

Israel: How (D)are You?

Evening Activity

AUTHOR(S):	Dan Libenson, Shalom Orzach, Jonathan Marx
SUMMARY:	Talking about Israel is often difficult. Passions run high, and the stakes feel higher. Too often, we respond by avoiding the topic. This evening, we will talk about Israel, and we will not avoid the most-difficult-to-discuss topics. At the same time, we will experience and practice attitudes and techniques that allow us to disagree but leave the conversation as friends. - Submitted by Dan Libenson
TOPIC(S):	Israel Communication across differences
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will experience talking passionately yet constructively about the most difficult questions relating to Israel – the conflict, religious pluralism, why even care about Israel – without fighting and without ugliness.
AUDIENCE:	Staff, older campers, CITs
TIMING:	75 minutes
APPENDICES:	
MATERIALS NEEDED:	
SET-UP DETAILS:	A large room Four chairs at the front, arranged in a square, concentric half-circles of chairs facing the front

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- 10 minutes – Framing, explaining the goals of the session:
 - Ask people why they attended
 - Ask a few people why conversations about Israel tend to become difficult
 - Use the Talmudic text from Eruvin 13b to explain the approach of effective advocates: speak with humility; first seek to understand the other deeply and be open to challenges of your position; state the other side's position before stating your own.

Round One: Religious Pluralism

- 10 minutes – Fishbowl conversation among four pre-chosen individuals with different positions
- 15 minutes – Participants can “tap in” to take the place of one of the fishbowl participants; each chair will be tagged with a certain position so that there is always someone in the group representing each position.

Round Two: The Conflict

- 5 minutes – Fishbowl conversation among four pre-chosen individuals with different positions
- 15 minutes – Participants can “tap in” to take the place of one of the fishbowl participants; each chair will be tagged with a certain position so that there is always someone in the group representing each position.

- 10 minutes – Conclusion

- Ask participants to reflect on what they saw going on.
- How was this different from other Israel conversations you have seen or been part of?
- What would you need to be able to do this in your “regular life”?