

Sharing our Jewish Journeys as a Tool to Strengthen and Build Community

Elective

AUTHOR(S):	Seth Braunstein
SUMMARY:	In this session we will have the opportunity to actively articulate and weave together our own Jewish journeys and think about how that impacts the way we relate to one another both as individuals and as a community. If you're curious about what makes others "tick" Jewishly and care about your own story then this is the session for you! - <i>Submitted by Seth Braunstein</i>
TOPIC(S):	Self-reflection, Jewish identity, community, and values
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	The participants will have had the opportunity to reflect on their own journey, articulate what that means to them both personally and communally. In addition, each participant will gain the skills to facilitate such an experience amongst fellow staff and hopefully campers in their own camp over the summer.
AUDIENCE:	Staff or campers; preferably older but could even be younger campers if the program is done a little differently.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Jewish Identity texts
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Paper & pens.
SET-UP DETAILS:	This can be in both an indoor and outdoor location in camp. Ideally it will be set during a time and space that is optimal for reflection and sharing.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

00:00-00:10 - Introduction Icebreaker (whichever you would like!)

00:10- 00:20 - Individual - Meditation that allows one to look back on their life and draw upon meaningful & transformative moments (I will stress differentiating between communal, individual, and national moments). Perhaps I'll ask people to think about where those differentiations mesh. At the end give everyone to write down and categorize these moments.

00:20-00:30 - Individual: Map the “Journey” - when did those moments occur? Were there outside influences (people, places etc.)? What was happening in your life?

00:30-00:40- Group Activity: Text Study - Read two texts that define identity...mention the other two (Pesach one especially communal/ individual)

00:40-00:55 - Hevrutah - Pair and each person shares 1-2 of their top moments while answering the following questions:

- 1) Why did you choose this moment?
- 2) Why was it transformative?
- 3) Do you recall this moment often? If so, why or why not?
- 4) How did you categorize it? (communal, individual, national or a combination of some kind?)
- 5) What were the outside influences (if any) people, places etc.?
- 6) Were you able to weave together your moments/ experiences to tell a story?
- 7) Was this an easy or challenging exercise?

00:55 - 01:15 - Each pair should share 1 example from each pair and answer some of the questions. Try and have your partner share your moment but not necessary.

01:15 - 01:25 - Closing - Full Group:

- 1) What was that experience like? Individual, communal Hevrutah?
- 2) Did you notice common themes? influences?
- 3) Can we help to create these moments in camp or are they totally subjective?
- 4) Part of the goal was not just individual but it was to help build community and feel connected to the larger Jewish community (Religious or natural I am not sure, it depends). Did any of you feel that? Why or why not?
- 5) How might you do this differently?
- 6) How might you take this back to camp? In what setting? How would it be different amongst a group of people who know each other well?

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

This can feel overwhelming but it can also be adapted piecemeal and you can just choose certain parts.