

Let's Get Moving

AUTHOR(S): Jason Scheff

SUMMARY: In this session we will engage in personal and intentional morning routines through physical activity and movement. We will also reflect on this experience through the lens of select prayers from *birkot hashachar*, a part of our daily morning prayers. Make sure to wear sneakers and clothing you feel comfortable moving around in!

GOALS:

- Participants will feel connected to Jewish prayer and community through active movement
- Participants will create a new part of their morning routine that works for them and potentially other members of their community
- Participants will feel emotionally and physically ready to seize the day!

AUDIENCE: Ages 9+, works best for a group of max 30

TIMING: 45 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Texts/text sheets below
- Tape

SET-UP: This activity should begin in a shady/roof enclosed area with the ability to tape/hang up the text sheets, and then transition to an open field that is a for movement and walking/running.

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 – Welcome and Intro
- 00:05-00:10 – Birkat Hashachar Gallery Walk
- 00:10-00:20 – Breakouts and Discussion
- 00:20-00:40 – Activity
- 00:40-00:45 – Reflection

SESSION OUTLINE

00:00-00:05 – Welcome to Intro

The session leader welcomes participants and asks all to sit in a circle. The session leader then introduces the topic, goals for the activity, and broadly informs participants of what they will be doing.

00:05-00:10 – Birkat Hashachar Gallery Walk

The session leader directs the group to disperse and engage in a gallery walk of the texts/prayers that are hung up, spread widely throughout the space so that participants are up and moving.

00:10-00:20 – Breakouts and Discussion

The session leader welcomes the group back and provides the group with the questions below. The session leader divides participants into groups of 6-8 and directs them to pick an area of the field for them to discuss the questions. The session leader gives the questions in writing to one member of each group. The session leader should encourage the group to hold the conversation in a way that's comfortable for them, whether that is sitting down/standing up or by answering the questions in a circle or popcorn style.

- Which prayer did you identify with the most as it relates to how your morning routine or how you start your day? Are you cognizant of these feelings when you wake up or before you exercise?
- How would you define the moment when you “start your day”?
- What is on your morning checklist that you need to complete in order to start your day? Do you consider this as your morning routine?

The session leader instructs everyone to gather back together in the middle of the field at the 20-minute mark.

00:20-00:40 – Activity

The session leader welcomes the group back and explains that it's time to activate our bodies so that we can feel prepared to start our day by engaging in a set of movements reflective of the texts that had been hung up. The session leader asks participants to stand in a line, shoulder-to-shoulder, with an arm-length of space between one another. Ensure that everyone can see the facilitator who will guide the group through the following:

- Active warm up: while walking forward, touch heel with toes pointing forward (10) straight leg kick-ups (10); pull knees to chest (10), – focus on stretching (*zokef kefufim*) (Prayer of gratitude before exercise)
- Plyometrics: high knees, butt kickers, skip for height, skip for distance, side shuffle (both directions) – focus on keeping eyes open, stretching, balance (*pokeach ivrim, zokef kefufim*)
- HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training): encourage participants to choose their own set of exercises or movement that will push them physically and mentally – focus on being strong (*hanotein layaef koach*)

00:40-00:45 – Reflection

Session leader directs the group back to the shady/enclosed roof area to rest and hydrate. Session leader asks a couple of volunteers from the group to answer and reflect on the following questions

- In what ways do you feel different in this moment than you did at the beginning of the activity?
- What did you notice about how your energy changed in the last 20 minutes?
- How has your perspective on morning intentions and routines changed?

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP

This session can be run in the same way at your camp. Depending on the age group and personal preference, there are many relatable texts in the Jewish daily morning prayers (*birkat hashachar* and *shacharit*) that you can choose to use as part of this activity.

Text Appendix

Modeh Ani Text

מוֹדֵה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ,	Modeh ani l'fānechâ,
מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיָּם,	Melech chai v'kayâm,
שֶׁהֵחֵזְרַתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחַמְלָה	she'heh'chezartâ bi nishmâti b'chemlâ
רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ.	Rabâ emunâ'techâ.

I gratefully thank You,
 living and everlasting Ruler,
 For restoring my soul to me, with compassion
 Abundant is your faithfulness.

Selected blessings from Birkot Hashachar:

<i>Pokeach Ivrim</i>	פוקח עוברים	opening eyes
<i>Zokef kefufim</i>	כפופים זוקף	lifts up the fallen (stretching)
<i>Hanotein layaef koach</i>	הנותן כח ליעף	gives strength to the weary

Rabbi S. Yanklowitz – Prayer of gratitude before exercise

My God, You have created my soul and body, and have commanded me to fervently watch over them; grant me the courage to exert myself to the suitable degree. I am grateful to You that You have provided me with the necessary vigor to exercise; please continue to guard me from injury during this training, allow me to delight in it, and assist my efforts to strengthen my body, and to lengthen my days in health.