes place during the month of *Elul* or around the High Holidays, introduce the concept that we are now in a time of thinking about our lives and what we want to change going forward. Give out paper (if you are going to throw the paper in the water later for tashlich, use dissolving paper) and ask everyone to write down one bad habit that they would like to break this year.







II. A Deeper Dive

The Four Steps of Teshuvah

Tell students that one of the most radical ideas that Judaism introduced to the world is the concept of teshuvah. According to Judaism, we can improve and change. The bad things that we have done don't define us forever. Bad habits — and worse — can be overcome through the hard work of teshuvah. In fact, the Sages say:

Babylonian Talmud Brachot 34b

במקום שבעלי תשובה עומדין צדיקים גמורים אינם עומדין

In the place that a ba'al teshuvah (someone who has conquered his or her flaws) stands, a purely righteous person is not worthy to stand.

Not only are we told that we can do teshuvah, we are also told the steps to follow for complete repentance. In the following source, the great Jewish sage Maimonides lays out the steps for teshuvah. As you read through this source together, challenge students to find the four elements of teshuvah that Maimonides describes.



וּמַה הָיא הַתָּשׁוּבָה--הוּא שֶׁיַעֲזֹב הַחוֹטֵא חֵטָאוֹ, וִיסִירֵנּוּ ממחשבתו ויגמר בּלבּוֹ שלא יַעשהוּ עוֹד, שנאמר ״יַעזב ַרְשַׁע דַּרְכּוֹ, וְאִישׁ אֲוֵן מַחְשָׁבֹתֵיו״ (ישעיהו נה,ז). וְכֵן יִתְנַחַם על שעבר, שנאמר ״כּי-אחרי שוּבי, נחמתּי, ואחרי הוּדעי, ָסָפַקְתִּי עַל-יָרֶךְ״ (ירמיהו לא,יח); וְיָעִיד עָלָיו יוֹדֵעַ תַּעֵלוּמוֹת שַׁלֹא יַשׁוּב לְזָה הַחֲטָא לְעוֹלַם, שַׁנַּאַמַר ״וָלֹא-נֹאמַר עוֹד ָאֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ--אֲשֶׁר-בְּךָּ, יְרָחַם יָתוֹם״ (הושע יד,ד). וָצָרִיךְ לְהָתָוַדּוֹת בִּשִּׂפָתָיו, וְלוֹמֵר עִנְיָנוֹת אֱלּוּ שֵׁגָּמַר בִּלְבּוֹ. What constitutes *Teshuvah*? That a sinner should abandon his sins and remove them from his thoughts, resolving in his heart, never to commit them again as [Isaiah 55:7] states "May the wicked abandon his ways...." Similarly, he must regret the past as [Jeremiah 31:18] states: "After I returned, I regretted." [He must reach the level where] He who knows the hidden will testify concerning him that he will never return to this sin again as [Hoshea 14:4] states: "We will no longer say to the work of our hands: 'You are our gods.'" He must verbally confess and state these matters which he resolved in his heart. (Translation from: http://www.chabad.org/library/article_ cdo/aid/911891/jewish/*Teshuvah*-Chapter-Two.htm)

Teshuvah

TESHUVAH

Ask students if they were able to spot the four steps of teshuvah listed in the Rambam.

They are usually described as:

- 1. Azivat ha-chet stop doing the bad action
- 2. *Charatah* remorse for having done the bad action
- 3. Viduy verbal confession
- 4. Kabbalah l'atid resolving, and making a plan, to never repeat these actions







TALK IT OUT

B. How to Break a Habit: Research from the Field

Tell students that a New York Times writer, Charles Duhigg, was also concerned with the question of how to break a habit. In fact, he was so concerned with this question that he wrote a book about habits: *The Power of Habit*. Duhigg found that there are three elements to a habit, what he calls the "habit loop": cue, routine and reward. In the following video, he describes how he used his knowledge of the habit loop to break his afternoon cookie habit.

Watch together "How to Break A Habit" — https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WleYrhGeffc

Discuss the three elements of the Habit Loop

- Cue trigger for an automatic behavior to start unfolding
- Routine behavior itself
- Reward tells our brain whether we should store it for future use or not

Duhigg found that if we become mindful of our habits, we can start to change them.

Duhigg's 4 Steps to Changing Your Habits

- 1. Isolate the routine that you want to change, e.g. eating a cookie in the afternoon.
- 2. Next, figure out the reward that you are really craving.
 - a. In Duhigg's cookie experiment, he realized that the reward he was craving was socializing with his colleagues. He realized that he could change his routine to get the same reward. When he changed his routine so that he was able to socialize away from the cafeteria, his desire for a cookie disappeared.
 - b. To figure out your desired reward, adjust your routine so that it gives you different rewards. Duhigg walked around the block, bought an apple in the cafeteria, and went to a friend's desk to experiment with different rewards. After you test the different rewards, write down a few words that come to mind. Then set an alarm for 15 minutes and see if you still have the desire for the same routine.
- 3. Observe your routine to figure out the cues that prompt the bad habit. Usually, a cue falls into one of five categories: location, time, emotional state, other people, immediately preceding action. Observe these 5 cues over the course of a week or two to figure out what is triggering your behavior.



4. Have a plan — Decide in advance what you will do when you experience the cue, so that you will get the reward you desire without engaging in the bad routine. For instance, in the video Duhigg decided he would socialize at a colleague's desk every day at 3:30 PM. Notice that the last step here -- Have a Plan -- is the same step Maimonides wrote about over 800 years ago: Kabalah I'Atid.

OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Brainstorming

Ask students to apply some of Duhigg's research to the following typical bad habits. Discuss together what some of the possible cues and rewards might be for these habits, and what plan one could implement to change the habit:

- Fights with roommates
- Staying up too late surfing the internet
- · Eating too much junk food
- · Gossiping about someone else

Once you have brainstormed together as a group, divide students into *chavruta* pairs and have them brainstorm some of the cues and rewards for the bad habits (routines) they originally wrote down, and how they can change those bad habits based on what the group has talked about today.

Tashlich

Reconvene the group. Tell participants that in the month of *Tishrei*, Jews traditionally gather around a stream or other place of flowing water, and symbolically throw away their sins. This custom, known as Tashlich, is meant to be a physical reminder to repent -- not to replace the hard work of *teshuvah*. Take students to a stream, river or other water source on campus (a fountain?) and (if allowed) throw the dissolving paper into the water, as a way to symbolically cast away the bad habit.

Follow-Up

Check in with students over the next week or two to see if they were able to change their bad habits by changing their cues or finding a new routine that gives them the same reward. If it has not worked, talk with them to further clarify their cues, routines and rewards to try to find a way to change the bad habit.







