

### Tisha B'Av - Ending Gossip, Bullying and Baseless Hatred in Camp and Beyond

*Elective 2*

<b>AUTHOR(S):</b>	Meir Balofsky
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	Bullying, gossip and baseless hatred are not just plot-lines for teen movies, they're ever-present in our camps and greater communities. We will look at new program ideas to bring these issues to our campers through the lens of Tisha B'Av – the saddest day on the Jewish calendar. Baseless hatred is not only the reason why the temple was destroyed 2000 years ago – It's also the reason it still has not been rebuilt. All are welcome; no previous knowledge of any or all things Tisha B'Av are required! Together we'll be honoring the past, mourning the present, and praying for the future. – <i>Submitted by Meir Balofsky</i>
<b>TOPIC(S):</b>	Tisha B'Av – Bullying
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVE:</b>	Participants will identify the classic teachings of Tisha B'Av in the context of camp communities and will learn and share new programs to bring back to camp to teach those themes.
<b>AUDIENCE:</b>	Middle school / High School campers
<b>TIMING:</b>	90 min
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	Worksheets
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	Pens – printed documents attached Flip Chart paper Video player – projector – speakers Two small hand-held mirrors
<b>SET-UP DETAILS:</b>	Any space with proper flooring (not outside)

Throughout the session have a running list of questions for consideration and future discussion – noted in blue

The video clip reference will be noted in yellow – all in one video clip compilation

### SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

10  
min

OPEN with a go around – name – camp and what Tisha B'av means / looks like in their camp

Classically -Tisha B'Av is the date when both temples were destroyed (586 BCE and 70 CE)  
Let's see what the Talmud states is the reason the temple was destroyed.

Have the following written out on large flip chart paper:

Tisha B'Av – Yoma 9B

...However, considering that the people during the Second Temple period were engaged in Torah study, observance of mitzvot, and acts of kindness, and that they did not perform the sinful acts that were performed in the First Temple, why was the Second Temple destroyed? It was destroyed due to the fact that there was baseless / wanton hatred during that period. This comes to teach you that the sin of baseless / wanton hatred is equivalent to the three severe transgressions: Idol worship, forbidden sexual relations and bloodshed.

ASK: What does baseless hatred mean?

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THE PROBLEM WITH BASELESS HATRED IS THAT WE CONVINCED OURSELVES IT'S NOT  
BASELESS - RABBI ARI KAHN

ASK: What does this mean? Can you relate to this quote? Discuss in pairs. Share

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When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. But I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my country. When I found I couldn't change my country, I began to focus on my town. However, I discovered that I couldn't change the town, and so as I grew older, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, but I've come to recognize that if long ago I had started with myself, then I could have made an impact on my family. And, my family and I could have made an impact on our town. And that, in turn, could have changed the country and we could all indeed have changed the world - Rabbi Yisrael Salanter 1810-1883

10  
min

Have a volunteer read this - Do you agree with this? Is this a good call-to-action?

Let's identify how baseless Hatred manifests in camp – let's try to mend our own community first

Bullying & Gossiping - the Bystander

Let's go through a couple of programming ideas that hit these issues hard. – This is a slew of different ideas I've worked on and are usually part of its own program - so enjoy the ride....

5  
min

Regina George and Biff Tannen Video

Do you see yourself in either of those bullies? - I'd like to think that everyone here said no. They're portrayed as cartoonish level evil people. That makes them virtually unrelatable because nobody wakes up and decides to be evil.

What are the roles in each case (bully, bystander, victim)

Have you ever seen anyone act like this?

Have you ever been the bully?

Have you ever been the bystander?

Have you ever felt like the victim?

Write an apology letter to someone to whom you hurt or stood by as others hurt them. – Not to be shown.

10  
min

Prompts:

One time, I said....

One time, I did...

After I did that, people around me must have thought things about you like...

The reason I don't think I can tell you this in person is....

Feet – Write what you felt and what you feel when you've been hurt.

What do you struggle with. (no names or details - just feelings)

Hand in anonymously – redistribute. Pass and exchange 3 times.

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Hands – On the back of that paper – draw outline of your hands and in that space – write what you want to do to be better. What's your personal call-to-action?

20  
min

Reveal after this is done – realize that you wrote your personal call-to-action on the paper that has someone else's pain on it

Write what you felt and what you feel when someone calls you out negatively for something you did. What do you struggle with? (no names or details)

If you do nothing – if you just watch as others do wrong, then you are watching the Beit HaMikdash burn and are doing nothing to put out the flames. The absence of evil is not good. Being a bystander will not help. To be good, to make a difference, you must do. After 120 years, your time here will end and you'll be asked, "on each day of your life, what did you do to make the world better" What will you say?

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Let's explore the personal call-to-action

How do I react when I see someone who is an "other" – someone who is different

I exclude - "I have my friends" already (A)

I say nothing and do nothing (B)

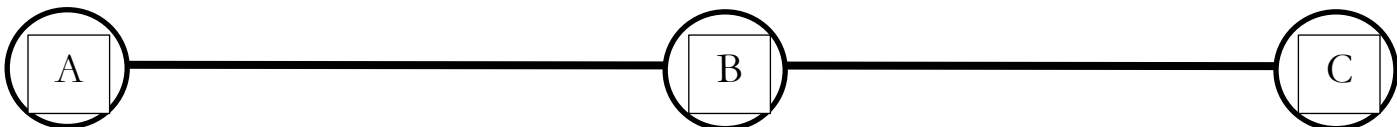
I reach out and try to make a new friend (C)

Where would you be on this spectrum?

Are you happy with where you are?

Where should you try to move to?

15  
min



One of the middot in Judaism is called Shleimut – Wholeness – To work on that middah we need to identify everything – even, and especially, the parts of yourself that you might not like.

Before you see the next clip – ask yourself as you see each person and each word:

Did I ever cause this to happen?

Did I ever feel this happening?

Did I ever watch this happen?

Watch the following video and write about one part that you connected to the most.

STAND UP VIDEO

What part of your personality of your self do you think needs to be worked on?

Write about the part you connected to the most?

Show final clip from Mean Girls -

Responses to write:

When am I afraid to speak up?

What do I do when I want to feel powerful?

Questions to think about:

Nobody is perfect – How can I identify what I'm lacking?

Change is not comfortable – Right now we live in a world with sinat chinam – hatred.

How uncomfortable am I prepared to get to make the change that I need to make?

**10  
min**

### LEADERSHIP THROUGH LOLLIPOPS - VIDEO

Do you have a teacher/counselor who had a specific impact on you – do they know it? Realize that you being the best version of yourself can have the best impact and it's possible that someone could choose you as their person who made that difference.

**10  
min**

Mirror Circle – hand out a mirror – go around and have each person look at themselves and make a resolution to make a difference.

What improvement will you demand from yourself starting tonight? Look in the mirror as it comes to you and make the commitment to yourself