

Tefillah Track: It Doesn't Have to be Perfect, It Just Has to Be Yours Post-It Party Experiential Tefillah *Specialty Track 1*

AUTHOR(S):	Sara Beth Berman
SUMMARY:	Using an experiential Tefillah program and a ton of Post-It Notes, some text, and a lot of personal opinions, you will learn about what matters to you about Tefillah and what matters to your camp community. You will talk about how you got into Tefillah, what you like and don't like, and how you can share this love with others, and learn to work through the heavier conversations that go along with it. - <i>Submitted by Sara Beth Berman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Prayer - Alternative, Prayer - Tefillah, Jewish Text
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	<p>Essential Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does Tefillah matter to me? • Why does Tefillah matter at camp? • How can I share my feelings about Tefillah with others at camp? • How letting the idea of perfection go positively impact Tefillah and programming at camp? <p>Knowledge and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will be able to communicate their feelings about Tefillah with others. • Participants will be able to demonstrate moments in camp when experiencing Tefillah is a wonderful way to explore personal and communal meaning. • Participants will feel free to create interesting and engaging Tefillah programming, with a focus on openness to experimentation and exploration.
AUDIENCE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle School, High School, Staff • Large, medium, or small group - need at least a minyan of participants for maximum effectiveness in conversation
TIMING:	90 Minutes
APPENDICES:	Post-It Party Pirkei Avot 4:1 Handout
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-colored stacks of post-its - one pad for every 2 people in the session • 1 pack of notecards - 3x5 or 4x6, lined or unlined - doesn't matter!

SET-UP DETAILS:

- Multiple writing services are needed
- Ample flat surfaces - table or wall - to organize post-its

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Opening Activity // Time: 15 minutes

We're going to do a series of activities that you can use as parts of a prayer experience at your own camp. I'll point them out as we get to them throughout the sessions. This one is the first:

1. Grabber (10 minutes): Anonymous Notecard - Writing Activity
 1. This is a safe space for learning, so I'm going to ask that nobody yuck anybody else's yum - just because their tefillah practice is different from your own doesn't mean that it's wrong. We're all here to learn from each other, and I ask that we all do that respectfully. Please give a thumbs up to show that you agree. (Everyone agrees, because I said so.)
 2. These next activities are meant to help you not just teach, but also have people teach each other. These experiences can help your community become wise through listening and conversing with others whose views may be different, or totally similar.
 3. Give every participant an index card, and ask them to fill out both prompts, without writing their names on them:
 1. PROMPT 1: When I'm in Tefillah at camp, I...
 2. PROMPT 2: When I think about my campers and Tefillah, I...
2. Collect the note cards, saying that nobody knows which answer belongs to which person, but if you don't want to share, just hang onto your card.
3. Call on volunteers to read their peers' cards out loud. (PROMPT 1, then PROMPT 2)
4. Discussion questions (5 minutes):
 1. How did it feel to read someone else's card?
 2. What did it feel like to read something you agreed with?
 3. What did it feel like to read something that made you uncomfortable?
 4. How can these questions help us to be better Tefillah programmers at camp?
 5. How would you use this activity in a staff or cabin meeting at camp?

Activity - Post-It Party // Time: 60 minutes

1. Post-It Party (15 minutes): In order to figure out who we are and how we're all going to work together. Each participant get a stack of Post-It notes. You will have a chance to write your answer to the following prompts on as many, or as few, Post-Its, as it takes you paint a picture of your religious life at home and in your current community.
2. Guidelines:
 1. When you answer for camp vs home vs school vs somewhere else, please just make a note on your Post-It (write home for home, school for school, camp for camp, etc.)
 2. Write concise things on each Post-It, the more you make, the more complete our discussion will be.
 3. Each Post-It should have one answer.
 4. Some prompts will have multiple answers, and that's ok.
5. Write a note on the Post-It, on the bottom, left hand corner, so you know which prompt it's answering. For example, for "Who do you pray with?" you should write "Who" on the Post-It.
6. You don't have to write your name on your Post-It.
7. Prompts:
 1. Who do you pray with? (Examples: Family, friends, Conservative Minyan, camp, etc...)

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2. What do I need to pray? (Examples: Guitar, prayer books, prayer cards, tallit, tefillin, kippah, community, silence, noise, nature)
 3. Where do you pray? (Examples: Hillel building, classrooms, dinner table, auditorium, amphitheater, chapel, synagogue, open field)
 4. When do you pray? (Examples: Early morning, afternoon, evening, Shabbat, havdallah, before/after meals)
 5. How do you pray? (Examples: Quietly, singing, with my community, on my own, in experiential activities, sitting in pews, running around, loudly while making noise, silently and meditatively)
 6. Why do you pray? (Examples: I'm required, I want to, it's what we do, I want to help, I want to change the world, God is listening, God isn't listening, it's for my kids, it's for my community)
 7. What do you like about Tefillah?
 8. What do you dislike about Tefillah?
8. Once you've written all of your Post-Its, you should self-prune, pulling out any answers you're not comfortable sharing with the group
1. Who is wise? (We are.) (30 minutes):
 1. Text Study (10 minutes): Let your Post-Its marinate - leave them where you were working on them, and set them aside. Make a group with 3-4 people. Try to get someone from a background that is DIFFERENT from yours. Different camps, different movements, different areas of the country, different minyanim. JCC, URJ, Ramah, Moshava, Habonim Dror, Independent. You shouldn't be grouped with anybody from your movement for this activity. (See Handout)
 2. Questions about the text:
 1. What does this text teach you about camp?
 2. What does this text teach you about learning at Cornerstone / with people who don't share your history, views, and/or opinions?
 3. Which of these 4 dimensions matters the most to you? The least? Why?
 3. Venn-ing (20 minutes): Once you've examined the Ben Zoma text, take your Post-Its, and stick them up on the wall, or on a piece of flip-chart paper, in the form of a Venn-ish Diagram. If you have three people, you can have three overlapping circles, if you have 4, you can divide your paper/space into quadrants, and make a box in the middle that is the center of your diagram. Just make sure you have a place where you can overlap. It doesn't matter what they look like, as long as you're talking about your answers.

2. Analysis / Closing Questions (15 minutes):
 1. Take a look at your partners' Post-Its, and take note (This may be integrated into the above Venn-ing activity):
 1. What is interesting to you?
 2. What seems "weird" to you?
 3. What reminds you of YOUR experience (at camp or school or home)?
 4. What do you have in common?
 5. What's different between you two?
 6. Put those Post-Its in the middle of your Venn-ish diagram.
 2. Venn-ish Questions:
 1. When they're in Tefillah at camp, they...
 2. When they think about their camp and Tefillah, they...
 3. How are you gaining understanding from your peers about how their prayer lives work?
 4. How did it feel to find commonalities with your peers from other movements / minyanim / geographical locations?
 5. What did it feel like to read something you agreed with?
 6. How did you come to terms with something your partner/s said that made you uncomfortable?
 7. How can these questions help us to be better Tefillah programmers and participants?
 3. In conclusion:
 1. What did you learn about yourself today?
 2. What was challenging about today's activity?
 3. How will this help you engage in tefillah over the course of the year?

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

(15 Minutes)

- How would the Vennish Diagrams activity help you in staff training? In working with CITs? In working with campers?
- How would you use the text we studied today with campers? With staff?
- What from the stuff written on the flip charts above most surprised you?
- What's one thing you learned today that will help you be a better staff member - and how will you use that skill?