



Dear Fabulous New Country Day Camp Staff,

Justin and Rory Michelle here. Respectively we your Special Consultant for NCDC Program Initiatives and your Jewish Life and Culture Director and together with five song leaders, we make up the **Jewish Life and Culture Team**. As a team, we are your thought-partners, collaborators, and sounding boards as you plan your summer programming.

Every NCDC staff member, whether at work in a division shelter, the pool, the office, or anywhere else in our huge, beautiful camp, sets an example for our campers of what it means to be a fully engaged member of the NCDC community. Alongside learning to swim together and breathing delicious forest air together and eating lots of pizza together, being part of this community means enthusiastically participating in Jewish Life and Culture and our exploration of the year's LABA theme (more on that later) through the thoughtful creation, execution, and modeling of activities and lessons for campers.

To help in your preparations for summer success, we've created this **Jewish Life and Culture Resource Guide**. Inside, we'll walk you through the theme of the summer and break it down week-by-week. You'll learn about each week's focus, find some critical questions to help enrich your lessons and activities, and see the Hebrew words we'll learn together with campers this summer.

This packet is not your only resource during this process. Many of you will meet with Rory Michelle and Justin and other members of the Key Staff in the weeks before camp and throughout the summer. We'll discuss your plans and work together to ensure you feel confident and prepared to bring your own style, techniques, strengths, and passions together with NCDC's guiding ideas to create fun and memorable programming with lasting impact. This document is a springboard for your creativity, and an invitation to collaborate with staff and campers to create a meaningful and transformative summer for all of us.

We recognize that this sounds lofty. It is. We believe summer camp can be even more than a place to run around and have fun in the sun. It is a place where we can learn, grow, and be transformed, and creating excellent programming is how we make that happen.

For more, turn the page.

Yours,

Justin and Rory Michelle

Special Consultant for NCDC Program Initiatives & Jewish Life and Culture Director

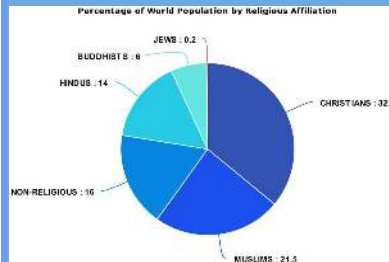
NDCD 2017:
OTHER

*imagining ourselves in
someone else's shoes*



**JEWISH LIFE
&
CULTURE
RESOURCE
GUIDE**

NDCD is a program of the 14th St Y, an arm of the Educational Alliance. EA was founded in 1889 on the Lower East Side, and has served downtown communities since then. Its original mission was to support Jewish immigrants on the LES, but as time passed it expanded its scope, serving other immigrant groups in the area. Today, the EA and all of its branches, including NDCD, are Jewish organizations that are open to everyone.



Jews make up only .2% of the world's population, and outside of Israel, there are more Jews in New York City than anywhere else in the world. Much of the work we do here at EA, 14Y and NDCD, we do to preserve and strengthen NYC's Jewish communities, while extending our reach to all local communities.

In other words, we are a Jewish camp open to everyone. That means we use Jewish concepts in our programming, sing Jewish songs, and use the Hebrew language - all in a way that celebrates Jewish culture and traditions, while warmly welcoming participants of all identities and backgrounds.

NDCD is on a mission:

to preserve what might otherwise be lost in contemporary NYC and to manifest it in our lives year-round: The peace one can only find in nature, the feeling of belonging to a close-knit community, the unbridled joy and celebration of youth, and Jewish identity in harmony with the diversity of NYC and the world around us.

NDCD has a vision:

By preserving these things for our campers and staff, we will create a space where everyone is treated with kindness, respect, courtesy, and welcome and manifest these things in our lives and communities year round.

Every year, to make sure all of camp's happenings, from Unit lessons to lunchtime chit-chat, are aligned with our mission and vision, we create a **curriculum** - a set of themes that give our programming structure, direction, and focus. This document, the **Jewish Life and Culture Resource Guide** is your copy of this year's curriculum.

