

CORNERSTONE 2019 RESOURCE

A Matter of Perspective: Prayer & Tefillah (Part 2) *Specialty Track*

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SUMMARY:	It's Not Just You! Just like you're never exactly the same person in tefillah (or anything else), so too are your campers, and costaff, and camp directors, and facilities staff. We're going to dig into the component parts of prayer, from what's fixed to what's flexible - and how to make that work for our communities. - <i>Submitted by Sara Beth Berman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Tefillah
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	<p><u>Knowledge and Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will be able to articulate the meanings of both "keva" and "kavannah" • Participants will be able to explain different locations in camp (other spaces) where they go for particular experiences. • Participants will be able to articulate how they situate themselves in prayer situations
AUDIENCE:	Learners of all ages! At least a bunk of participants, possible for a whole unit of participants. Could be all-staff.
TIMING:	90 Minutes
APPENDICES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "He's not your man" meme • The Ba'al Shem Tov Lights a Fire! (below)
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Flip Chart / Flip Chart Markers • White printer paper • Markers for fellows, pen/cils • Pen/cils
SET-UP DETAILS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector/AV hookup

Broad Subject and Skill(s)

- The spark of Tefillah - the passion and excitement for it - lives in you. Usually.
- People in your camp/school/home community have feelings about Tefillah, and they can all learn from sharing those thoughts with each other.
- Tefillah is a process, and looks different to different people in different ways at different times.

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Understanding

- I can help to build a positive and exploratory Tefillah environment at camp.
- My love of Tefillah and my need to provide excellent educational experiences. Thinking about everybody's perspective will help craft programming that will address different needs at different times.
- Tefillah is an experience at camp that can be as life-changing as any other.

Essential Questions

- 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 considering learner perspective positively impact Tefillah and programming at camp?

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Opening Activity // Time: 10 minutes

1. This meme comes from a place of heteronormativity, so let's acknowledge that there are plenty of ways to enter into an intense person-to-person relationship. Now that we've addressed that: Who's familiar with the "he's not your man" meme? [Here's a few examples](#). Now, make your own, but make it about Tefillah!
2. SHARE!
3. Discussion -
 1. What was good about using a meme to think about prayer?
 2. What kind of themes surfaced when you made prayer memes (about your camp)?
 1. ...about the prayer experience more broadly?
 3. Which one made you laugh the most, and why?

Step-by-Step Session Description // Time: 70 minutes

1. Keva and Kavannah (30 minutes):
 1. Now that we've lifted up some themes from our own prayer experiences, I want to make sure we discuss the component parts of any Tefillah experience, which will help us broaden what we're trying to learn and teach with this track. There are two parts of prayer, the fixed stuff we're supposed to sing, do, and say - Keva - and then there's the intention and meaning behind it all - Kavannah. Break into a group of mixed-camp backgrounds, and divide a sheet of butcher paper in half, writing Keva on one side and Kavannah on the other, and make a list of tefillah stuff that belongs on either side
 1. Keva - set prayers, order of prayers, location of prayers, siddurim, prayer cards, visual tefillah, machzor Vitry (the first siddur, more or less!), chumash, powerpoints, etc...
 2. Kavannah - speeches, song choices, what you skip (if you skip), what you add in, poetry, location changes, timing changes, tunes, meditations, stories, etc...
 2. Put it together (like Scattergories - go team by team, and make sure you add in from each group until everything is up on one master piece of paper)
 3. Who can come up with a meme about Keva? Kavannah?
 4. Discussion Questions:
 1. When you think about Keva and Kavannah, how do those distinctions come out at camp? Where?
 2. How are you someone who cares about Tefillah? Keva? Kavannah? Why and how?