Teshuvah Soul Session: It is All Up to Me

This Activity is Great For





I. Beginning the Conversation

Soul sessions are based on the work of Parker Palmer, specifically his development of the "circle of trust" and his emphasis on drawing out the soul and giving it safe space. In these soul sessions, we will read a piece of text connected to a sensibility, and give ourselves the time and safe space to fully experience the text and discover our relationship to it. Our goals in these sessions are: (1) to get in touch with the wisdom that we have within; (2) to have real, meaningful encounters with Jewish ideas; and (3) to create a welcoming community that nurtures true, honest and kind communication.

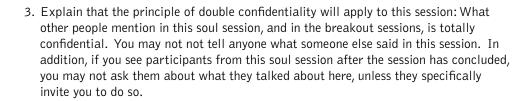
For more information about Parker Palmer, the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the principles and procedures of Circles of Trust, see http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/.

Note to Facilitator:

How to conduct a soul session:

- 1. Set up chairs in a circle, where everyone can see each other.
- 2. Welcome students to the soul session, and explain what a soul session/circle of trust is. You may wish to distribute the Courage and Renewal touchstones, and read each touchstone out loud, in order to set the stage for the work that the group will do together. (http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/CourageRenewal-Circle-of-Trust-Touchstones-(c)2015.pdf)





- 4. Introduce the text: Introduce the radical Jewish idea of teshuvah, that we are all capable of repentance, return and growth. If you are leading this session as an alternative High Holiday service or around the time of the High Holidays, explain that the rituals this time of year encourage us to engage in *teshuvah* by reflecting upon our actions and striving to do better. Tell students that we will now read a funny and profound story from the Babylonian Talmud about a man who you might not think of as the model for teshuvah. Encourage them to open their hearts to the story and the meaning that it holds for them. Tell students: In our session today, it does not matter whether you have heard this story many times before or if this is your first encounter with the story. What we will do is read it as if it is the first time, and create the space and atmosphere to have a deep and meaningful personal encounter with the text.
- 5. Ask for two volunteers to read the text out loud, one after the other, so that we can hear the text in two different voices. (See below for text)

Teshuvah

תשובה

TESHUVAH

Take Responsibility

- 6. Invite members of the circle to comment on what resonates for them in the piece they just read. You should be involved as a member of the circle, but don't rush to fill the silence; give participants the time and space to comment and reflect. Encourage participants to speak into the middle of the circle, rather than to each other.
- 7. Journaling: Before the session, write out the following questions or any other questions you would like to pose on a large sheet of paper. At this point in the session, post the paper on the wall and read out the questions.
 - What kind of person does Eleazar ben Dordaya seem to be? Do you identify with Eleazar in any way?
 - Why do you think Eleazar was so disturbed by the prostitute's exhaled breath and words?
 - What scares Eleazar when he says "then the matter depends on me alone"? Does that scare you?
 - Why do you think the heavenly voice announced that Eleazar was accepted into the World to Come? What did he do to deserve it?
 - Have you ever felt like you hit rock bottom? What have you done to climb back out? What could you do in the future?

Invite students to spend 10 minutes writing in their journal, or if this session occurs on Shabbat or a holiday, silently reflecting on these questions. They should find a place to sit comfortably, and take their time. Their written reflections will be kept private unless they choose to reveal them.

8. Small Group Discussion: Bring the group back together and explain that you will now separate them into groups of two or three (depending on how much time you have carved out for this session, and your space constraints). Each group will find someplace to gather, and then each individual in the group will have 10 minutes to talk about their reflections on the text and questions, or whatever thoughts the text has prompted in them. Each group should appoint a timekeeper to raise his or her hand when the 10 minutes are up. After each member of the group has had his or her ten minutes, they should return to the circle.





Ground rules for the breakout groups:

- a. Sit in silence and give the individual who is speaking the space and time to talk at his or her own pace. Do not jump in with questions or comments. Hold the space for them to talk. If they take all 10 minutes to talk, then your job is simply to listen. If they decide they do not want to talk at all, sit in silence with them for 10 minutes. If they have finished what they have to say, and they invite questions before the 10 minutes are up, ask brief, open and honest questions - without introducing your own opinion or offering advice.
- b. Do not give advice your job is not to tell the others what they should do. Your job is to help create a safe, open space where honest, soulful reflection can occur.
- c. The rule of double confidentiality applies. Members of the group may not tell anyone else what they heard in this conversation. In addition, if you see a member of your group later on, you may not ask them about what they talked about, unless they specifically invite you to do so.
- 9. Whole Group Reflection: When everyone returns to the circle, invite participants to share with the whole group something they have discovered (about themselves only — no talking about what others had said) through their journaling and small group discussions, or to reflect on the soul session and its process of reflection and building of safe space. Allow students to sit in silence to reflect; do not rush to close.
- 10. Closing: Thank students for their time and for creating a welcoming, honest, safe space. Remind them again that double confidentiality applies. Tell students that you are always happy to speak with them about some of the issues that have come up for them in this session, but that because of double confidentiality you will not refer back to what they said unless they explicitly and proactively invite you to do so (make sure to let them know that, so no misunderstandings occur).

The Story of Rabbi Eleazer ben Dordaya, Babylonian Talmud, Avoda Zara 17a

אמרו עליו על ר"א בן דורדיא שלא הניח זונה אחת בעולם שלא בא עליה פעם אחת שמע שיש זונה אחת בכרכי הים והיתה נוטלת כיס דינרין בשכרה נטל כיס דינרין והלך ועבר עליה שבעה נהרות בשעת הרגל דבר הפיחה אמרה כשם שהפיחה זו אינה חוזרת למקומה כך אלעזר בן דורדיא אין מקבלין אותו בתשובה הלך וישב בין שני הרים וגבעות אמר הרים וגבעות בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו לו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו נד) כי ההרים ימושו והגבעות תמוטינה אמר שמים וארץ בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו נא) כי שמים כעשן נמלחו והארץ כבגד תבלה אמר חמה ולבנה בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו לו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו כד) וחפרה הלבנה ובושה החמה אמר כוכבים ומזלות

It was said of Rabbi Eleazar ben Dordaya that he did not leave out any harlot in the world without coming to her. Once, on hearing that there was a certain harlot in one of the towns by the sea who accepted a purse of denarii for her hire, he took a purse of denarii and crossed seven rivers for her sake. As he was with her, she blew forth breath (another translation: she passed gas) and said: As this blown breath will not return to its place, so will Eleazar ben Dordaya never be received in repentance. He thereupon went, sat between two hills and mountains and exclaimed: "O, you hills and mountains, plead for mercy for me!" They replied: "How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed!" (Isaiah 54:10) So he exclaimed: "Heaven and earth, plead you for mercy for me!" They, too, replied: "How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment."" (Isaiah 51:6)



The Story of Rabbi Eleazer ben Dordaya, Babylonian Talmud, Avoda Zara 17a (continued)

בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו לו עד שאנו מבק־ שים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו לד) ונמקו כל צבא השמים אמר אין הדבר תלוי אלא בי הניח ראשו בין ברכיו וגעה בבכיה עד שיצתה נשמתו יצתה בת קול ואמרה ר״א בן דורדיא מזומן לחיי העולם הבא. . . בכה רבי ואמר יש קונה עולמו בכמה שנים ויש קונה עולמו בשעה אחת ואמר רבי לא דיין לבעלי תשובה שמקבלין אותן אלא שקורין אותן רבי

He then exclaimed: "Sun and moon, plead you for mercy for me!" But they also replied: "How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed." (Isaiah 24:23) He exclaimed: "You stars and constellations, plead you for mercy for me!" Said they: How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'And all the hosts of heaven shall moulder away."" (Isaiah 34:4) Said he: "The matter then depends upon me alone!" Having placed his head between his knees, he wept aloud until his soul departed. Then a bat-kol (heavenly voice) was heard proclaiming: "Rabbi Eleazar ben Dordaya is destined for the life of the world to come!"... Rabbi [on hearing of it] wept and said: One may acquire eternal life after many years, another in one hour! Rabbi also said: Not only are penitents accepted, they are even called 'Rabbi'!







Just for Hillel Professionals: Dealing with Failure

This Activity is Great For



I. Beginning the Conversation

Hillel professionals work hard on a day-to-day basis connecting with students, planning and implementing programs, and teaching classes. Inevitably, some of these encounters, programs or classes will not go as well as we had hoped. Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of teshuvah to make things right and move forward.

- 1. Have there been any recent interactions with colleagues or students that you have regretted?
 - a. What did you do about it?
 - b. If you could do it over, what would you do?
 - c. What can you do about it now?
- 2. What are some specific things you will do this year to deal with personal or professional situations that you find challenging?
- 3. What are your strengths as a person and Hillel professional?
- 4. What are some specific things you will do this year to use your strengths to greater effect in both your personal and professional lives?





Teshuvah

Take Responsibility for

Textsheets for Students

Teshuvah: Who Am I?

"The Zebra Question" by Shel Silverstein

The poem, though whimsical, contains some very deep Jewish wisdom, and can be found at: https://allpoetry.com/Zebra-Question.





Textsheets for Students

Teshuvah: Who Am I? (continued)

A. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hakohen Kook, Orot haTeshuvah 5:6

שלמותם של החיים היא דוקא עם המשך התגלותם על פי טבעם העצמי. וכיון שהטבע היא מצד עצמו אינו בעל הסתכלות והבחנה, הרי החטא מכרח הוא מצד זה. ואין אדם צדיק בארץ אשר יעשה טוב ולא יחטא. ובטול עצם טבעיותם של החיים, כדי שיהיה האדם בלתי-חוטא. זהו עצמו החטא היותר גדול, "וכפר עליו מאשר חטא על הנפש״. על כן התשובה מתקנת את הקלקול ומחזירה את העולם ואת החיים למקורו דוקא בגילוי יסוד עצמיותם העליון, עולם החרות, ועל שם כך מכנים שם ה׳ אלקים חיים.

A person's life is perfected by developing his inherent character. And since one's still-undeveloped character lacks insight. sin is guaranteed along this path of development. "There is no righteous person in the land who will commit good and not sin." [Kohelet 7:20] On the other hand, eliminating one's natural character in order to prevent sin is itself the greatest sin, [regarding which the *Torah* says of the *nazir* in *Bamidbar* 6:11,] "He shall atone for his sin against life."

Therefore, *Teshuvah* repairs the damage Ecaused by sin and trying to be someone you are not] and restores the world and this person's life to its root, precisely by helping the inherent character to develop. (Translation adapted from: http:// rechovot.blogspot.com/2010/08/ravkook-on-teshuvah-healthy-natural.html.)



(Excerpt and translation from Morasha Syllabus, http://www.morashasyllabus.com/class/ Defining%200nes%20Role%20in%20Life.pdf, p. 7.)

בראש כל האדם חייב להתבונן היטב ולחקור ולדעת מהי חובתו המיוחדת בעולמו, מהו הענין המיוחד שבשבילו ירד לעולם . . .

Before anything else, a person is obligated to reflect upon and search out what is his/ her unique mission for the sake of which he descended to the world . . .





Textsheets for Students

Change Your Habits, Change Your Life

Babylonian Talmud Brachot 34b

במקום שבעלי תשובה עומדין צדיקים גמורים אינם עומדין

In the place that a ba'al teshuvah (someone who has conquered his or her flaws) stands, a purely righteous person is not worthy to stand.

Maimonides Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah, Chapter 2, Halacha 3

וּמַה הִיא הַתִּשׁוּבָה--הוּא שֵׁיַעֲזֹב הַחוֹטֵא חֵטָאוֹ, וִיסִירֵנוּ מִמַּחִשַּׁבְתּוֹ וִיִגְמֹר בִּלְבּוֹ שֵׁלֹּא יַעֲשֶׂהוּ עוֹד, שֶׁנָּאֱמַר ״יַעֲזֹב רָשַׁע דַּרְכּוֹ, וְאִישׁ אָוֵן מַחִשָּׁבֹתָיו״ (ישעיהו נה,ז). וְכֵן יִתְנַחַם ָעַל שַׁעַבַר, שַׁנַּאֱמַר ״כִּי-אַחֱרֵי שׁוּבִי, נְחַמְתִּיי וְאַחֲרֵי הָוַדְעִי, סַפַּקְתִּי עַל-יַרֵךְ״ (ירמיהו לא,יח); ויָעִיד עָלָיו יוֹדֵעַ תַּעֵלוּמוֹת שֵׁלֹּא יַשׁוּב לְזֵה הַחֲטָא לְעוֹלַם, שֶׁנַּאֱמַר ״וִלֹא-ָנֹאמַר עוֹד אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ--אֲשֵׁר-בְּךָ, יִרְחַם יַתוֹם" (הושע יד,ד). וְצַרִיךְ לְהָתְוַדּוֹת בִּשִּׂפַתִיו, וְלוֹמַר עְנִיַנוֹת אֱלּוּ שָׁגַּמַר בִּלְבּוֹ.

What constitutes *Teshuvah*? That a sinner should abandon his sins and remove them from his thoughts, resolving in his heart, never to commit them again as [Isaiah 55:7] states "May the wicked abandon his ways...." Similarly, he must regret the past as [Jeremiah 31:18] states: "After I returned, I regretted." [He must reach the level where] He who knows the hidden will testify concerning him that he will never return to this sin again as [Hoshea 14:4] states: "We will no longer say to the work of our hands: 'You are our gods." He must verbally confess and state these matters which he resolved in his heart.

