

Building a Community

בונים קהילה



Category of Activity	Peulat Shabbat
Grade Level	7th-8th Grades
Time	Erev Shabbat - 30 minutes, Yom Shabbat - 75 minutes
Method	Group Scenario/Discussion
Size of Group	Eidah
Keywords	Community

GOALS

1. The campers will learn about the variety of values represented by different families within a community.
2. The campers will discuss the significance of a variety of different values when trying to build a community.
3. The campers will use skills of compromise and consensus in dealing with possible value conflicts.

BACKGROUND

NONE

PLACE

1. One large room where the whole Eidah can meet together.
2. Five smaller rooms for discussion groups.

PREPARATION OF SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES

1. A list of ten to twelve campers and one to two counselors divided into five family groups.
2. A list values and clarifications questions for each family group. (See Attachments - Family Values and Discussion Questions).

STAFF PREPARATION

1. The program leader should read the activity very carefully so as to understand both the content and logistics.
2. The program leader should present the program to the Eidah staff several days before the program. He/she should review the different groups, logistics of the program and make sure that the staff members understand the value systems of each family type.
3. The program leader should prepare cards with aDescription for each family group. Examples of these descriptions are listed in the attachments.

SETUP PREPARATION

NONE

METHODOLOGY AND DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Part 1 - Erev Shabbat

1. The Eidah should meet together in a large room.
2. The program leader should tell the following story.
" Each of you is a member of one of five families that were travelling together on a ship. There was a storm, and all of you ended up on a deserted island. Now your task is to build a new community on the island. The five families are all from North America.

Three are Jewish families representing three of the organized movements - Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. In addition, there is a non-religious Christian family, and a Catholic religious family".

3. The program leader should divide the campers into groups of "families". Each group should be no larger than 10-12 campers per group. If the Eidah is larger than 60, there should be more than one "family" group representing one or more of the religious groups.

4. Each "family" should go to a discussion area in order to learn the values that represent the "family". The purpose of this meeting is to become familiar with the values of the "family" and to prioritize them. Members of the "family" will be expected to present the family value systems in a mixed group later in the program. (See attachment for lists of values for each "family". (30 minutes)

Part 2 - Yom Shabbat

1. The Eidah should gather in a large room or in a large outdoor area.

The program leader should invite the family group representatives of each category to form their sub-groups. Two-three campers each from each family should join the sub-group representing the "family" in one of the following value categories:

- a. Religion
- b. Education
- c. Culture
- d. Economy
- e. Politics

Each sub-group will meet with representatives from the other families who share the same value category, and try and reach a consensus as to what should guide the new island community. A representative of the sub-group should then be chosen to share the agreed upon guiding value system for each category with the entire "community" when it reconvenes (40 minutes).

Part 3

2. The entire Eidah should reconvene in a large room. The representatives of each "value category" should share the agreed upon value system in that category (20 minutes).

Part 4

The program leader should lead a brief summary discussion.
(See Attachment - Summary questions (15 minutes).

ATTACHMENTS- RESOURCE TEXTS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

A. Value descriptions

1. Conservative Jewish

Religion

You are committed to Halacha but at the same time you recognize its development over the generations according to the social, cultural and technological needs of society. You seek to adapt Halacha to the trends in society such as egalitarianism. You want to allow both men and women the same privileges in prayer, including appointing a woman as rabbi and cantor.

Education

You prefer integration in general liberal studies but seek to provide supplementary Jewish studies in Hebrew schools on Saturdays and Sundays, and at Jewish summer camps. You also feel positive about elementary Jewish education at Solomon Shechter type schools. On the high school and university level, you favor full integration with the general population.

Culture

You enjoy full integration in general culture, such as music, theatre, literature, movies, restaurants, sports, etc.

Economics

You are well educated and economically established. You make important contributions to the economic life of North America.

Politics

Your general political view is liberal and you believe in the benefits of democratic political life. You are well-integrated into the general society in spite of being a member of a minority group. Minority rights, personal freedom, and your right to be different as protected in the American constitution are important issues to you. You are very loyal to your country, but also support Israel as a national home for the Jewish people.