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3. Why do you care about Tefillah at camp?
 1. Who cares the most about Tefillah at camp? Why do you think that is?
 4. Which of these presents an opportunity for perfection? How and why?
2. Where Am I? Here I Am. (35 minutes)
 1. Safety/danger (15 minutes)
 1. We're going to play the game safety/danger (does anybody have another name for this?). Stand in a circle, and look down. When I say go, look up and pass your gaze around each person in the circle. Once you've done that, do another pass, deciding that one person is your "safety" and one is your "danger." Once you've chosen, when I say go this is what will happen: You're going to try to move around so you're always as close to your safety as possible and as far away from your danger as possible. Parameters: you cannot touch another person, move any furniture or other belongings in the room, and you must stay in the room. When I holler "STOP" you'll pause. Ready? GO!OK STOP.
 2. Discussion questions:
 1. What was the experience like for you to play this game?
 2. What was weird for you?
 3. What was awesome?
 4. Think-pair-share - what does this have to do with tefillah?
 5. How does this compare to the way we situate ourselves in relationship to Israel in prayer? What could take precedence over Israel/the Kotel when facing a location for prayer?
 2. Draw It (20 minutes)
 1. Now that you've had a chance to distance yourself and draw near at the same time, I'm going to ask you to sketch something out for yourself. It doesn't have to be beautiful, it just has to be yours. Grab a piece of paper and some markers, and draw your camp. (You can also draw your Hillel, your synagogue at home, or your team's stadium or arena.)
 2. Now that you've drawn your camp, think about what you're drawing near to, and far from, for different activities. Take different color markers or write out your notes in words.
 1. Where does the Keva show up?
 2. Where does the Kavannah show up?
 3. Share with in a small group, considering the following questions?
 1. How is their experience different than yours?
 2. How are your experiences similar?
 3. Remember the points of view - what do you learn about your own camp, geography, keva, and kavannah from considering your map from an outsider's point of view?
 4. How would you learn about your own camp, geography, keva, and kavannah from considering your map from a young camper's point of view? A veteran camper? A peer in your camp?
 3. Remember The Memes? (15 minutes) -
 1. Earlier, we thought about all of the ways that we're not seeing a situation for what it is - "He's not your man, he's Tefillah!" You just did some deep work on where you are situating yourself at camp, and we also should think about where we situate ourselves within our communities.

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2. Baal Shem Tov Story (B'shem Josh Lake) - <https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Cmon-Baby-Story-2.pdf>

The Bal Shem Tov Lights a Fire!

When Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism, saw that the Jewish people were threatened by tragedy, he would go to a particular place in the forest where he lit a fire, recited a particular prayer, and asked for a miracle to save the Jews from the threat. Because of the Holy Fire and faithfulness of the prayer, the miracle was accomplished, averting the tragedy.

Later, when the Baal Shem Tov's disciple, the Maggid of Mezrich, had to intervene with heaven for the same reason, he went to the same place in the forest where he told the Master of the Universe that while he did not know how to light the fire, he could still recite the prayer, and again, the miracle was accomplished.

Later still, Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sasov, in turn a disciple of the Maggid of Mezrich, went into the forest to save his people. "I do not know how to light the fire," he pleaded with God, "and I do not know the prayer, but I can find the place and this must be sufficient." Once again, the miracle was accomplished.

When it was the turn of Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn, the great grandson of the Maggid of Mezrich who, who was named after the Baal Shem Tov, to avert the threat, he sat in his armchair, holding his head in his hands, and said to God: "I am unable to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, and I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story. That must be enough."

Imagine if you knew how to light the holy fire?! Imagine if you knew how to light the fire and had the opportunity to teach others how to light the fire?! Here is your opportunity!

This version of the story from my Rebbe, Josh Lake.

1. Questions:
 - a. This story says that prayer averts evil decrees or tragedies - how do you answer your campers' questions when they ask why they feel their prayers didn't work?
 - b. What are the pieces that are applied to prayer?
 - c. What does this particular story tell us about what's important for prayer? What's not?

Bringing it Back to Camp (Raise as necessary):

- How would you use the resources we used today (or resources like them) with campers? With staff?
- How does thinking about what we do in which spaces help us think about prayer at camp?
 - ...not just prayer, but intentionality more broadly at camp?
- What's a story you tell to help people think about prayer and
 - ...how do you use it?
 - ...when do you use it? (grief, joy, doesn't go our way, first/last night of camp...)
 - ...how could you use it better?
- Who at your camp would enjoy this sort of analysis and discussion?
 - Where does this fit into your summer?

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Discussion

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