

CORNERSTONE 2016 RESOURCE

Israel: Harmony and Dissonance, *Elective 2*

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| AUTHOR: | Daniel Utley |
| SUMMARY: | How do you frame a real, honest conversation on Israel at camp? And, how do our personal opinions blend with the many Jewish voices around the world or even just in our own cabin? Explore how this serious and sometimes challenging topic can become meaning - <i>Submitted by Daniel Utley</i> |
| TOPICS: | Israel Programming, Jewish Values, Leadership Development, Team Building |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVE: | Goals: Develop a set of values to guide conversations and programs on Israel at Jewish Camp Experience active and fun ways of framing metaphors on handling conversations that often involve conflicting opinions Use musical games and concepts as tools for shaping the conversation on Israel |
| AUDIENCE: | These activities are probably best used with high school age or older. Group size 25-35 |
| LENGTH: | 75-90 Minutes |
| APPENDIXES: | IsraelHarmonyAndDissonance - Handout.doc |
| MATERIALS: | copies of the handout for each participant: IsraelHarmonyAndDissonance - Handout.doc flipchart paper and markers notecards projector/sound musical instruments as listed in supplies section |
| SETTING: | Room with open space like 6a or 6b or similar. Chairs pushed to side of room if possible, wall space is helpful. Projector/Sound/Screen please. |

Session Description:

Opening set (10 min)

Participants arrive at the session and are asked to form a closed circle, where people stand shoulder to shoulder. Make sure to be transparent about physical contact in giving instructions so that all can be comfortable with whom they are standing in case anyone is *shomer n'giyah*.

Dissonance and Unison exercise: Ask participants to close their eyes and take a deep breath. In a moment we will all breathe together and sing a sound with our voices - any sound that comes into your head. The goal is for us to all start making a sound simultaneously, but to not be influenced in the pitch or tone of our voice by others around us (explain pitch and tone). The group will do this exercise several times to practice starting together. Directions may vary as you help the group adjust to this unusual group activity. Take the group through several exercises of this practice - helping them to focus on not changing their pitch to match others (which is common) as they begin to sing.

Engage several variations on this game until you shift the goal for everyone to match pitch as the sing. The directions can be played with to create results that will be good fodder for conversations on



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dissonance (clashing musical pitches), harmony (positive blending of sound), and unison (all sounding the same pitch). This metaphor will extend forward into the conversation on Israel

Introductions, names, and values (5 min):

Whip around the circle for each participant to share their name, camp, and a Jewish value they aspire to hold when discussing or learning about Israel.

Exploring a metaphor for conversations about Israel (10 min):

Give definition and musical examples for the terms: Harmony, Dissonance, and Unison.

Apply this metaphor for examples of discussion on topics where people feel passionately, and sometimes disagree. In particular apply this metaphor to Israel and Israel Education in our communities and camps.

- What are examples of harmony, dissonance, and unison about Israel?
- In what situations are each of these paths helpful or harmful?

Exercise/Activity #2: Finding your sound amongst the sea of voices (20 min)

Spread out in an open and uncluttered space. Ask participants to partner up with someone they do not mind touching. One partner will be blindfolded and the other partner will be their guide, just to make sure they are safe while moving about the space. There is no need for the partners who are not blindfolded to intervene unless the person who is blindfolded is in danger of running into someone or something.

After one person in each pair puts on the blindfold the instructor hands out musical instruments to each blindfolded person. The musical instruments are all different but in pairs so that there are two of each instrument in the room, only spread out with different people.

Explain the following directions: "In a moment I will ask you to move about the space shaking your instrument to make sound. Your goal is to find the other person in the room that has your same instrument and pair up with them. When you find your partner decide on a common way that the two of you will make your instrument make sound together, so that your two instruments sound like one instrument. However, please do not talk in this process and please do not remove your blindfolds. Your blindfolded partner is here just to make sure that you are safe and do not run into anyone or anything in the process."

Once everyone has found their partners, draw the group's attention, have them stop, and sit down. Explain that they are going to switch roles and the individuals who are blindfolded before will now be the safety guides and vice versa. Reshuffle the instruments once the new people are blindfolded. Run the activity one more time so that everyone can experience it.

Discuss and create metaphor as a group (7 min): How is this a metaphor for how we share opinions and beliefs on Israel?

Part 2: Israel at Camp - and Camp's Constituencies (20 min)

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An example of values in conflict: Share the letter of support (handout) written by rabbis to congress about the Iran Deal in the summer of 2015. This letter speaks of a divided position amongst the Jewish communal leadership.

- What values are in conflict in this expression about Israel?
- Did anyone discuss the Iran deal at camp last summer, and if so, how?

At camp we serve many constituencies including campers, staff members, parents, rabbis, etc. All of the interests of each of these groups affect how we go about our programming and learning in the camp environment - our own views and interests as counselors shape our work just as much as the views of the camp directors or the parents. How do we proceed in our work as Israel educators in our bunks when there may be values in conflict? Let's explore how this understanding shapes our conversation on Israel at camp:

Using Large post-it papers, make a list of all of the constituencies we serve at camp. Decide on the top 5 most important constituencies and put one constituency label at the top of each blank page. Space these out on the walls of the room. Pass out markers to all participants and ask them to go and label each page with an answer to the following:

- What values about Israel does this constituent desire to see Jewish camp express?

Compare and contrast the values that come out of this exercise:

- Which values are in conflict or dissonance with other values?
- Which values are in harmony?
- How can we balance the interests of these values in our programming at camp?

Share clip from TED Talk (5 min)- Itay Talgam - Leadership from the great conductors

Important point to share: good leaders space for each community member's interpretation to be shared together constructively.

Conclusion (20 min) - Values clarification exercise

In small working groups draft the 5 most important values you think should guide the conversation and programming about Israel at camp.

As a large group draft a set of principles to guide conversations on Israel at Jewish Summer camp. What are the most important values that should guide this work?

Share "Approaching Conflicts Toolkit" values from the iCenter (Handout)

Closure Reflection



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Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp:

Each musical activity could be run separately or used to generate a different metaphor other than just about Israel

APPENDIXES:

ISRAELHARMONYANDDISSONANCE - HANDOUT.DOC