How to use this resource guide:

- 1. Familiarize yourself with *theme* of the summer and each week.**
- 2. Use the discussion and guided questions to help develop age-appropriate programming focused on the *theme*.**
- 3. Talk it out! Discuss your plans and the *theme* with Zoë, Justin, Rory Michelle, and everyone else too.**

This year, NCDC's *theme* is **OTHER**. Here's why:

The 14th Street Y hosts a year-long artist fellowship program called LABA that explores a *theme* through the study of Jewish texts. Each year, NCDC uses LABA's theme to inspire camp programming.

This year LABA's *theme* is **OTHER**.

As you can see in the box to the right, LABA's interpretation of **OTHER** is pretty conceptual. To make it a little more approachable and concrete, we've chosen to focus our exploration of **OTHER** on

EMPATHY.

noun: the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner.

from merriam-webster.com

*(this is the dictionary definition of **EMPATHY**. maybe you and your campers can come up with a better one)*

Imagining life from the perspective of **OTHER** people, and learning to be sensitive to their feelings, thoughts and experiences is part of the foundation for building a more caring, just and respectful world. This is the focus of this summer's camp programming.

You might be asking (you're probably not, but you might be; anything's possible...),

*Here's what the LABA director has to say about **OTHER**:*

As human beings, we are thrown into the world and instantly become simultaneously a Self and an Other. We are potential arch rivals and possible closest friends, alone and secluded in the universe and weaved intrinsically into social interrelations. Being human means we can not but define others and be defined by them. We can not at all grasp ourselves without their presence, as we all mutually reflect each other and mutually disrupt each other's lives. No matter what we do to avoid the question, it keeps begging our attention and showing up in our daily routine.

No doubt, talking about the Other is risky. It could even be painful. It could impact our confidence in ourselves, the world and our fellow human beings. It might shake our feeling of safety, our deepest beliefs, our most precious ideas and values, even our friendships. It might shatter our long established cliches and stereotypes. It could change us. For better or for worse? This is up to each and every one of us.

“OK, how do I make sure my work is guided by this *theme*?”

Well, it’s going to look different for everyone. On the next pages you’ll find some ideas, specific to your role at camp, about how to make your work thematic. *Take a look!*



Oh, just a few last things before we dig in:

Remember that many of us will be working with **campers of all ages** throughout the summer. Think about ways you can adapt your planned activities and discussions for campers from **four to fourteen**. Unit and Division staff will meet with Zoë,

Rory Michelle, and Justin to discuss creating age-appropriate programming.

And no matter what role you play at camp, allow the exploration of OTHER/EMPATHY to personally affect you, too. The best way to encourage our campers to be thoughtful, open-minded learners is to model that thoughtfulness authentically.

Ok, here we go!

For Office, Pool and Utility Staff, and for everyone who’ll have **spontaneous one-on-one interactions** with campers (that’s all of us), the *theme* in practice might look like this:

Use your interactions with campers and staff thoughtfully. Have conversations! Ask questions!

“Do you remember this week’s theme?”

“How is your summer going?”

“What do you hope will happen this year at camp?”

“Do you remember how to say it in Hebrew?”

“How do you think it’s going for OTHER campers?”

“What can you do to make sure it happens?”

Ask yourself these questions: What are YOU hoping to get out of camp this summer?

For Counselors and Song Leaders and other staff who are preparing for lots of **informal activities with small groups** of campers, it might look like this:

Make a list of activities you can introduce when the need arises. Use these activities to spark campers’ imaginations and discussions about the *theme*. Here are some examples using a hypothetical *theme*: **CONFIDENCE** (not a real *theme* for 2017)

Teach a song whose lyrics relate to feeling confident. Discuss: does singing the song influence the way they feel?

Play a game in which campers do something that requires confidence: make up a song on the spot, try to make everyone laugh. Discuss: did the game remind them of another time they needed confidence?

