

CORNERSTONE 2018 RESOURCE

Havdalah: Dwelling Between Times, *Spin It!*

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SUMMARY:	This session explores Havdalah as a space between Shabbat and weekday time, and gives campers tools to consider other ways of existing between categories when they feel boxed in by other peoples' assumptions - <i>Submitted by Ariella Rosen</i>
TOPIC(S):	Shabbat, Identity
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will understand the role of Havdalah in easing the transition out of Shabbat, and will be able to articulate the ways in which the concept of Havdalah as an in-between space can be useful in other aspects of their lives.
AUDIENCE:	This activity can be done with a group of any size, though it would work best with a group of 10-30 people. This activity is geared toward older campers (ages 12 and up), but the introductory activity in particular can be modified for younger children.
TIMING:	20 minutes (but this session can be made longer by allowing for more reflection time throughout)
APPENDICES:	none
MATERIALS NEEDED:	2 long strings or ropes (should be thick enough to be easily seen on the ground/floor, and should be long enough that participants can stand side-by-side along it) Watch with a second hand or another device for timing the activity Flipchart paper or poster board Markers
SET-UP DETAILS:	This activity can take place in any location, though an indoor space might work better for making the lists the group generates visible. This program is designed to take place at night (before Havdalah) so any space that is well-lit enough to see each other and the materials works. The space should be wide enough to stretch out the rope and have enough room for all participants to stand side-by-side.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Timeline:

00:00-00:10- Introductory Activity

00:10-00:20- Weekly Ritual

Detailed Step-by-step:

Note: This session is designed as an introductory activity (to be done once with a group) to generate understanding around Havdalah as a “between time” followed by a ritual that can be done weekly as part of Havdalah (or right before Havdalah).

Introductory Activity- Crossing from Shabbat to Chol (10 min.)

Begin by gathering on one side of the rope.

Explain: We are currently standing in Shabbat time.

- What does Shabbat feel like? What do you feel in your body when it is Shabbat?

Generate responses and list them on a large piece of paper, and leave it in a visible place on that side of the rope.

Ask everyone to step to the other side of the rope and explain:

Now we are standing in Chol time (not Shabbat- normal, everyday time).

- What does Chol feel like? What do you feel in your body when it is Chol?
- Generate responses and list them on a large piece of paper, and leave it in a visible place on that side of the rope.

Invite the group to step back to the Shabbat side, and give the following instruction:

Embody Shabbat for 1 minute. Try to carry yourself based on how Shabbat “feels” to you. You can use the list we made for guidance. Feel free to act, to make dramatic gestures that others can see, or to carry Shabbat in a more personal way in your body.

After 1 minute, instruct participants to step over the line into Chol, and to do the same thing on that side: Carry yourself based on how Chol “feels” to you. You can use the list we made for guidance. Feel free to act, to make dramatic gestures that others can see, or to carry Chol in a more personal way in your body.

After 1 minute, regroup. Ask for reactions:

- How did it feel to embody Shabbat and Chol? Did you feel a difference?
- How was it to make that immediate transition from Shabbat to Chol?

Add the second rope parallel to the first (on the Chol side), creating a pathway that is about 4 feet wide.

Explain: You are going to do this same activity again. This time, when I tell you to move into Chol, you can take as much time as you would like (of the 1 minute) in between the ropes before stepping over into Chol.

- After everyone has stepped to the Chol side (ask any remaining participants in the middle to step to that side when the time is up), ask:
- How did it feel to move from Shabbat to Chol? How did this transition compare to the first time we did this?
- How did you use the middle space? What did you do there?

Explain that for many people, that immediate transition from Shabbat to Chol is really hard. They needed a way to ease that transition, and that is one important role that Havdalah plays. We could end Shabbat and go immediately into Chol time, but instead Jewish tradition includes Havdalah.

It’s a little ironic- Havdalah literally means “separation” or “distinction” between categories, but the experience of Havdalah itself is the creation of a 3rd kind of time, a middle space between Shabbat and Chol. Havdalah takes a thin line and makes it wide enough to dwell inside.

Weekly Ritual (10 min)

Havdalah allows us to blur the lines between categories. We are now going to explore how Havdalah can help us find other middle spaces and times to dwell in over the course of our week. This is a ritual or activity that can be done each week leading into Havdalah:

Ask the group to generate categories that lead to assumptions being made: (some examples may include gender, appearance, abilities, interests, where someone comes from, etc.) List these on flipchart paper.

Ask participants to think about one way in which you feel stuck on one side of a line, or boxed into something. With a partner, taking 1-2 minutes per partner, answer the following questions:

- What is one way you feel “stuck in a category?” What are assumptions people make about you? If nothing comes to mind, more generally, what is something from this past week that you want to be different this coming week?
- What “middle dwelling” do you want to do this week? How do you want to change those assumptions? Or more generally, what is your goal for this coming week?

Invite participants to gather on the Shabbat side of the line.

Explain: we are about to go from Shabbat, a special time where anything feels possible, to the Chol side, where reality is, where hard work is done. In a moment, we'll cross from Shabbat to Chol. Once again, try to feel it in your body. Use the Havdalah space between- think about your goals and your dreams for this week and how you hope to get there, how you can find ways to be more “in between” this week, take a deep breath, etc.

Invite participants to take 1 minute to cross from Shabbat to Chol. Once everyone has crossed, wish them a Shavua Tov, a great new week!

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

With more time, participants can both journal and discuss in smaller groups the ways in which they feel stuck on one side of a line or category.

If done weekly, the group could focus on a different type of category to be blurred each week: gender, abilities, hometown, appearance, etc.

At camp, this activity can be done with a community that feels connected to each other and knows each other well. If doing this with a cabin or unit, for the final “crossing” have everyone line the two sides of the Havdalah space (standing along each rope) and give some sort of encouragement or cheer for each camper as they walk through the middle.

This can more explicitly be used as a program to discuss gender identity and/or other binaries that exist in our communities.