(Translation from: http://www.chabad.org/ library/article_cdo/aid/911891/jewish/ Teshuvah-Chapter-Two.htm)



Teshuvah Soul Session: It is All Up to Me

The Story of Rabbi Eleazer ben Dordaya, Babylonian Talmud, Avoda Zara 17a

אמרו עליו על ר״א בן דורדיא שלא הניח זונה אחת בעולם שלא בא עליה פעם אחת שמע שיש זונה אחת בכרכי הים והיתה נוטלת כיס דינרין בשכרה נטל כיס דינרין והלך ועבר עליה שבעה נהרות בשעת הרגל דבר הפיחה אמרה כשם שהפיחה זו אינה חוזרת למקו־ מה כך אלעזר בן דורדיא אין מקבלין אותו בתשובה הלך וישב בין שני הרים וגבעות אמר הרים וגבעות בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו לו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו נד) כי ההרים ימושו והגבעות תמוטינה אמר שמים וארץ בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו נא) כי שמים כעשן נמלחו והארץ כבגד תבלה אמר חמה ולבנה בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו לו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר (ישעיהו כד) וחפרה הלבנה ובושה החמה אמר כוכבים ומזלות בקשו עלי רחמים אמרו לו עד שאנו מבקשים עליך נבקש על עצמנו שנאמר ישעיהו לד) ונמקו כל צבא השמים אמר) אין הדבר תלוי אלא בי הניח ראשו בין ברכיו וגעה בבכיה עד שיצתה נשמתו יצתה בת קול ואמרה ר״א בן דורדיא מזומן לחיי העולם הבא. . . בכה רבי ואמר יש קונה עולמו בכמה שנים ויש קונה עולמו בשעה אחת ואמר רבי לא דיין לבעלי תשובה שמקבלין אותן אלא שקורין אותן רבי

It was said of Rabbi Eleazar ben Dordaya that he did not leave out any harlot in the world without coming to her. Once, on hearing that there was a certain harlot in one of the towns by the sea who accepted a purse of denarii for her hire, he took a purse of denarii and crossed seven rivers for her sake. As he was with her, she blew forth breath (another translation: she passed gas) and said: As this blown breath will not return to its place, so will Eleazar ben Dordaya never be received in repentance. He thereupon went, sat between two hills and mountains and exclaimed: "0, you hills and mountains, plead for mercy for me!" They replied: "How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed!" (Isaiah 54:10) So he exclaimed: "Heaven and earth, plead you for mercy for me!" They, too, replied: "How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment." (Isaiah 51:6) He then exclaimed: "Sun and moon, plead you for mercy for me!" But they also replied: "How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed.'" (Isaiah 24:23) He exclaimed: "You stars and constellations, plead you for mercy for me!" Said they: How shall we pray for you? We stand in need of it ourselves, for it is said, 'And all the hosts of heaven shall moulder away." (Isaiah 34:4) Said he: "The matter then depends upon me alone!" Having placed his head between his knees, he wept aloud until his soul departed. Then a batkol (heavenly voice) was heard proclaiming: "Rabbi Eleazar ben Dordaya is destined for the life of the world to come!"... Rabbi [on hearing of it] wept and said: One may acquire eternal life after many years, another in one hour! Rabbi also said: Not only are penitents accepted, they are even called 'Rabbi'!



Israel

ישראל

ISRAEL

wrestling with G!d

Question Everything, Including Authority

The Jewish approach includes asking questions— of ourselves and of others, about why and how things are the way they are.

Even in the face of great power the approach is not to bow down but to engage, and struggle for deeper understanding.

SENSIBILITY CARD





On One Foot: Israel

IMPORTANT TEXTS

"My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West" Rabbi Judah Ha-Levi (d. 1141)

"Thus He will judge among the nations, and arbitrate for the many peoples, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up sword against nation; they shall never again know war." — Isaiah 2:4

"The name "Israel" stands for shir el the song of God. It is a simple song, a twofold song, a threefold song, and a fourfold song." — Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook (1865-1935), The Fourfold Song



We will look at Israel in the context of:

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- "My Heart Is In the East" Why? **157**
- Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People 161
- Just for Hillel Educators: Dissent Within the Jewish Community 164
- Textsheets for Students 165





Soul Session: Wrestling With God

This Activity is Great For





I. Beginning the Conversation

Soul sessions are based on the work of Parker Palmer, specifically his development of the "circle of trust" and his emphasis on drawing out the soul and giving it safe space. In these soul sessions, we will use a piece of text or artwork connected to a sensibility, and give ourselves the time and safe space to fully experience the text and discover our relationship to it. Our goals in these sessions are: (1) to get in touch with the wisdom that we have within; (2) to have real, meaningful encounters with Jewish ideas; and (3) to create a welcoming community that nurtures true, honest and kind communication.

For more information about Parker Palmer, the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the principles and procedures of Circles of Trust, see http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/.

Note to Facilitator:

As the facilitator, your role is to help the circle participants create a secure space where they can meaningfully encounter themselves, each other and the text. As much as possible, try to facilitate and not teach: you should be involved in the discussions, journaling and small discussions like other members of the group. Give the group the space and trust to proceed without telling them what they should think or how they should interpret.

How to conduct a soul session:

- 1. Set up chairs in a circle, where everyone can see each other.
- 2. Welcome students to the soul session, and explain what a soul session/ circle of trust is. You may wish to distribute the Courage and Renewal touchstones, and read each touchstone out loud, in order to set the stage for the work that the group will do together. (http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/CourageRenewal-Circle-of-Trust-Touchstones-(c)2015.pdf)
- 3. Explain that the principle of double confidentiality will apply to this session: What other people mention in this soul session, and in the breakout sessions, is totally confidential. You may not not tell anyone what someone else said in this session. In addition, if you see participants from this soul session after the session has concluded, you may not ask them about what they talked about here, unless they specifically invite you to do so.



- 4. Introduce the text: This poem is taken from *God's Optimism*, a book of poetry by Yehoshua November. November was raised in a traditional Jewish home and became Chassidic in college. As his commitment to his faith deepened, he stopped writing poetry and enrolled in yeshiva until, with his rabbis' encouragement, he began to write again after two years' silence. In a 2010 interview, November said: "I think it's important to explore how most people, even if they look as if everything is in order, are facing challenges. Art that doesn't express conflict always falls flat because it's not true to human experience." (from the Poetry Foundation, http://www. poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/yehoshua-november)
- 5. Ask for two volunteers to read the text out loud, one after the other, so that we can hear the text in two different voices (the poem can be found on the page right after this facilitation guide)
- 6. Invite members of the circle to comment on what resonates for them in the piece they just read. You should be involved as a member of the circle, but don't rush to fill the silence - give participants the time and space to comment and reflect. Encourage participants to speak into the middle of the circle, rather than to each other.



