

Dealing with Death, *FJC Knowledge Center Resource*

AUTHOR:	Sara Beth Berman
SUMMARY:	Talking about how hard it is to deal with death, and discussing Jewish texts that help you understand your responsibilities in caring for those who are less fortunate / bereaved in your community. - <i>Submitted by Sara Beth Berman</i>
TOPICS:	Communication Skills, Community Building, Group Dynamics, Identity, Jewish Culture, Jewish History, Jewish Text, Jewish Values, Life Cycle Events, Prayer-Tefillah, Prayer- Alternative, Team Building
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Talking about how hard it is to deal with death, and discussing Jewish texts that help you understand your responsibilities in caring for those who are less fortunate / bereaved in your community.
AUDIENCE:	Older - middle school and high school, CITs, staff
LENGTH:	20-30 Minutes
APPENDIXES:	<u>Essential Texts</u> 1. Dealing with Death - It's Scary (Grey's Anatomy)
MATERIALS:	1. AV Setup - to project video and also play music 2. Handout
SETTING:	Space with AV / circle of chairs.

Session Description:

1. Dealing with Death (20 minutes):
 - a. [Dealing with Death - It's Scary \(Grey's Anatomy\)](#) (1:04 clip - 8 minutes)
 - i. Discussion questions:
 1. Can you think of a time when you adhered to a superstition at camp, and how it guided the community?
 2. What from this clip is important to talk about when discussing bad things happening at camp?
 3. How does this clip help you understand some of your campers' feelings about bad things happening - at camp or outside of camp?
 - b. Jewish Text (12 minutes) There's a Jewish way to deal with this stuff, of course! Let's look at some texts. I pulled some texts that specifically have to do with treating the less fortunate in Judaism - the stranger, the widow, the oppressed.

Exodus 22:21-23	
21 Do not mistreat a widow or an orphan. 22 If you mistreat them, and they cry out to Me, I will hear their cry. 23 I will [then] display My anger and kill you by the sword, so that your wives will be widows, and your children, orphans.	<p>כא כָּל-אַלְמָנָה וַיְתוֹם, לֹא תַעֲנוּן. כב אִם-עֵנָה תַעֲנֶנָּה, אֹתוֹ--כִּי אִם-צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי, שָׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקוֹתָיו. כג וְחָרָה אַפִּי, וְהִרְגַתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּחָרֶב; וְהָיוּ נְשֵׁיכֶם</p>

	אֱלֻמָּנוֹת, וּבְנֵיכֶם יִתְמִיִּם.
Isaiah 1:17	
Learn to do well; Seek justice, relieve the oppressed, Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.	יִזְלַמְדוּ הַיָּטִב דְרָשׁוּ מִשְׁפָּט, אֲשֶׁרוֹ חֲמוּץ; שְׁפֹטוּ יְתוֹם, רִיבוֹ אֱלֻמָּנָה.
Jeremiah 7:5-6	
5 Nay, but if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbour; 6 if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt;7 then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.	ה כִּי אִם-הֵיטִיב תִּיטִיבוּ, אֶת-דַּרְכֵיכֶם וְאֶת-מַעַלְלֵיכֶם: אִם-עָשׂוּ תַעֲשׂוּ מִשְׁפָּט, בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין רֵעֵהוּ. ו גַּר יְתוֹם וְאֱלֻמָּנָה, לֹא תַעֲשִׂקוּ, וְדָם נָקִי, אַל-תִּשְׁפְּכוּ בַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה; וְאַחֲרַי אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרָיִם לֹא תִלְכוּ, לְרַע לָכֶם. ז וְשִׁכַנְתִּי אִתְּכֶם, בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה--בְּאֶרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: לְמֵן-עוֹלָם, וְעַד-עוֹלָם.

Hebrew Texts from Mechon-Mamre.org / English from [BibleORT](http://BibleORT.org) and/or Sefaria.org. Texts compiled in this article: <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/widows-in-jewish-tradition/2/#>

c. Discussion Questions:

- i. These texts talk specifically about populations that God and the prophets were interested in protecting. Why do you think these people are a focus for protection and care?
- ii. God gets really angry in the Exodus quote - why do you think the punishment is so severe in this case?
- iii. Based on your experiences as a staff member at your camp, who are the people you most feel the need to protect and care for, above and beyond the typical camper?
- iv. If you had to restate one of the texts above, using words that apply to the people in your camp you're trying to protect, what would it look and sound like?

Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp:

You can just use the text study by itself to talk about dealing with people who are bereaved, but the "Two Sad Videos" short program rounds the experience out a bit.

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**“That Stinks”
(Handout 1)**

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- iv. If you had to restate one of the texts above, using words that apply to the people in your camp you're trying to protect, what would it look and sound like?