Social Justice Specialty TrackSession 2

**Session Timeline & Outline:**

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| **AUTHOR(S):** | Sarra Alpert |
| **SUMMARY:** | In these sessions, we’ll be exploring a series of activities and perspectives about what it means to be in solidarity with others. How do I genuinely learn from others about what they’re experiencing, what they need, and how I can support them? How have Jews stood up for and with other communities in the past? How can Jews come together with other communities to stand up for social justice now and how are we doing that already? *– Submitted by Sarra Alpert* |
| **TOPIC(S):** | Social Justice, Tikkun Olam |
| **LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** | Fellows will gain new tools and activities for social justice activities that focus on how communities and individuals come together, stand up for each other, and support each other, especially in the current political moment. |
| **AUDIENCE:** | Most activities are designed for older campers (13 and up) or staff. Some activities can be adapted for younger groups. |
| **TIMING:** | This full set of sessions covers several hours’ worth of material. Smaller sections are broken out into separate activities in the Knowledge Center, as well. |
| **APPENDICES:** |  |
| **MATERIALS NEEDED:** | Chart paper, markers, journaling paper, handouts, glasses cutouts (link in outline), assorted art supplies, something to play music from (a phone with a good speaker is fine), A/V setup for a laptop projection if possible (can be adjusted to do without) |
| **SET-UP DETAILS:** | Space with enough room to have everyone in a circle. Also need some room to move around (can move within and around the chair circle) and will need walls for posting texts. Some activities involve A/V but can be done without, if needed. |

**Track Session 2: What Has It Meant to Show Up?**

1. **Beyond Welcoming:**

* Start with the attached text study delving into meaning of the commandment to “welcome the stranger.”
* Journaling: Ask everyone to do some stream-of-consciousness writing about how they want to feel when they’re being welcomed, comforted, appreciated, challenged, or protected.
  + *Potential adaptation: Have a bunch of adjectives and key phrases (that relate to these ideas) printed out and cut up and laid out on the floor or on a table. For people who don’t feel as comfortable free-writing, they can walk around and pick up the words and phrases that best fit them.*
* Split into small groups (ideally 4 or 5 people).
* You’ll be calling out each of the journaling prompts (i.e., welcomed, comforted, appreciated, challenged, or protected). You also can add others to that list or take suggestions from the group.
* For each of those prompts, one person will explain to the rest of the group how they would like to feel when that situation is happening for them. For example: “When I’m being welcomed into a new space or group, I like to feel lots of warmth, but I also prefer not to be the center of attention. I like to feel like people are happy that I’m there and that there are opportunities to get to know them.”
* After that one person explains his/her particular vision for being welcomed/comforted/etc., the other people will take a moment to think about how they might act that out - how would their tone be, how might they physically engage with the person (if the person is comfortable with that), what items would help with this. Then each person will act out their version of a welcoming/comforting/etc. moment (miming any items – e.g., pretending to bring flowers, etc.).

1. **When Other Groups Have Shown Up:**

* Brainstorm examples of periods in history when other groups have stood up to protect Jews in times of peril.
* Share examples from the “I Am Your Protector” <http://www.iamyourprotector.org/> and read 1st-person Jewish accounts of such situations where others stood up for us.
* Discuss:
* How do these examples relate to the stories you know of when Jews were protected by others?
  + How do knowing these stories shift how people relate to each other?

1. **When We’ve Shown Up:**

* Go through this Prezi on the History of the Jewish Social Justice Field. Do Q&A throughout. Open up opportunities for people to share things they’re noticing, things they’re inspired by and things they wonder about. Prezi link: <https://prezi.com/nffd_cgdukgb/the-history-of-the-jewish-social-justice-field/>
* Potential directions for discussion/debriefing:
  + Are most Jews currently connected to the social justice work/campaigns/organizations that we just looked at? If not, why not?
  + What chapters of social justice involvement were newest to you? What was especially interesting to you about that learning?

*Note: It’s important to not pretend that all members of the Jewish community have always been involved in social justice. Be sure to discuss ways to address that in programming that emphasizes the history of Jewish social justice. How can we acknowledge those complications and let those make us even more committed to Jewish involvement in social justice over the long haul?*

* Alternatives: if you don’t have an A/V setup, print images from the Prezi to post on the walls for everyone to respond to in writing. And/or include the following article on Jewish participation in the Freedom Rides: <https://jwa.org/blog/why-do-we-act-lessons-from-the-freedom-rides>

1. **Identifying, Illustrating and Celebrating:**

* Go back to the exercise from earlier in the session when we embodied what it feels like to be welcomed, comforted, protected, etc. What are historical examples we discussed today that take those experiences from the personal to the communal, either when other groups have done so for Jews or when Jews have done so for others? (For example, HIAS’ work as an example of welcoming.)
* Each person should choose either one of those specific historical examples or a broader theme/experience/feeling that goes across multiple examples.
* Make a poster that celebrates that example or theme so that we can see those celebrations all around our space (and so that others can see those posters and learn about these examples and themes).