

Arts and Crafts (Part 2) *Specialty Track*

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| AUTHOR(S): | Daniel Abramson |
| SUMMARY: | Participants will learn how to explore the idea of Tzedakah (Justice) through the creation of a Tzedakah box. - <i>Submitted by Daniel Abramson</i> |
| TOPIC(S): | Jewish Values, Social Justice, Visual Arts |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVE: | Participants will learn how to empower campers develop a sense of responsibility and engagement in issues by making a tzedakah box that represents the issues that they care about. |
| AUDIENCE: | The activity of creating a tzedakah box can be as relevant for the youngest campers at camp as it is for the older campers or staff. The depth and/or tone of the exploration of the texts referring to pursuing justice can be changed to suit the age and stage of the campers. For younger campers, more emphasis can be on the creation of the box, and for older campers and staff the focus can be on the representation of specific issues of Social Justice. |
| TIMING: | 90 Minutes |
| APPENDICES: | N/A |
| MATERIALS NEEDED: | How Dalia Put a Big Yellow Comforter Inside a Tiny Blue Box by Linda Heller Small aluminum cans (or other suitable boxes) Craft supplies (Tissue paper, glue, pipe cleaners, magazines, paint etc.) |
| SET-UP DETAILS: | This session should be done in the Arts and Crafts space. Participants will need access to different craft materials and tools. |

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- 10 minutes – Read aloud “How Dalia Put a Big Yellow Comforter Inside a Tiny Blue Box”
- 10 minutes – Making personal connections to the pursuit of Justice
- 40 minutes – Creating the Tzedakah box

Read the book "How Delia Put a Big Yellow Comforter Inside a Tiny Blue Box" (10 minutes)

While reading the book does not change the process of making the tzedakah box, it is important in helping participants understand that Tzedakah is not essentially about the money, it is about justice. The idea that the act of giving can transform money into justice is key to building a personal commitment to the acts of Tzedakah.

Teaching about the Jewish value of the pursuit of justice (10 minutes)

Ask participants to think of one cause that is important to them and then to think what object they would add to their own Tzedakah box to achieve justice like Dalia did when she imagined a big yellow comforter for Mrs. Ross in the story. The facilitator can model by sharing a cause that is important to themselves so that participants can have a model to think about. For example:

"I am passionate about seeking justice for Indigenous people in Canada, it is an issue that is close to my heart. I think that the object that will achieve that justice is a garden of traditional medicines because in First Nations culture these medicines are a symbol and vehicle for emotional healing. When I imagine the contents of my tzedakah box, I think about a garden with sage, cedar, sweetgrass, and tobacco growing in my yard as a tribute to First Nations culture."

Participants take a few minutes to quietly choose one thing in the world that needs justice, and imagine what thing could go in Dalia's box to help achieve that justice. It is important that participants try to choose an issue of justice that is important to their hearts because this is what will connect them with the feeling of necessity in pursuing that justice.

"Usually a Tzedakah box has the word "צדקה" (Tzedakah) and the book, Dalia offers a few great ideas about what it means. Here are some other words that we might consider when we make our boxes."

Facilitator shows the following quotes about justice from Jewish texts:

It is not up to you to complete the work, but you are not free to desist from it.
לא עליך המלאכה לגמור, ולא אתה בן חורין ליבטל ממנה

Justice, justice you shall pursue
צדק צדק תרדוף

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
וַיָּגַל כַּמַּיִם, מִשִּׁפְטִי; וְצִדְקָה, כְּנַחַל אֵיתָן

Making the Tzedakah Box (45-60 minutes)

Facilitator explains that the participants are now going to make a tzedakah box. The idea is to decorate the outside of the box in a way that will remind you about justice and a cause that you are passionate about.

****Playing music in the background can help inspire certain ideas. Choose your favorite music as a backdrop for the creative work.**

There are hundreds of materials and techniques that can be used to implement this project. Try to find some affordable, but durable materials. Ask your Arts and Crafts staff for some ideas or check out pinterest. If your camp has a pottery program, this can be an amazing medium to do this project!

Here are a few ideas for your Tzedakah boxes:

- Cover empty baby food jars with FIMO or Sculpey
- Purchase some storage tins from a Dollar store
- Turn empty coffee tins into the body of a piggy bank style tzedakah box
- Collect empty jam or pickle jars to decorate
- Make your own box from glue and popsicle sticks

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

Consider the resources that you have available to you at camp. This activity can be a quick craft or it can be more significant depending on your goals and the materials you have available. It is an amazing opportunity for campers to create an artifact that will remind them of what they learned at camp for years to come.



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