- 7. Journaling: Before the session, write out the following questions or any other questions you would like to pose on a large sheet of paper. At this point in the session, post the paper on the wall and read the questions out loud.
 - How would you describe your relationship with God?
 - How has the sorrow in this world affected your relationship with God?
 - What does November suggest that one do instead? What would that look like in your life?
 - What are some words you would use to describe how you would like your relationship with God to be?

Invite students to spend 10 minutes writing in their journal, or if this session occurs on Shabbat or a holiday, silently reflecting on these questions. They should find a place to sit comfortably, and take their time. Their written reflections will be kept private unless they choose to reveal them.

8. Small Group Discussion: Bring the group back together and explain that you will now separate them into groups of two or three (depending on how much time you have carved out for this session, and your space constraints). Each group will find someplace to gather, and then each individual in the group will have 10 minutes to talk about their reflections on the text and questions, or whatever thoughts the text has prompted in them. Each group should appoint a timekeeper to raise his or her hand when the 10 minutes are up. After each member of the group has had his or her ten minutes, they should return to the circle.

Ground rules for the breakout groups:

- a. Sit in silence and give the individual who is speaking the space and time to talk at his or her own pace. Do not jump in with questions or comments. Hold the space for them to talk. If they take all 10 minutes to talk, then your job is simply to listen. If they decide they do not want to talk at all, sit in silence with them for 10 minutes. If they have finished what they have to say, and they invite questions before the 10 minutes are up, ask brief, open and honest questions — without introducing your own opinion or offering advice.
- b. Do not give advice your job is not to tell the others what they should do. Your job is to help create a safe, open space where honest, soulful reflection can occur.





- c. The rule of double confidentiality applies. Members of the group may not tell anyone else what they heard in this conversation. In addition, if you see a member of your group later on, you may not ask them about what they talked about, unless they specifically invite you to do so.
- 9. Whole Group Reflection: When everyone returns to the circle, invite participants to share with the whole group something they have discovered (about themselves only — no talking about what others had said) through their journaling and small group discussions, or to reflect on the soul session and its process of reflection and building of safe space. Allow students to sit in silence to reflect; do not rush to close.
- 10. Closing: Thank students for their time and for creating a welcoming, honest, safe space. Remind them again that double confidentiality applies. Tell students that you are always happy to speak with them about some of the issues that have come up for them in this session, but that because of double confidentiality you will not refer back to what they said unless they explicitly and proactively invite you to do so (make sure to let them know that so no misunderstandings occur).

The Purpose of this World

From *God's Optimism* by Yehoshua November

When some Jews cannot explain the sorrow of their lives

they take a vow of atheism.

Then everywhere they go,

they curse the God they don't believe exists.

But why, why don't they grab Him by the lapels,

pull His formless body down into this lowly world,

and make Him explain.

After all, this is the purpose of creation —

to make this coarse realm a dwelling place

for His presence.

"My Heart Is In the East"

— Why?

This Activity is Great For



· Beit Midrash Group Learning



 Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day)



 Pre-Birthright Session



iq Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Judah HaLevi (d. 1141) was a Spanish poet and philosopher who longed to live in the Land of Israel. Many of his poems speak to his love for Zion and his despair at being so far away, though he lived relatively comfortably in Spain. Read "My Heart Is In the East", perhaps HaLevi's most famous ode to the Land of Israel.

"My Heart is in the East"

לְבִּי בִמְזָרֵח וְאַנֹכִי בִּסוֹף מַעַרַב אַיך אָטעַמַה אָת אַשֶּׁר אֹכַל וְאֵיךְ יֵעַרָב אַיכַה אַשַׁלֵּם נִדְרֵי וַאֵסַרַי, בִּעוֹד צִיּוֹן בָּחֶבֶל אֱדוֹם וַאֲנִי בִּכֶבֵל עֲרָב וַקַל בִּעֵינַי עַזֹב כָּל טוּב סְפָרַד, כִּמוֹ יַקַר בִּעֵינַי רָאוֹת עַפָּרוֹת דְּבִיר נַחֲרָב.

My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West How can I taste the food I eat, could it bring me any rest? The vows and oaths I've sworn, can I heed them as I must When Zion's bound with Christian rope and I with Arab chains? It seems as easy in my eyes to leave the charms of Spain, As precious as my eyes would find the ruined Temple's dust.

(Translation by: http://www.soulandgone.com/2012/11/05/libive-mizrah/.)

Tell students: Judah HaLevi lived 1,000 years after the destruction of the Temple and the Jewish diaspora, yet his heart desperately longed for Jerusalem. And he wasn't alone — for thousands of years Jews have mourned, fasted, written poetry and risked their lives to return to the Land of Israel. What is so special about Israel, specifically Jerusalem, in Jewish tradition that led Jews to never forget about it?





II. A Deeper Dive

Let us look at some of the strands in Jewish tradition that speak about Jerusalem to understand the love and longing that Jews have had for city throughout the ages.

Stories of Jerusalem appear throughout our tradition. Today, we will look at one story that describes why Jerusalem was chosen, and a prophecy of the promise of Jerusalem.

The following is well-known folk story about why Jerusalem was chosen as the site of the Temple. It is not found in the *Talmud* or *Midrash*.

You may wish to read and discuss the first story together, and then divide students into *chavruta* pairs to read the second source and discuss the questions.

A. The Two Brothers on the Temple Mount

Long before the Temple was built, two brothers lived and farmed on that site [in Jerusalem]. One was married and had a large family, while the other was single. They lived in close proximity to each other, and each worked his land growing wheat. When harvest time arrived, each was blessed with a bountiful crop and piled up his grain for long-term storage. The unmarried brother, observing his good fortune, thought to himself that God had blessed him with more than he needed, whereas his brother, who was blessed with a large family, could surely use more. He arose in the middle of the night and secretly took from his grain and put it in his brother's pile. Similarly, the married brother thought to himself that he was fortunate to have children who will care for him in his old age, while his brother will depend on what he saved. He, too, arose in the middle of the night and quietly transferred grain from his pile to his brother's. In the morning, each pondered why there was no noticeable decrease in his own pile, and so they repeated the transfer the next night. These nocturnal activities went on for several nights, until one night the brothers bumped into each other. In that instant, in the dark of night, the glow of brotherly love lit up the mountain sky; they each understood what the other had been doing and fell into each other's arms in a loving embrace. According to the legend, when God saw that display of brotherly love, He selected the site for His Temple. (retold by Dr. Ari Zivotofsky, https://www.ou.org/torah/machshava/ tzarich-iyun/tzarich iyun the two brothers and the temple mount/)

- 1. What was so special about this story between two brothers?
- 2. Why situate the Temple, Judaism's holiest site, in this place? What does this tell us about the significance of the Temple, and of Jerusalem?
- 3. Have you ever given up something of your own for another, because of your love for them? Has someone ever done that for you? What does that experience feel like?