Write poems or draw pictures about a time

Lead a discussion of confidence. What have campers learned about

campers needed it at camp? Did anything happen confidence but didn't this week that made them feel feel it. confident?

For Unit & Division Staff who are planning *formal lessons for big groups* of campers, it might look like this:

You're creating a different program based on each week's *theme*, so you get to engage the weekly *themes* with depth and breadth.

here are some examples using a hypothetical *theme*:

RESPECT

(not a real *theme* for 2017)

Use *Division Time*- morning meetings, after lunch cleanup, and other periods, thematically. Ask each group to make a poster with synonyms for "RESPECT" and use them to decorate the shelter, make a sticker chart that tracks RESPECTful behaviors that you or counselors witness, challenge the whole Division to learn the Hebrew name of the week's *theme* and have a celebration when everyone gets it.

Unit planning involves both **finding/inventing new activities** designed specifically to encourage thinking about **RESPECT...**

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| in <i>visual arts</i> assign ask campers to create work about someone they RESPECT and to tell you about why they feel that way. | <i>newsroom</i> campers to interview community members about their thoughts on RESPECT . | in <i>imagination</i> improvise a story as a group, and explicitly model RESPECTful listening. Ask campers to identify your behavior. | teach a lesson about ecosystems in <i>grow</i> and ask campers to name consequences of human actions that RESPECT and don't respect the wellbeing of a single species. | teach a challenging exercise in <i>movement</i> and discuss what it means to listen to our bodies and RESPECT our limits. |
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and relying on your favorite go-to games and lessons and using them to start conversations about **RESPECT**.

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| go for a hike during <i>discover</i> , and ask campers to name ways we can practice RESPECT for animals and plants in the forest. | before a <i>science</i> activity, communicate the importance of respect for other campers, the instructor and have campers name ways they can practice that RESPECT during the activity. | in <i>sports</i> challenge campers to demonstrate different ways of showing RESPECT to our competitors during a favorite team game. | ask <i>performing arts</i> campers to think about characters they're playing: whom do those characters RESPECT ? Why do they think that? | after a skills practice session in <i>martial arts</i> , ask campers to consider whether they demonstrated RESPECT for the instructor, and how that affected their experience of the exercise. |
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All right! Now we've talked about NCDC's mission and vision, the theme for 2017, and ways you can use the theme to help build your programming. Now it's time to introduce you to the *theme* for each week.

Session One: Week One

OTHER

בעברית

{in Hebrew}

EMPATHY

OTHER

ah-KHAIR

אַחַר

EMPATHY

em-PAHT-yah

אֶמְפַּתְיָה

In the two short days of Week One, you might simply start asking questions to help you gauge campers' understanding of **OTHER** and **EMPATHY**. You can ask what they think of when they hear the word **OTHER**, and what they think **EMPATHY** means. Even better, ask them *what they think **EMPATHY** does*. How do you show **EMPATHY**? How do we *do* **EMPATHY**?

Getting a sense of your campers' current understanding will help you gear your programming to where they are now, and give you a quick walk in their small (though sometimes big) shoes.

Questions to ask yourself as you plan your programming:

- How does this activity help me to understand my campers' current understandings?
- What can I do to learn more how they understand **OTHER** and **EMPATHY** rather than tell them what I think it is?
- How does this activity, and my framing, encourage campers to differentiate between **EMPATHY** and "nice" things like kindness, respect, and love?
- How can I model and encourage a no-judgment zone as campers begin to share on these first two days of camp?

Questions to prompt your campers:

- What do you think of when you hear the word '**OTHER**'? What do you think of when you hear the word **EMPATHY**?
- When have you felt that you were genuinely interested and concerned about an **OTHER** person? What did you do? What did you say? What could you have done or said to show your genuine interest and concern?
- What does awareness of **OTHER**s, genuine interest and concern for an **OTHER**'s understandings, feelings, and perspectives look like in this particular activity (soccer, art, planting, LARPing, etc.)?

