

Building Community Through Group Singing

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SUMMARY: In this session we will explore the power of song-sharing as a leadership skill to create and strengthen community. Some songs will be led by our faculty team and there will be time for some participants to lead songs too.

GOALS: Participants will have new ideas for how to add new layers to group singing experiences in ways that help to strengthen the group's bond. Participants will also have new understanding about how singing can help connect us to spiritual life, social movements, and joy. Participants will know how to make intentional choices about what kind of singing experience and emotional outcome they are aiming to cultivate.

AUDIENCE: This session is designed for leaders of song (or staff who want to lead songs as part of their programs), but the approach we're teaching can be used for any age or size of group.

TIMING: 60 minutes

MATERIALS: Songsheets or a projector (with lyrics on a slide deck)

(Songsheet from the Cornerstone session:

https://foundationforjewishcamp.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/Cornerstone/_layouts/15/doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7Bb28f6820-94d0-4dc4-a823-484bb3306aff%7D&action=edit)

SET-UP: Space for a circle or concentric circles, quiet enough for storytelling and singing

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:15 – *Introductions and setting up framing idea (including pair and share)*
- 00:15-00:50 – *Singing*
- 00:50-01:00 – *Reflection*

SESSION OUTLINE

- 1) Present idea of group singing as community building: how does it have that effect?
- 2) Pair and share: when has that happened for you? (if it hasn't, what's another artistic experience that had that impact for you?)
- 3) Explain structure of the evening:
 - a. Three framing concepts for how to choose and introduce a song so that it helps people understand you and/or your community better.
 - b. For each of those, one of the faculty will present the idea and lead one song. We'll then have space for someone from the room to lead another song along that theme (if no one wants to, the faculty member will have a second song ready.)
- 4) Frame #1: Songs for Spiritual Catharsis (Aki)
 - a. *Insert a couple of sentences about what that means*
 - b. *Which songs are you using?*
- 5) Frame #2: Songs for Social Change (Sarra)
 - a. *Insert a couple of sentences about what that means*
 - b. *Which songs are you using?*
- 6) Frame #3: Songs for Serotonin/Joy Cultivation (Eryn)
 - a. *Insert a couple of sentences about what that means*
 - b. *Which songs are you using?*
- 7) If there's time after those three rounds, we'll open it to the group for folks to lead songs, as long as they introduce the song using this model of explaining something about their or their community's connection to the song.
- 8) Reflection: bringing this back to camp

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP

Questions for discussion:

- Is there anything we did tonight that you're looking forward to incorporating into your songleading?

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- Are there other ideas you want to share for how you can add more layers of meaning and/or connection into your songleading or ways to diversify your approach to singing?
- Where can you imagine using this kind of group singing even in a program that isn't only/primarily about music/singing?

Building Community Through Group Singing: Songsheet

She Is On Her Way – Aly Halpert

The policemen have thrown away their guns
They kiss their sons and their daughters and their souls are at peace
No more black boys, black girls, trans women dying
No more reasons that could ever justify their loss
And mothers send their teens out at night
To breathe the sweet summer air
And exhale on the ground
The earth was made for them
The earth is made for them

She is on her way, on her way

She is on her way, on her way

And no one can be silent any more
Every death is a death that my family mourns
We've traded in our numbness and all of our fear
To fight for the lives we now hold dear
And everyone has come to greet the reckoning
The place where our hearts got smaller and smaller
Now grows to hold the pain
The brokenness that leads to change

She is on her way, on her way

She is on her way, on her way

Another world's not only possible
On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing

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Another world's not only possible
On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing

Another world's not only possible
On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing

Another world's not only possible
On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing

She is on her way, on her way

She is on her way, on her way

And when the world we're building is ours
We'll be tall inside
There will be no question as we pray and sing
That we have each other and what that means
We'll finally get to be together
Stare with our hearts at what has been
And find some place of home
And find some place of home

She is on her way, on her way

She is on her way, on her way

She is on her way, on her way

She is on her way, on her way

Song for the Divine Mother of the Universe – Ben Lee

Sweet mother I'm coming home
Now I know I'm not alone
Cause I've been far
Now I'm close
Sweet mother I'm coming home

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Tell me mother can you hear me sing
Your love is everything
Heart and soul
Breath and skin
Your love is everything

Oh mother, please hold me tight
Cause mother I need some help tonight
What went wrong
Will soon be right
Oh mother, please hold me tight

Tell me mother can you hear me sing
Your love is everything
Heart and soul
Breath and skin
Your love is everything

Oh mother, this world is strange
Love me mother and make me brave
In my dreams
On this stage
Oh mother, this world is strange

Tell me mother can you hear me sing
Your love is everything
Heart and soul
Breath and skin
Your love is everything

Tell me mother can you hear me sing
Your love is everything
Heart and soul
Breath and skin
Your love is everything...