

CORNERSTONE 2022 RESOURCE

This Session Isn't Life or Death...It's Both!, Evening Experience

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| AUTHOR(S): | Arielle Friedtanzer |
| SUMMARY: | We will explore and discover ways we want to remember and honor ourselves, our experiences, and our loved ones in this hands-on, interactive Celebration of Life. |
| ABC GOALS: | <p>Affective: Participants will feel...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excited by the various activities they're able to partake in • Empowered to tell their own stories and those of their loved ones • Connected to their peers by skipping the small talk and diving deep <p>Behavior: Participants will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on their lives and what matters most to them • Express gratitude for someone in their life, past or present • Find meaning and joy in sad moments <p>Cognitive: Participants will know...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to articulate and design what a celebration of life might look like • That the end of a life doesn't always have to feel dreary or solemn • That thinking about death isn't going to make it happen any sooner |
| AUDIENCE: | This session is targeted toward people of any age and size, but in its current intimate form, ideal size would be 15-40 people. |
| TIMING: | 75 minutes |
| APPENDICES: | Mad Lib Eulogy.pdf |

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MATERIALS NEEDED:

Black Magic cards with styluses, 1.5 per person (in case they mess up) – not particular about the size as long as they're at least 4"x5" (examples include: Rainbow Scratch Paper at Lakeshore Learning or Amazon.com: Scratch Paper Art Set for Kids Rainbow Magic Scratch Off Paper Black Scratch Sheets Notes Cards Boards Doodle Pads Childrens Arts and Crafts Projects Kit for Girls Boys Adults Birthday Christmas Gift : Toys & Games)

Chocolate chip cookies (2 per person)

A bunch of gluten free cookies (if anyone gluten free has registered for the program)

2 tubs of Chocolate frosting

2 tubs of vanilla frosting

2 shakers of Rainbow sprinkles

2 bags of Mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

2 bags of Mini marshmallows

1 bottle of Caramel syrup

1 shaker of Sea salt or kosher salt

1 shaker or small bowl of cinnamon

Large plates - 1 per person

Napkins - 1 per person

8 knives to spread icing

6 spoons for ingredients

6 bowls for ingredients

Index cards in 9 different colors (1 in each color per person)

1 Scissors

1 hole puncher (single preferred)

One binder ring per person (not particular about the size, but at least 1")

8 feet of Butcher paper

Tape

Markers or paint markers or sharpies – your choice! Many of them 😊

Small folded cards and envelopes - 1.5 per person (in case someone wants to write a second)

Stamps - 1 per person

Pens – 1 per person

Printed versions of mad lib eulogy - 1 per person

Pencils – one per person

Tables and chairs (1 seat at a table per person)

Tie dye tablecloths – one per table

Any other tie dye décor you think would be fun

1 ball of String

Clothespins - 2 per person, size doesn't matter

SET-UP DETAILS:

This program should take place in a large room that has space for chairs to be set up in rows (like in a chapel or funeral), and for several tables to be set up in a different part of the room with the same number of chairs around it (one per person). Tables can be next to each other or separate - whatever allows for the appropriate number of chairs – those will be used for cookie decorating, letter writing, and Black Magic. There should also be space for the graffiti wall to be set up off to the side. All of the materials for the various activities should be set up in piles on a separate table in a different part of the room for only the facilitator's use (which will be distributed to participants)

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05: everyone getting settled
- 00:05-00:15: Introduction, Opening Icebreaker
- 00:15-00:22: Activity #1: Venue
- 00:23-00:25: Debrief
- 00:25-00:32: Activity #2: Decor
- 00:33-00:35: Debrief
- 00:35-00:42: Activity #3: Audio, Visual, Music
- 00:43-00:45: Debrief
- 00:45-00:52: Activity #4: Food
- 00:53-00:55: Debrief
- 00:55-01:02: Activity #5: Spoken Word
- 01:03-01:05: Debrief
- 01:05-01:12: Activity #6: Special Touches
- 01:13-01:15: Final Debrief

SESSION OUTLINE:

00:00-00:05: everyone getting settled

00:05-00:15: Introduction

- Arielle welcomes everyone to her Celebration of Life as its officiant, explains why they are gathered together and how they will celebrate her life today. A little unconventional as a living funeral, but the beauty of this experience is that it can be done when someone is alive or after they have died – the hope is that they have a say in it either way!
- Opening icebreaker: This is about to get very intimate very quickly so we want to get to know each other a little better and make this room feel like a safe space. As they walked in, everyone was given a binder ring with two index cards on it. During this time they will take a minute to answer the two prompts below, and will pair up with a new person for each prompt.
 - What is something about your life that you want to be celebrated?
 - What is something other people would likely celebrate about you?