Session One: Week Two

ME

בעברית

{in Hebrew}

ME
ah-NEE

WE
ah-NACH-noo

אני

אנו

Everyone has a story. You might even say that everyone *is* a story. We carry around in our heads lists of facts and figures, exciting tales, funny moments, loves and hates, stuff that makes us sit up and take notice and stuff that puts us to sleep - all the unique information that takes a jumble of carbon and DNA and white blood cells and fingernails and transforms it all into a one-of-a-kind, never-before-imagined and never-to-be-repeated human person- a unique **ME**.

Remember the story of your life, write it down, sing it, draw it, dance it, express it in the form of a lunch! Think about your life as a chain of events that led to this moment. Everything you've ever done has brought you to this!

Everything in our lives begins, for us, from this perspective: the first person singular. ***We can ease our passage into new relationships and new communities by being aware of our own perspectives.*** How do we feel? How do we want to feel? What can we do to help us move from one to the next? By meditating on questions like these, especially in new situations (the beginning of camp can be stressful!) we help equip ourselves to take on new challenges, including readying ourselves to encounter **OTHERs** and *their* perspectives.

Questions to ask yourself as you plan your programming:

- How does this activity encourage campers to consider their own feelings? What questions could you ask to bring campers' attention to their emotions?
- Does this activity (or discussion of this activity) encourage self-awareness or self-centeredness?
- How does this activity leave room for me to model self-awareness and self-respect?

Questions to prompt your campers:

- How do I feel right now? Is it different from how I wish to feel?
- What are my expectations for the rest of the day? The week? The summer? How do I think I might feel if things don't go as I expect?
- What is a challenging situation I've experienced recently? How did I feel? How did I respond?
- What do I do when I feel scared? Sad? Happy? Excited? Surprised? Angry? How could I change how I respond?

- How can I model and encourage a no-judgment zone as campers explore their feelings?

SESSION ONE: WEEK THREE

YOU

בעברית

{in Hebrew}

FEM. SINGULAR

AHT

FEM. PLURAL

ah-TEN

את

MASC. SINGULAR

ah-TAH

אתן

MASC. PLURAL

ah-TEHM

אתה

אתם

It can take dedicated thought to realize that **OTHERs** have as rich an inner life and history as we do. Because they are also one of a kind, they're also not automatically just like us in every detail and preference. The challenge of this week is remembering that the same kind of recipe that makes us each a unique 'me' exists for each **OTHER** person- everyone we meet is a one-of-a-kind **YOU**.

Ask someone about their life's history. Find out defining moments in their lives, their goals, their missions, their callings. What are they capable of? What are their deepest fears? Their most astounding and glorious aspirations? **How can you appreciate and respectfully share this person's story?**

Just as our individual experiences and perspectives are vital to the community as a whole, so, too, are the individual experiences and perspectives of every member. How can we include each voice?

Questions to ask yourself as you plan:

- How does this activity (or discussion of this activity) encourage surface level understandings of an **OTHER** (e.g. what's your favorite ice cream, do you like pizza?) or meaningful understandings?
- How does this activity leave room for me to model active listening and respect for **OTHERs'** perspectives and experiences?

Questions to prompt your campers:

- How does my partner/friend/fellow camper feel about this activity? About camp? About their past or upcoming day/week/year?
- What is something really important to the people around me? What makes them tick? How do I know? How could I find out?
- Who in our group experiences things in a similar way to me? In a different way? How do I know? How could I find out?
- What challenges or joys are **OTHERs** in my group experiencing? What or who helps them deal with those challenges? How do they celebrate those joys?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I model and encourage a no-judgment zone as campers explore OTHERS' feelings? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do OTHERs in my group do when they feel scared? Sad? Happy? Excited? Surprised? Angry? What do I do when someone in my group feels these things? How could I change how I respond? |
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SESSION TWO: WEEK FOUR

HERE

בעברית
{in Hebrew}

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| PO | KAHN | hee-NAY |
| פֹּה | כָּאן | הֵנָּה |

Session Two is dedicated to places: this place, and **OTHERs**. This week we can open ourselves to the beautiful camp around us; the places we gather, relax, play and learn. We can think about our group’s shelter and take pride it in. We can experience the forest - a protected natural habitat - as our **HERE** for this summer. **HERE** can also mean our own homes - NYC, the borough we come from, the house we live in. How do we feel when **OTHER** people visit our home? What does it mean when we are visiting a place that is home for someone else?

