

Alternative Listening: Tapping into Unconventional Tefillah Resources

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SUMMARY: How do you use art to connect with those around you? This session will be looking at, talking about, and drawing some art. The art will help us find and explore another person's perspective. In understanding another's perspective we will dive into what it can mean to experience prayer in community.

GOALS: To talk about what it really means to pray as an individual within a community and ask questions about perspectives in tefillah. After this session participants will have engaged in the work of repetition within prayer using art as the siddur. Walking away they will have a new perspective in how they engage personally and with the community during tefillah.

AUDIENCE: 10-20

TIMING: 45 minutes

MATERIALS: 15-20 pieces of art that represent Jewish ideas or specific prayers, pens/pencils, paper/notebooks, markers and colored pencils, tape

SET-UP: Indoors and a quiet space with light music place the 15-20 pictures around the walls. The pictures are numbered. Clear as much of the space as possible except for a circle to sit in either on the floor or in chairs

SESSION TIMELINE

- *00:00-00:05 - Introductions, setting group norms*
- *00:05-00:12 - Group walk through*
- *00:12-00:27 - Individual and partnered walk through*
- *00:27-00:35 - Individual walk through with map and draw assigned picture*
- *00:35-00:45 - Sikum discussion*

SESSION OUTLINE

00:00-00:05 - Introductions, setting group norms

Welcome everyone, hear names, ask icebreaker question about art

00:05-00:12 - Group walkthrough

Together we look at the pictures one by one with no explanation. Music is going in the background and the leader is setting the pace to see all the pictures.

00:12-00:27 - Individual and partnered walkthrough

This is the time that each person can walk and see the pictures at their own pace. They are given a piece of paper for this part and asked to time on their phones how long they look at each picture and in which order (indicated by the numbers of each picture) and write it down.

When told, they will switch papers with another person and follow that new “map,” which pictures to go to and for how long. The partners will come back together to discuss:

- What were some big differences between the time you spent at different pictures?
- What drew each of you to different pictures?
- How did it feel to walk through using someone else's thought process?

00:27-00:35 - Individual walkthrough with map and draw assigned picture

They do another walkthrough with a “Map” from a second partner. Then once they finish the route they are assigned a picture and asked to draw it from memory to the best of their ability and place it on the wall where the original picture was. They will not discuss with this second partner.

While participants are drawing, the facilitator should take down all the original pictures. Once all the new ones are put up, walkthrough as a group again looking at the new gallery.

00:35-00:45 - Sikum discussion

- What was this experience like? Have you ever looked at art in this way before?
- How did it feel to walk through using another person's perspective/map?
- How is this like prayer?
 - Each of the pictures is a prayer
 - Having both a group and individual experience
- What are the parts of prayer which are individual or together?
 - How do those together parts affect individual parts?
- How do you ask someone else about how they pray or open up about how you pray?
 - How do you open and express organic and authentic conversations about someone else's prayer experience?