B. The Hope for What Jerusalem Can Be

This text comes from Isaiah, who lived at the time of the destruction of the first Temple. He lays out a vision of what Jerusalem can - and one day will - be.

א הַדַּבַר אֱשֶׁר חַזַה יִשַּׁעְיָהוּ בֵּן אַמוֹץ עַל יָהוּדַה וִירוּשַׁלַם.

בַ וְהַיָה בָּאַחֵרִית הַיָּמִים נָכוֹן יִהְיֵה הַר בֵּית יִהוָה בִּרֹאשׁ הֵהָרִים וְנָשָּׂא מִגְּבָעוֹת וַנָהֱרוּ אֱלַיו כָּל הַגּוֹיִם.

ג וַהַלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאַמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַעֲלֵה אַל הַר יִהוָה אָל בֵּית אֵלהֵי יַעַקֹב וִיֹרֵנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנֵלְכָה בִּאֹרְחֹתָיו כִּי מִצְיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר יִהוָה מִירוּשָׁלָם.

ד וִשַּׁפַט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים וְכָתָתוּ חַרְבוֹתָם לְאָתִים וַחַנִּיתוֹתֵיהֵם לְמַזְמֵרוֹת לֹא יִשָּׂא גוֹי אֵל גוֹי חֵרֵב וְלֹא יַלמדוּ עוֹד מלחמה. 1 The word that Isaiah son of Amoz prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 In the days to come, The Mount of the Lord's House Shall stand firm above the mountains And tower above the hills: And all the nations Shall gaze on it with joy.

3 And the many peoples shall go and say: "Come,

Let us go up to the Mount of the Lord, To the House of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4 Thus He will judge among the nations And arbitrate for the many peoples, And they shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up Sword against nation; They shall never again know war.



TALK IT OUT

- How does our world compare to the vision that Isaiah presents of Jerusalem?
- What are some of the themes about Jerusalem that you see in these two texts?
- · How do you typically think about Jerusalem? How is this way of thinking different from the one you see in this text?





Judah HaLevi, (continued)

Tell students about the end of Judah HaLevi's life:

"Judah ha-Levi" from the Jewish Encyclopedia (Richard Gottheil, Max Schloessinger, Isaac Broydé, Judah Ha-Levi, Jewish Encyclopedia, http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/ articles/9005-judah-ha-levi):

Judah ha-Levi does not seem to have been contented in Toledo; for he removed to the (Muslim) city of Cordova. Even here he did not feel at ease... He had long yearned for a new, or rather for the old, home—for the Holy Land... and at length he decided to set out on a journey to Palestine. For himself at least, he wished "to do away with the contradiction of daily confessing a longing and of never attempting to realize it" (Kaufmann, "Jehuda Halevi"); and therefore, on the death of his wife, he bade farewell to daughter, grandson, pupils, friends, rank, and affluence. There was only one image in his heart—Jerusalem:

Oh! had I eagle's wings, I'd fly to thee, And with my falling tears make moist thine earth."

After a stormy passage he arrived in Alexandria, where he was enthusiastically greeted by friends and admirers. At Damietta he had to struggle against the promptings of his own heart and the pleadings of his friend Halfon ha-Levi that he remain in Egypt, which also was Jewish soil and free from intolerant oppression. He, however, resisted the temptation to remain there, and started on the tedious land route trodden of old by the Israelitish wanderers in the desert. Again he is met with, worn out, with broken heart and whitened hair, in Tyre and Damascus. Here authentic records fail; but Jewish legend has taken up the broken threads of history and woven them further. It is related that as he came near Jerusalem, overpowered by the sight of the Holy City, he sang his most beautiful elegy, the celebrated "Zionide," "Zion ha-lo Tish'ali." At that instant he was ridden down and killed by a man on a horse, who dashed forth from a gate (Gedaliah ibn Yahya, "Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah," ed. Venice, p. 40b).

Ask:

- Can you imagine yourself having a love like Judah Ha-Levi's for Jerusalem?
- What will you do to develop the Jewish love story with Jerusalem?



Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People

This Activity is Great For





Relationships



• Self-Worth Student Leaders



Idea

I. Beginning the Conversation

Ask students what songs have been stuck in their heads recently. On the count of three, ask students to all sing their songs at the same time.

Discuss with students why certain songs get stuck in their heads, and other songs get stuck in other people's heads. Talk about how everyone has their own song that appeals to them.

II. A Deeper Dive

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935), a great mystic, Torah scholar and Jewish leader who was the first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Mandatory Palestine, was also a prolific poet. Give out and read together Rabbi Kook's poem "The Fourfold Song."

A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Orot Hakodesh, Volume II, pp.458-459

שיר מרובע

There are many levels of song.

יש שהוא שר את שירת נפשו, ובנפשו הוא מוצא את הכל, את מלא הסיפוק הרוחני במילואו. There is one who sings the song of one's own life, and in herself she finds everything, full spiritual satisfaction.

ויש שהוא שר שירת האומה, יוצא הוא מתוך המעגל של נפשו הפרטית, שאינו מוצא אותה מרוחבת כראוי, ולא מיושבת ישוב אידיאלי, שואף למרומי עז, והוא מתדבק באהבה עדינה עם כללותה של כנסת ישראל, ועמה הוא There is another who sings the song of his people. He leaves the circle of his own individual self, because he finds it without sufficient breadth, without an idealistic basis. He aspires toward the heights, and he stretches himself with a gentle love to the whole community of





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A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Orot Hakodesh, Volume II, pp.458-459 (continued)

שר את שיריה, מצר בצרותיה, ומשת־ עשע בתקוותיה, הוגה דעות עליונות וטהורות על עברה ועל עתידה, וחוקר באהבה ובחכמת לב את תוכן רוחה הפנימי.

ויש אשר עוד תתרחב נפשו עד שיוצא ומתפשט מעל גבול ישראל, לשיר את שירת האדם, רוחו הולך ומתרחב בגאון כללות האדם והוד צלמו, שואף אל תעודתו הכללית ומצפה להשתלמותו העליונה, וממקור חיים זה הוא שואב את כללות הגיונותיו ומחקריו, שאיפותיו וחזיונותיו.

ויש אשר עוד מזה למעלה ברוחב יתנשא, עד שמתאחד עם כל היקום כולו, עם כל הבריות, ועם כל העולמים, ועם כולם אומר שירה, זה הוא העוסק בפרק שירה בכל יום שמובטח לו שהוא בן העולם הבא.