This week we have the opportunity to *think about our relationships to the places we inhabit*. How do we feel about this place, right **HERE**? How does being **HERE** become a part of our stories? What about places “in between” one place and somewhere else? We spend a lot of time at camp moving along paths, shuttling between activities- how would we feel if we stopped thinking of those paths as “the way to get someplace” and started thinking of them as **HERE**- this place we’re in right now?

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| <p>Questions to ask yourself as you plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does this activity encourage campers to consider the space around them? What questions could you ask to bring campers’ attention to their surroundings? How does this activity leave room for me to model being present to and appreciating my surroundings? My home? How can I model and encourage a no-judgment zone as campers explore HERE? | <p>Questions to prompt your campers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you feel about the space around you? What do you consider HERE? What is the boundary of HERE? How far does/can it extend? How can you explore those boundaries? How do you know when you’re HERE? How is being HERE physical? How is it emotional? Mental? Spiritual? How do you feel when you’re HERE? How do you feel when OTHERs are HERE with you? |
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THERE

SESSION TWO: WEEK FIVE

בעברית

{in Hebrew}

SHAHM

שם

We often define ourselves and our identities in contrast to **OTHER** people and ways of being. I am short because someone else is taller, and it's only notable that I live in the city because there are lots of other people who live in a totally different kind of place- the country, the suburbs, a space station... Last week, we took time to look deeply at our surroundings with fresh eyes and a spirit of discovery. This week, we're closing the loop and giving context to our 'here' by contrasting it to **THERE**.

One way to encounter **THERE** is by exploring customs and languages and cultural expression that make up people's lives in **OTHER** places. There's something about travel that broadens our perspective and we can use this week to travel the world imaginatively, without ever leaving the city and camp that are our home.

Programming this week can include playing games from other cultures, or imagining what it would be like to live somewhere else. Maybe we have friends at NCDC who have lived in **OTHER** places and can teach us about them. As with Me and You in weeks two and three, we will likely be amazed at how rich **OTHER** places are in comparison with our imaginations of them. How can we make sure that our imaginative relationships to other places are respectful of the people who live there? What's the value of imagining another place compared to learning about it? How can we make sure to root this exploration in **EMPATHY**?

Questions to ask yourself as you plan:

- How does this activity encourage campers to consider **OTHER** places? What questions could you ask to that encourage a respectful relationship to **OTHER** places?
- As we ask campers to imagine **OTHERs** places, how can we also encourage them to challenge their assumptions?
- Does this activity or discussion encourage surface level understandings of an **OTHER** place (e.g. is it hot, are there a lot of people?) or meaningful understandings

Questions to prompt your campers:

- What do you consider **THERE**? Where does **THERE** start? How far does/can it extend? How can you explore those boundaries?
- How can we experience **THERE** without being there?
- How do you feel when you think about visiting **THERE**? What about it attracts you? What about it makes you feel scared? Excited? Why?
- As you imagine this **OTHER** place, what parts of your imagining do you think will

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| <p>and appreciations of OTHER places and the people that live there?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this activity leave room for me to model a respectful relationship to OTHER places? To an OTHER's home? | <p>be true? What parts do you think might be different than you imagine? How can you find out?</p> |
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SESSION THREE: WEEK SIX

THEN (PAST)

בעברית
{in Hebrew}
AHZ ah-VAHR
אָז עבר

Session Three is all about **OTHER** times, and this week we're turning our focus on the **PAST**. Thinking about the **PAST** is vital to understanding who we are. Everything we are as individuals and as communities is the sum of everything that's come before- whatever we ate for breakfast this morning, *and* the things we liked to do as toddlers, *and* where and how and why our ancestors came to live in this country, *and* what kind of plants and animals lived on our patch of Earth millions of years ago. **THEN** gives us context. **THEN** is the context!

