



CORNERSTONE 2016 RESOURCE

Amidah Meditation Gallery, *FJC Knowledge Center Resource*

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SUMMARY:	Create an indoor or outdoor gallery tour of artistic expressions of the 19 blessings in the Amidah prayer. Use the gallery as a part of weekday t'filah for meditation or praying the Amidah. - <i>Submitted by Daniel Utley</i>
TOPICS:	Jewish Text, Prayer- Tefillah, Prayer- Alternative, Visual Arts
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Offer an alternative to standard davenning or silent prayer for the Amidah. Provide visual learners with images and illustrated phrases that help to draw out the themes of the 19 blessings of the Amidah.
AUDIENCE:	ideal for a group of 20 or less, high school and older in age. It is helpful to have a songleader assist the program leader in creating the right atmosphere for reflection and meditation.
LENGTH:	20-30 Minutes
MATERIALS:	N/A
SETTING:	any outdoor gathering space (a cove in the forest or campfire area, dry creek bed or similar). Any indoor space with walls and room for movement for the group size will work.

Session Description:

Procedure:

Participants arrive at the program space, greeted with a niggun for all to sing. The leader explains directions and contextualizes the Amidah gallery space: indoors/outdoors? - literally, and figuratively (describe physical location, and also frame the location in the prayer service: at the opening of the Amidah - the standing prayer)

Welcome participants into the Amidah gallery, a place for meditation and reflection on the themes of the Amidah blessings. Explain that this prayer contains 19 benedictions during the week, seven on Shabbat, and that each blessing reflects a certain theme: a way to go about thanking God or petitioning God for something in life. (reference a few themes like justice, health, or peace).

Explain that this activity will be a time to offer the Amidah prayers, but not in the typical way of standing with feet together and hearts open, rather this experience will be a moving journey through the blessings with our hearts open, but our bodies in motion, moving forward in prayer. The goal is to find and identify personal connections or examples in your life that you think of when briefly meditating on each blessing. Participants may wish to keep moving slowly the entire time, or pause at each blessing to reflect or journal.

Set general ground rules to keep the space holy during the prayer - for example: refrain from conversation, jot down thoughts you have or reactions in your journal, take time to internalize each image and each idea. Explain that participants will return to this gathering space at the end to reflect on the experience. It is suggested to return when participants hear a niggun again. - Sing "Adonai s'fatai tiftach..." to signal the beginning of the journey.



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Leader guides a reflective conversation at the end when participants gather. Reflect on what participants wrote down and what stories or life examples each blessing sparked

in their mind.

- What did you notice?
- In what ways did this feel like prayer and in what ways did it not?
- How might this activity affect a someone's approach to prayer in the future?
- Which images stuck in your head?
- Was this prayer? why or why not?

Close with a niggun

Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp:

suggested adaptations are described in the notes.