

Name of Session:	Jewish Meditation in a Pinch
Instructor:	Seth Wax, Cornerstone Faculty 2009
Core Curriculum Pillar:	Creating and Understanding Effective Camp Ritual, Tradition, and Programming
Website Description: (Who, What, Why?)	You can only play duck-duck-goose or teach a new Hebrew word so many times in a week before your campers revolt. At this session, we'll learn some simple meditation practices to use with campers that are useful for calming them down and developing concentration skills, are fun, and just may help their spiritual growth. A great introduction with no previous experience necessary!
Outcomes: What participants will be able to do at camp	Implement a variety of short meditation activities to be used with campers in different situations (e.g. before bedtime, at meals, during downtime, etc.).
Knowledge to be Acquired:	Brief meditation activities
Jewish Texts and/or Contexts:	Selection from <i>Hanhagot Tzaddikim</i> of R. Dov Baer of Mezeritch
Materials Needed:	Raisins (or any kind of fruit), flipchart, paper and pens
Space Needs:	
Maximum Number of Participants:	25
<p><u>Welcome</u> <u>Time: 2 minutes</u> Welcome participants and introduce them to a session where we'll be learning five short meditation activities that they can do with their campers.</p> <p><u>Raisin Meditation</u> <u>Time: 10 minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute 1-2 raisins (or pieces of fruit). • Tell participants that we'll be having a small snack in this session. But instead of eating the raisins quickly, we'll be doing it a little differently. • Direct attention to the flipchart, which has appropriate <i>bracha</i> (blessing) for fruit on it. Mention how <i>brachot</i> (blessings) are an opportunity for mindfulness and gratitude for food. • Participants are to spend 2 minutes just watching the raisin: touching, looking, smelling. But not eating! • Next, we recite the <i>bracha</i> together, and they will have 2 minutes to eat their raisin. • Debrief: How did it feel to wait so long to eat? What was different? • Introduce participants to different <i>brachot</i> to be said before eating different foods. <p><u>Palms Together Mindfulness Meditation</u> <u>Time: 10 minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants pair off and sit opposite each other. Distribute a piece of paper and pen to each group. 	

- One partner does a simple movement (like moving hands or neck), and the other acts as secretary, recording everything the partner says. (Facilitator demonstrates and verbalizes explicitly and extensively.)
- After 5 minutes, partners switch tasks.
- Ask for a pair to share their experience.

Walking Meditation

Time: 15 minutes

- Distribute the R. Dov Baer text and facilitate a short discussion on it. Draw out the implication that all things and all actions are representations and expressions of God.
- Have participants line up behind facilitator and take off their shoes. Following the facilitator's lead, everyone walks around the room very slowly in a circle. Facilitator guides by asking questions, such as, "Where are you placing your weight? How do you shift your weight? When does one step end and the next begin?"
- Ask for 1-2 participants to share their experience.

Relaxation Meditation

Time: 10 minutes

- Have participants lie on the floor with their hands in a comfortable position and eyes closed.
- Ask participants to feel the contact of their body with the floor – its hardness, its coldness or warmth, or whatever they feel.
- The next part of the meditation is a body scan. Ask participants to bring attention to their feet and consciously to relax them. Next, move up to the calf muscles, the thighs, etc. up to the shoulders, neck, and head. Depending on time, the facilitator can focus on large or small chunks of the body.
- Depending on time, ask for 1-2 participants to share their experience.

Breath Meditation

Time: 10 minutes

- Participants can either remain lying on the floor or, if they feel comfortable, sit up leaning against the wall or a chair.
- Facilitator offers a *kavana* (meditation) relating the breath to the soul that God breathed into the first human being in Genesis 2:7.
- Ask participants to bring their awareness to their stomach area and to notice how it rises and falls as they breathe.
- Facilitator invites participants to explore other areas where they may feel their breaths: in the back of the throat, the back of the nose, inside the nostrils, the tip of the nose, and finally, the whole breath.
- Depending on time, ask for 1-2 participants to share their experience.

Planning for Camp

Time: 10 minutes

We will briefly explore some of the benefits of doing these meditations. These will be listed on a flipchart in advance.

- Physical relaxation
- Improved concentration
- Increased ability to deal with stress
- Improved mindfulness
- Enhanced spiritual development

Next, we will briefly discuss some additional pointers to keep in mind when leading a guided meditation. These will be listed on a flipchart in advance.

- Practice the meditation several times before leading it.
- Center yourself beforehand. (Take a few deep breaths, sit quietly for a few moments, etc.)
- Space: Have few distractions, maybe play gentle music can help, try to sit in a large space

- Timing: Think about the best time to lead a meditation (Before bed? On Shabbat afternoon? Before dinner?). Take into account how campers' energy and their schedule will affect your choice.
- If a camper is giggly, opens his or her eyes a lot, or isn't engaged, that's OKAY. Don't scold. Often, the camper feels uncomfortable in a new situation. Try smiling at them and after a moment signaling to close their eyes, or briefly place your hand on their shoulder.
- Remember that you're offering something to your campers; it's for them to accept or receive. So offer it with love & care.

Closing Activity

Time: 5 minutes

We close by taking some time for a few silent breaths and chanting "*Hinei Ma Tov*" as a *niggun* (wordless tune).

Recommended Follow-Up:
(By Liaison or Faculty)

Liaison or Faculty checks in with participants to see how they have used these meditations and to see what further support they need.

Jewish Meditation in a Pinch: Handout 1

Fruit:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרִי הָעֵץ.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, bo-re p'ri ha-eitz.

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who creates fruit of the tree.

Upon eating fruit for the first time in a season, add:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׂהֵיְתֵנוּ וְקִיְמֵנוּ וְהִגְיֵנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַיּוֹם.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-heheyntu v'kiy'mantu v'hig'antu la-z'man ha-zeh.

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, for granting us life, for sustaining us, and for helping us to reach this day.

Food which grows in the ground:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרִי הָאָדָמָה.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, bo-re p'ri ha-adamah.

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who creates fruit of the ground.

Other food and drink:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׂהֵיְתֵנוּ וְקִיְמֵנוּ וְהִגְיֵנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַיּוֹם.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-ha-kol nihyeh bi-d'varo.

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe at whose word all things come into being.

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BERAKHOT BEFORE FOOD

Bread:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמּוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ha-motzi lehem min ha-aretz.

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth.

Food (other than bread) prepared from wheat, barley, rye, oats, or spelt:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיַּיִן מְזוּנוֹת.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, bo-re minei m'zonot. Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who creates various kinds of nourishment.

Wine or grape juice:

פָּרֹרֶךְ אֱמֵתָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, bo-re p'ri ha-gafen. Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who creates fruit of the vine.

BERAKHOT FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS 714

Jewish Meditation in a Pinch: Handout 2

Pay close attention to everything that happens,
everything you hear or see,
but especially to what you do.

This is why it is written of King Solomon
that he “spoke about the trees” (I Kings 5:13) –
meaning, all that he saw led him to serve God.

Everything in the world is needed for God’s worship
– whether pure or impure –
because everything is God;
His guidance and providence are cloaked in Creation.

-R. Dov Baer of Mezeritch, *Hanhagot Tzaddikim*,
Trans. Rabbi Or Rose & Rabbi Ebn Leader