ויש אשר עולה עם כל השירים הללו ביחד באגודה אחת, וכולם נותנים את קולותיהם, כולם יחד מנעימים את זמ־ ריהם, וזה לתוך זה נותן לשד וחיים, קול ששון וקול שמחה, קול צהלה וקול רנה, קול חדוה וקול קדושה. שירת הנפש, שירת האומה, שירת האדם, שירת העו־ לם, כולן יחד מתמזגות בקרבו בכל עת ובכל שעה. והתמימות הזאת במילואה עולה היא להיות שירת קודש, שירת אל, שירת ישראל, בעוצם עזה ותפארתה, בעוצם אמתה וגדלה, ישראל שיר אל, שיר פשוט, שיר כפול, שיר משולש, שיר מרובע. שיר השירים אשר לשלמה, למלך שהשלום שלו.

(אורות הקודש ב, עמ' תמד-תמה)

Israel. Together with her he sings her songs. He feels grieved in her afflictions and delights in her hopes. He contemplates noble and pure thoughts about her past and her future, and probes with love and wisdom her inner spiritual essence.

There is another who reaches toward more distant realms, and she goes beyond the boundary of Israel to sing the song of humanity. Her spirit extends to the wider vistas of the majesty of humanity in general, and its noble essence, aspiring towards humanity's general goal and looking forward towards its higher perfection. From this source of life she draws the subjects of her meditation and study, her aspirations and her visions.

Then there is one who rises toward wider horizons, until he links himself with all existence, with all God's creatures, with all worlds, and he sings his song with all of them. It is of one such as this that tradition has said that whoever sings a portion of song each day is assured of having a share in the world to come.

And then there is one who rises with all these songs in one ensemble, and they all join their voices. Together they sing their songs with beauty, each one lends vitality and life to the other. They are sounds of joy and gladness, sounds of jubilation and celebration, sounds of ecstasy and holiness. The song of the self, the song of the people, the song of humanity, the song of the world all merge in her at all times, in every hour. And this full comprehensiveness rises to become the song of holiness, the song of God, the song of *Israel*, in its full strength and beauty, in its full authenticity and greatness. The name "Israel" stands for shir el the song of God. It is a simple song, a twofold song, a threefold song, and a fourfold song. It is the Song of Songs of Solomon, Shlomo which means peace or wholeness. It is the song of the Highest One in whom is wholeness.

(Text from Noah Dolgin, http://jewcology.org/ wp-content/uploads/2010/11/4-fold song with Hebrew.pdf.)



Discuss with students each of the four songs that Rav Kook describes. Point out that the song of God, Shir El, is made up of all four songs — and Rabbi Kook says that is why we are called Yisrael/ (Israel).

Divide the room into four quadrants:

- The Song of One's Own Life
- The Song of Your People
- The Song of Humanity
- The Song of All Existence

Tell students to go into the quadrant that best represents their own song. While students are still in their quadrants, ask them:

- How does this song express itself in your leadership?
- What do you want others in the community to know about your song and why it is important to you?

Now tell students to walk over to someone who was in a quadrant that represents them least or that they don't fully understand. Have a conversation with that person about their song, and how to craft a Jewish community that meaningfully represents both your songs.



OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Ask students to go back into their quadrants. Give out poster board and markers.



Tell students about an upcoming Hillel event that you have not yet started planning. Give them 15 minutes to design the event in a way that expresses the song of their souls, and to sketch out their vision for the event on poster board.

Ask each quadrant to present their vision for the event.

Bring everyone back together to combine elements from all four visions of the event to create an event in which "they all join their voices." Consciously make sure that the event has elements from all four quadrants. Discuss how this commitment to the needs of all the different souls creates an event "with beauty, [as] each one lends vitality and life to the other."





Just for Hillel Professionals: Dissent Within the Jewish Community

This Activity is Great For



I. Beginning the Conversation

While it is important to wrestle over important questions, Jewish tradition also has a strong value of achdut Yisrael, the unity of the Jewish people. Rabbi Avi Weiss has come up with some ground rules for debate within the Jewish community in order to preserve achdut.

Do you agree with these ground rules? Would you change them in any way? Go over this list with a colleague, and then create your own.

Rabbi Avraham Weiss, Spiritual Activism: A Jewish Guide to Leadership and Repairing the World, Vermont: Jewish Lights, 2008, p. 33:

- Language must be used with care.
- Dissent is acceptable; delegitimization is not.
- Total material and spiritual commitment to the State of Israel must remain unconditional regardless of any disputes with particular Israeli policies.
- No stream of Judaism has a monopoly on love for the people of Israel, the Torah of Israel, and the land of Israel.
- We can learn from one another despite, and perhaps because of, our disagreements. The Orthodox can learn the universalistic agenda of tikkun olam (repairing the world) from the non-Orthodox, and the non-Orthodox can learn the importance of ritual and day school education from the Orthodox.
- We should focus our collective energy on reaching the majority of American Jews who are uninvolved with Judaism.

Your List of Ground Rules for Dissent:







Textsheets for Students

Soul Session: Wrestling with God

The Purpose of this World

From *God's Optimism* by Yehoshua November

When some Jews cannot explain the sorrow of their lives they take a vow of atheism. Then everywhere they go, they curse the God they don't believe exists. But why, why don't they grab Him by the lapels, pull His formless body down into this lowly world, and make Him explain.

After all, this is the purpose of creation to make this coarse realm a dwelling place for His presence.



"My Heart Is In the East" — Why?

Israel

uestion Everythin

Yehuda Ha-Levi, "My Heart is in the East"

לְבִּי בִמְזָרָח וְאָנֹכִי בִּסוֹף מַעַרָב אַיך אָטעַמַה אַת אַשָּׁר אֹכַל וְאֵיךְ יֵעַרַב אֵיכָה אֵשַׁלֵּם נִדָרַי וַאֱסַרַי, בִּעוֹד צִיּוֹן בָּחֶבֶל אֲדוֹם וַאַנִי בְּכֶבֵל עַרֲב וַקַל בִּעֵינַי עַזֹב כָּל טוּב סְפַרַד, כָּמוֹ יַקַר בִּעֵינַי רָאוֹת עַפָּרוֹת דְּבִיר נַחֲרָב.

My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West How can I taste the food I eat, could it bring me any rest? The vows and oaths I've sworn, can I heed them as I must When Zion's bound with Christian rope and I with Arab chains? It seems as easy in my eyes to leave the charms of Spain, As precious as my eyes would find the ruined Temple's dust.

(Translation by: http://www.soulandgone.com/2012/11/05/libive-mizrah/.)