When we prompt kids to remember and learn about the **PAST**, we *widen their perspective and give them opportunities to practice EMPATHY*, and deepen their understanding of themselves.

Any activity at all can open a door to the **PAST**: a hike through the woods can start a discussion of New York history, Division Time can be a chance to learn a game campers' grandparents played at their age. Your consideration of the **PAST** could take so many different forms: you don't have to be a history teacher doling out names and dates. A camper might not remember everything you tell them about the history of, say, the crayon, but it might change their perspective just to realize that the crayon is something that had to be invented, something that has a history. You can talk about the history of the concept "crayon" or imagine the history of a particular red crayon from a little yellow box, or think about a camper's memories of crayons. All these things are the **PAST**, and each makes room for contextualizing the present.

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| <p>Questions to ask yourself as you plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this activity encourage campers to think about the PAST? And within what framework: as an opportunity for imagination and fantasy? As a concrete history made up of facts? • What questions will you ask campers to prompt their consideration of their feelings about the PAST? How do <i>you</i> feel about the PAST you're discussing, and how | <p>Questions to prompt your campers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you <i>know</i> about the PAST? How do you know it? • What do you have to <i>imagine</i> about the PAST? Do you think the thing you imagine is close to what "really" happened? • Do you think people who lived in the PAST have the same feelings that you have? Why do you think that? |
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| <p>do your feelings inform your programming?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you do to invite campers to practice EMPATHY for people who inhabit the PAST? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where have we come from? What were our thoughts pre-camp on EMPATHY? What are we thinking now? |
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SESSION THREE: WEEK SEVEN

NOW

בעברית

{in Hebrew}

akh-SHAV

עכשיו

*If not **NOW**, when?* says the famous Rabbi Hillel (college Jewish student centers are named after this guy) in Pirkei Avot 1:14. **NOW** teaches us to number our days wisely. Even if we live to be 120 (and may we all, in good health!), we only have a finite number of years on Earth. **How can we make the most of that time?**

By now, we've thought about what makes us who we are, what makes **OTHER** people tick, and even if we're a camper here only for Session Three, we've at least thought about the past. At this point we can go a step further: Knowing what's most important to us and to **OTHER**s, how can we start aligning ourselves with our ideal selves and most cherished visions, so that our future **NOW** looks the way we want it?

And also: what does it mean to live in the great **NOW**? Does it mean letting go of the past and being unconcerned, at least for the moment, about the future? Or does it mean being aware of the past and building on it in service of a desired future outcome? How can we move toward appreciating and living in the **NOW**? How can that help us build **EMPATHY**?

We can also apply this line of thinking to our Divisions, our Units, our communities at home, our world at large. We can take stock. What does our group look like? Where are we doing great? Where do we need work? How have we learned and grown so far this summer? An inventory of where we are now can help us as we look to the future next week.

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| <p>Questions to ask yourself as you plan your programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this activity encourage campers to experience time as precious, finite, and valuable? • What is my relationship to living in the NOW? How can I use that to inform my programming? • How does this activity leave room for me to model being fully present to the moment? | <p>Questions to prompt your campers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you notice in this moment? What can you hear? See? Taste? Touch? Smell? • Do you think everyone experiences this moment in the same way? How can you know? • What would you do if you knew that today/this week/this summer/this year was your last chunk of time on earth? |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this activity (or discussion) bring campers' awareness and focus to the present moment? | <p>How could you use that knowledge to live more purposefully?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are we NOW? What are our current thoughts on EMPATHY? Where would we like to be? |
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THEN

(FUTURE)

SESSION THREE: WEEK EIGHT

בעברית

{in Hebrew}

AHZ

ah-TEED

אָז

עתידי

The **FUTURE** is everything we can imagine - it *exists* in our imaginations! We get to *make* it! The **FUTURE** is a canvas on which we paint with our ideals, our beliefs, our desires; and it challenges us to balance our wish for immediate gratification against the consequences of our actions.

