

Spin-it: Tefillah

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| AUTHOR: | Daniel Abramson |
| SUMMARY: | Participants will make beaded bracelets as part of a mindful introspection activity focussed on 3 key ideas from traditional prayer. In this workshop, participants will modify the traditional method of tying tzitzit (fringes on a prayer shawl) in order t - <i>Submitted by Daniel Abramson</i> |
| TOPICS: | Identity, Jewish Text, Jewish Values, Prayer- Alternative, Teen Programs, Visual Arts |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVE: | Participants will understand that there are many ways to foster a sense of meaningful quiet introspection. This activity will allow participants an opportunity to “re-write” the traditional words of tefillah through art in a way that celebrates their own experiences. |
| AUDIENCE: | This is an ideal activity for older campers who have a hard time connecting to traditional modes of prayer. |
| LENGTH: | 20-30 Minutes |
| MATERIALS: | Embroidery String - 1 small roll per participant (many colours) Glass beads that will fit on string (various) 3-5 per participant |

Session Description:

- Participants will choose 4 pieces of embroidery thread. 3 of them should be about the length of a full armspan (5 - 6ft) and one should be about 2 ft. longer.
- Participants will use the traditional techniques of tying tzitzit with a series of double knots and winds, but they will alter the numbers in the traditional pattern to symbolically indicate some ideas that are important to them. For example, in a traditional tzitzit, there would be a double knot then 7 winds, but participants might choose to to 12 winds representing the number of campers in their cabin, followed by doubles knots then 4 winds to represent the number of sibling in their family etc.
- At three locations in the bracelet, participants will add beads. One bead will represent the Shema, one represents the Amida, and one represents Aleynu.
- The hebrew word **שמע** means listen or hear, so for the bead that represents the Shema, ask participants to imagine a time that they felt listened to and choose a bead to represent that time.
- The text of the Amida contains important ideas like freedom, justice, righteousness and healing. The word Amida literally means standing. Participants will consider one thing that is worth “standing up” for. Participants will choose a bead that represents this idea.
- Lastly, Aleynu means “on us”, so participants will think of something that they are responsible for and choose a bead to represent it.
- When participants assemble the bracelet with knots, winds, and beads, they will have a bracelet that contains symbols of things and ideas that are important to them and that refers to the core ideas of tefillah.

Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp: Changing the method of making the bracelet can make this program easier for younger children. For instance, you can take hemp twine and braid the bracelets so that the focus can be on the beading and not the knots and wraps of the string.