A. The Two Brothers on the Temple Mount

Long before the Temple was built, two brothers lived and farmed on that site [in Jerusalem]. One was married and had a large family, while the other was single. They lived in close proximity to each other, and each worked his land growing wheat. When harvest time arrived, each was blessed with a bountiful crop and piled up his grain for long-term storage. The unmarried brother, observing his good fortune, thought to himself that God had blessed him with more than he needed, whereas his brother, who was blessed with a large family, could surely use more. He arose in the middle of the night and secretly took from his grain and put it in his brother's pile. Similarly, the married brother thought to himself that he was fortunate to have children who will care for him in his old age, while his brother will depend on what he saved. He, too, arose in the middle of the night and quietly transferred grain from his pile to his brother's. In the morning, each pondered why there was no noticeable decrease in his own pile, and so they repeated the transfer the next night. These nocturnal activities went on for several nights, until one night the brothers bumped into each other. In that instant, in the dark of night, the glow of brotherly love lit up the mountain sky; they each understood what the other had been doing and fell into each other's arms in a loving embrace. According to the legend, when God saw that display of brotherly love, He selected the site for His Temple. (retold by Dr. Ari Zivotofsky, https://www.ou.org/torah/machshava/ tzarich-iyun/tzarich_iyun_the_two_brothers_and_the_temple_mount/)



Textsheets for Students

"My Heart Is In the East" — Why? (continued)

B. The Hope for What Jerusalem Can Be

This text comes from Isaiah, who lived at the time of the destruction of the first Temple. He lays out a vision of what Jerusalem can - and one day will - be.

א הַדַּבָר אֱשֶׁר חָזָה יִשַּׁעְיָהוּ בֵּן אַמוֹץ עַל יָהוּדַה וִירוּשַׁלַם. 1 The word that Isaiah son of Amoz prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

ב וָהָיָה בָּאַחֵרִית הַיָּמִים נַכוֹן יִהְיֵה הַר בֵּית יָהוַה בָּרֹאשׁ הֶהַרִים וְנָשַּׂא מִגְּבַעוֹת ּוְנַהֱרוּ אֱלַיו כָּל הַגּוֹיִם.

2 In the days to come, The Mount of the Lord's House Shall stand firm above the mountains And tower above the hills: And all the nations Shall gaze on it with joy.

ג והלכו עמים רבים ואמרו לכו ונעלה אַל הַר יִהוָה אֵל בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעַקֹב וִיֹרֲנוּ מִדְּרַכֵּיו וְנֵלְכָה בָּאֹרָחֹתַיו כִּי מִצְיּוֹן תַּצֵא תוֹרַה וּדָבַר יִהוָה מִירוּשָׁלָם.

3 And the many peoples shall go and say: "Come,

ד ושפט בין הגוֹים והוֹכיח לעמים רבים וכתתו חרבותם לאתים וחניתותיהם לְמַזְמֵרוֹת לֹא יָשַּׂא גוֹי אֵל גּוֹי חֶרֵב וְלֹא יַלמדוּ עוֹד מלחמה.

Let us go up to the Mount of the Lord, To the House of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4 Thus He will judge among the nations And arbitrate for the many peoples, And they shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up Sword against nation; They shall never again know war.

TALK IT OUT

- How does our world compare to the vision that Isaiah presents of Jerusalem?
- What are some of the themes about Jerusalem that you see in these two texts?
- How do you typically think about Jerusalem? How is this way of thinking different from the one you see in this text?



Textsheets for Students

"My Heart Is In the East" — Why? (continued)

"Judah ha-Levi" from the Jewish Encyclopedia (Richard Gottheil, Max Schloessinger, Isaac Broydé, Judah Ha-Levi, Jewish Encyclopedia, http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/ articles/9005-judah-ha-levi):

Judah ha-Levi does not seem to have been contented in Toledo; for he removed to the (Muslim) city of Cordova. Even here he did not feel at ease... He had long yearned for a new, or rather for the old, home — for the Holy Land ... and at length he decided to set out on a journey to Palestine. For himself at least, he wished "to do away with the contradiction of daily confessing a longing and of never attempting to realize it" (Kaufmann, "Jehuda Halevi"); and therefore, on the death of his wife, he bade farewell to daughter, grandson, pupils, friends, rank, and affluence. There was only one image in his heart—Jerusalem:

Oh! had I eagle's wings, I'd fly to thee, And with my falling tears make moist thine earth."

After a stormy passage he arrived in Alexandria, where he was enthusiastically greeted by friends and admirers. At Damietta he had to struggle against the promptings of his own heart and the pleadings of his friend Halfon ha-Levi that he remain in Egypt, which also was Jewish soil and free from intolerant oppression. He, however, resisted the temptation to remain there, and started on the tedious land route trodden of old by the Israelitish wanderers in the desert. Again he is met with, worn out, with broken heart and whitened hair, in Tyre and Damascus. Here authentic records fail; but Jewish legend has taken up the broken threads of history and woven them further. It is related that as he came near Jerusalem, overpowered by the sight of the Holy City, he sang his most beautiful elegy, the celebrated "Zionide," "Zion ha-lo Tish'ali." At that instant he was ridden down and killed by a man on a horse, who dashed forth from a gate (Gedaliah ibn Yahya, "Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah," ed. Venice, p. 40b).





Israel ISRAEL wrestling with Gld Question Everything

Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People

A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Orot Hakodesh, Volume II, pp.458-459

שיר מרובע

There are many levels of song.

יש שהוא שר את שירת נפשו, ובנפשו הוא מוצא את הכל, את מלא הסיפוק הרוחני במילואו.

There is one who sings the song of one's own life, and in herself she finds everything, full spiritual satisfaction.

ויש שהוא שר שירת האומה, יוצא הוא מתוך המעגל של נפשו הפרטית, שאינו מוצא אותה מרוחבת כראוי, ולא מיושבת ישוב אידיאלי, שואף למרומי עז, והוא מתדבק באהבה עדינה עם כללותה של כנסת ישראל, ועמה הוא שר את שיריה, מצר בצרותיה, ומשת־ עשע בתקוותיה, הוגה דעות עליונות וטהורות על עברה ועל עתידה, וחוקר באהבה ובחכמת לב את תוכן רוחה הפנימי.

There is another who sings the song of his people. He leaves the circle of his own individual self, because he finds it without sufficient breadth, without an idealistic basis. He aspires toward the heights, and he stretches himself with a gentle love to the whole community of Israel. Together with her he sings her songs. He feels grieved in her afflictions and delights in her hopes. He contemplates noble and pure thoughts about her past and her future, and probes with love and wisdom her inner spiritual essence.

ויש אשר עוד תתרחב נפשו עד שיוצא ומתפשט מעל גבול ישראל, לשיר את שירת האדם, רוחו הולך ומתרחב בגאון כללות האדם והוד צלמו, שואף אל תעודתו הכללית ומצפה להשתלמותו העליונה, וממקור חיים זה הוא שואב את כללות הגיונותיו ומחקריו, שאיפותיו וחזיונותיו.

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Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People

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(Text from Noah Dolgin, http://jewcology.org/ wp-content/uploads/2010/11/4-fold_song_ with_Hebrew.pdf.)



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We hope you have enjoyed using the resources contained within this curriculum! It was created by the staff of the Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Experience at Hillel International. If you have any further questions, please contact meyerhoffcenter@hillel.org.