And the **FUTURE** belongs to more than just us- it belongs to our descendants, to people who will think about us as we think back on our ancestors. Just as people who inhabit the past created the world we live in, we will make the world for the people of the **FUTURE**.

Because of this, the consideration of the **FUTURE** is the greatest test of our capacity for **EMPATHY**: it asks us to empathize with people who don't yet exist- people we will never meet and people who may never thank us.

This is the final week of camp, and includes a **FUTURE**-themed Maccabiyah. It's full of activity and can be an emotional time for campers (and staff!). "The **FUTURE**" is a fun theme for imaginative programming; kids love to envision sci-fi worlds, or think about what their grown-up lives will be like. In addition though, this week offers us lots of opportunities to think about the *near FUTURE*- going back to school, changing our routines- and to focus on **bringing forward into the year all that we've learned at camp this summer**.

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| <p>Questions to ask yourself as you plan your programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this activity encourage campers to consider their own FUTURE? The week after camp, the next year, as grown-ups? • What can I do to instill in campers a sense that the choices we make today create our FUTURE? • How does this activity leave room for me to model both purposefulness in my choices and comfort with the uncertainty of the FUTURE? | <p>Questions to prompt your campers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was my favorite part of camp this summer? How can I take that with me into the rest of the summer? Into this year? • What was the most challenging part of this summer? What did I learn from it? How can I take what I learned with me into the rest of the summer? Into this year? • How did I get better this summer at recognizing and appreciating OTHER people's perspectives and experiences? |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I model and encourage a no-judgment zone as campers reflect on their experiences at camp and/or visions for the FUTURE? | <p>How can I take that with me into the rest of the summer? Into this year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I want to do, be, and have personally in the FUTURE? What do I want my family, my community, and the world to look like? How can I take some next steps in that direction? |
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A BRIEF GUIDE TO JEWISH IDENTITY, HEBREW, AND SHABBAT AT NCDC

We’re going to leave you with some information about Jewishness and Hebrew at camp that we hope will answer some questions you might have. If you have questions you don’t see covered here, please don’t hesitate to come talk to us!

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| <p>maybe you’re asking...</p> <p><i>I’m not Jewish. Is that ok?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">OR</p> <p><i>I am Jewish, but I don’t know or do any of this stuff outside of camp. Is that ok?</i></p> | <p>Yes to both! 110%! To describe NCDC’s Jewishness, we use the phrase <i>Open Tent</i>, inspired by the Biblical story of Sarah and Abraham, who welcomed as guests friends, family, and strangers alike. Lots of our campers and staff are not Jewish - and we treasure the richness this diversity brings to NCDC. For example, Rory Michelle is Jewish, and Justin isn’t, and here we are collaborating on this Guide. And it wouldn’t be the same without <i>both</i> of our perspectives.</p> <p>So, if you’re not Jewish, no one at camp will ever try to make you Jewish, or ask you to change the way you identify yourself in any way.</p> <p>And maybe you <i>are</i> Jewish, but Jewishness in your life doesn’t look like Jewishness at camp. That’s great! There’s no <i>right way</i> to be Jewish, and we want your Jewish identity to be personal, specific to you.</p> <p>However you identify yourself, you don’t need any special skills, knowledge, experience or beliefs; just do your best learning the Hebrew terms and songs we teach, and show your campers what enthusiastic participation looks like by modeling it yourself throughout camp’s Jewish Life & Culture programming. You don’t need to be perfect, just have fun!</p> |
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As you know, we’ll be learning some words in Hebrew this summer. When Hebrew is transliterated into Roman characters, most of the letters you see are pronounced like they are in English, but some aren’t. To help you with tricky ones, we’re including this **HEBREW PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:**