00:15-00:22: Activity #1: Venue

- Answer on your next card:
 - When you think about people gathering together to celebrate your life, where do you picture it happening?
 - Grand Canyon
 - Near a waterfall
 - Movie theater
 - At the beach
 - In your synagogue
 - At the Taj Mahal
- Activity: Write, draw, or express it on the graffiti wall!

00:23-00:25: Debrief: 2-3 people share their answers

00:25-00:32: Activity #2: Décor

- Answer on your next card:

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- What do you see when you look around the space? How do you want the place to be decorated? What the vibes
- For me, it was all about tie dye, bright colors, and zest for life.
- Activity: What feeling, emotion, experience do you want people to have when they attend or participate in your celebration of life? Draw or name that on your Black Magic card.

00:33-00:35: Debrief: 2-3 people share their answers

00:35-00:42: Activity #3: Audio, Visual, Music

- Answer on your next card:
 - What would you like your attendees to see and hear when they enter your Celebration of Life, and throughout their experience?
 - Do you want it to be quiet or should there be background music, instrumental or otherwise? Ambient or natural sounds? A pump-up playlist or music from the year you were born?
- Activity: We're going to create the Playlist of Our Lives, and using the QR code in front of you, I'd ask you to add the songs you wrote down to our group playlist.
 - Think about the song that makes you feel like celebrating when it's hard to... the song that you'd enter the baseball field with or that would play you in or out at the Oscars? In the cartoon of your life, what's your theme song?

00:43-00:45: Debrief: 2-3 people share their answers

00:45-00:52: Activity #4: Food and Drink

- Answer on your next card:
 - What would you want served or available at your Celebration of Life?
 - Your favorite foods?
 - Buffet or passed? Sit-down and formal or casual picnic?
 - Potluck style or catered?
- Activity: Cookie decorating
 - We're going to decorate and, if desired, eat delicious cookies, but these are the cookies of our lives, so they should be decorated with the items that represent how we live and how we want to be remembered.
 - Chocolate chips: small mountains we climbed
 - Rainbow Sprinkles: Energy and sparkle
 - Caramel sauce: went with the flow
 - Mini marshmallows: loved living life in bite-sized moments
 - Sea salt/kosher salt: found strength in tears
 - Cinnamon: found the spice in life

00:53-00:55: Debrief: 2-3 people share their answers

00:55-01:02: Activity #5: Spoken Word

- Answer on your next card:
 - What would you like shared, read, or said at your funeral?
 - Who would you like to speak at your celebration of life and what do you hope that they'll say about you?
 - Any particular writers or poets you love that you would like to have others hear?



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- Are there any Jewish blessings, prayers, or pieces of liturgy that you find meaningful to be shared at your celebration of life?
- Meditative pieces to ground them?
- Write down adjectives and accomplishments and anything else you'd like!
- Activity: Madlib eulogy, written by Mordechai Torczyner (Tor-CHEE-ner)
 - Get into pairs with someone you don't know. One person will be creating the madlib while the other writes the answers down. Then switch!
 - Take the last moment to read them to each other.
 - We can hang them in a public space for people to read them later

01:03-01:05: Debrief: 2-3 people share their answers (if they're particularly funny or meaningful)

01:05-01:12: Activity #6: Special Touches

- Answer on your next card:
 - What special additions would you like to add to your celebration of life that speak to you and the person you are, something that an attendee would feel just makes perfect sense?
 - For me, this was asking people to bring items that can be donated: clothes, shoes, food, glasses, blankets, coats.... and then distributing them at the end of the celebration
- Activity: Write a card to someone who has left a special touch on your heart? This person can be dead or alive, and you can take it with you or mail it to them.

01:13-01:15: Final Debrief

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP

- If you do this elsewhere, consider using magnetic poetry or Velcro words or felt board words for "Spoken Words"
- You don't need to do this whole program at once. You can isolate any one of the activities from the others to make them smaller conversations about more specific topics
- You can also turn the activities into a round robin and have people rotate through the activities. You'd just need to put instructions and prompts on each table