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| ch/kh | a throat-clearing noise, like a <i>j</i> in Spanish or in the German <i>Ach!</i> |
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| a/ah | as in <i>father</i> | i | as in <i>machine</i> | g | a hard <i>g</i> as in <i>game</i> |
| ai | like the English word <i>I</i> | o | as in <i>home</i> | h | silent at the end of a word, as in <i>Sarah</i> |
| e | as in <i>bed</i> | u | like the <i>oo</i> in <i>boot</i> | ei | like the English word <i>A</i> |
| r | Israelis pronounce this like <i>r</i> in French or German, but most Americans say this like <i>r</i> as in <i>rail</i> | | | | |
| ‘ (apostrophe) | - a silent stop between two vowels / a silent stop between two vowels OR - <i>schwa</i> - an unemphasized vowel sound <i>uh</i> , like the first and last <i>a</i> in <i>banana</i> | | | | |

Adapted from a guide by Tracy Rich, jewfaq.org/translitguide

What is Shabbat?

“Shabbat” is Hebrew and is the root of the English word “Sabbath”. Literally it means “a rest”.

Shabbat is, in the words of Jewish philosopher Abraham Joshua Heschel, an “**island in time.**” It’s a day each week that Jews set apart to rest, because the Torah teaches that after creating the world, G-d rested (Genesis 1:1-2:3). Many Jews honor Shabbat by spending time at home, eating and drinking together and relaxing and recharging after a week of work.

Whatever your beliefs about divinity (believer, atheist, unsure, indifferent), it is powerful to recognize that we did not create the world ourselves. Shabbat is a time to recognize that, and *to celebrate being together with friends, to rest and relax, and to enjoy the goodness that the world has to offer.*

To honor Shabbat we spend time as **human beings rather than “human doings”**.

We like to think of camp as “**the Shabbat of the year,**” a special time set aside for rest, togetherness and celebration.

What Does Shabbat look like at NCDC?

Technically, Shabbat starts eighteen minutes after sundown on Friday night and lasts for 25 hours - or until three stars appear on Saturday night. Since we are not at camp during this time, at NCDC we celebrate and acknowledge Shabbat on Friday.

Programming on Fridays is lighter in honor of Shabbat: Campers don’t have **Unit** lessons, there’s no instructional swim, and we all go home one hour early!

We also have a ceremony called **Kabbalat Shabbat**, in which we **receive** Shabbat (*Kabbalat* means *to receive*), welcoming the spirit of rest and celebration into our week. It’s a beautiful way to end each week of camp.

On Friday afternoon, the whole camp community makes a festive procession into the amphitheater where we sing special Shabbat songs, light candles to usher in Shabbat’s distinctive peace, drink grape juice and eat yummy egg bread called *challah* - made fresh at camp over an open fire!- all in celebration of being together on this special occasion. Each of these ritual moments - candles, grape juice, *challah* - is accompanied by a blessing in which we express thanks for the opportunity to light the Shabbat lights, for “the fruit of the vine,” and for “bread brought forth from the earth.”

Then there’s a presentation in which **Divisions, Units** or **OTHER groups** who want to share can perform, show work, or give demonstrations of what they’ve been doing all week.

Your role in all of this will be to model **enthusiastic participation** in the procession, ceremony, singing and presentations. You might also distribute *challah*, help campers answer a prompt about their week, and cheer on campers and staff during presentations.

On Shabbat, we use the greeting **Shabbat Shalom!** “*Shalom*” means hello, goodbye, and peace.

Shabbat Shalom! wishes someone a Shabbat of peace and wholeness. And since camp is the **Shabbat of the year**, we want to welcome you to camp with a warm...

SHABBAT SHALOM!