2. Orthodox Jewish

Religion

You are committed to Halacha as were your ancestors over the past thousand years. You are unwilling to consider changes in Jewish law. To preserve Judaism, Halacha must not be tampered with. You are observant of Kashrut, Shabbat and the laws of family purity. You are committed to separate seating at religious services. Women have a central role in building a Jewish home, and raising and educating children. You believe that women should cover their hair at all times as a sign of modesty. You know that women should wear modest clothes and men should wear tzitzit and a kippah to remind you that you are different from those of other religions.

Education

Your commitment to living as a Jew means that you are willing to permit general studies in addition to the majority focus on Jewish studies. It is best if boys and girls study separately, especially after 4th grade. You feel positive about university studies as well as Yeshiva studies. **Culture**

Only expressions of Jewish culture, such as concerts of Jewish music, Torah and Judaica studies, are appropriate in a synagogue. You are not anxious to incorporate "North American culture" into your life. Some of you are interested in sports, theatre and movies, provided they don't compromise your basic values of modesty and morality.

Economics

You are economically well established and have an interest in developing institutions which provide for your religious needs, such as kosher restaurants, kosher food stores, kosher kitchens in hospitals, etc.

Politics

It is very important that your rights to live as a minority and to practice all aspects of your religion are protected. You are very supportive of a strong and secure Israel.

3. Reform Jewish

Religion - You do not feel a connection to Jewish Halacha. You see Judaism as a cultural way of life. Thus, you place an emphasis on the experience of Jewish holidays but not the strict observance of rituals. You put little emphasis on shabbat observance, and kashrut. Unlike Orthodox and Conservative Jews, you can accept as Jewish someone whose father is Jewish but not his mother. Synagogue life is important to you as a means for preserving Jewish culture. You have supported egalitarianism for many years. You are willing to allow non-Jewish spouses full membership privileges in your synagogues. You are strongly committed to helping not only Jews, but people who are suffering anywhere in the world.

Education

You support general liberal education for all. It is very important that Jewish youth integrate into the general society. They should, however, supplement their Jewish education in synagogue settings on Sundays. You are not in favor of separate Jewish education such as day schools, since they might create a sense of separation from the general population.

Culture

You enjoy full participation in prevalent cultural events such as music, dance, theatre, literature, movies, sports, etc.

Economics

You are well integrated into the general economic life of society and make significant contributions to it.

Politics

Your overall outlook is liberal and you believe in democracy. You are able to integrate into political life, in spite of the fact that you belong to a small ethnic minority. You are very sympathetic to minorities in general and strongly support personal freedom and the right to be different as protected by the constitution. You are very loyal to your country but also support Israel as a national home for the Jewish people.

4. American Secular**Religion**

You celebrate Christmas, but see it more as a national holiday. Once in a while you attend church, but primarily for weddings, funerals or social functions. You are open to all religious outlooks, and have a liberal, humanist approach that views mankind as the center of the universe. In your opinion, all human beings are equal. This is not just a slogan, but a real value for you. You have no problem with your children marrying with other races or religions, if that is their desire.

Education

You favor open, liberal education for people of all faiths and races without distinction. It is important that everyone has an equal opportunity to develop according to his/her abilities and talents. You

oppose separate school systems as this encourages a split in society. At the same time, you would respect anyone who desired separate education. You have a liberal approach to family life and education for your children.

Culture

You benefit from and contribute to all aspects of culture in your community, such as music, dance, theatre, the arts, movies, sports, etc.

Economics

You are very involved in the economic life of your community and your country. You firmly believe in a free and open economic environment where anyone can grow and develop.

Politics

You are a political liberal. You believe in a welfare society that helps the poor and underprivileged through government-funded programs. You favor government-supported programs that will improve the economic and social welfare of all members of society.

5. Fundamentalist Christian

Religion

You are a very observant Fundamentalist Christian family. You regularly attend church on Sunday. You are very active in church activities and study groups. You observe church rituals and holy days. You hope to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land for the year 2000-millennium celebrations. You read your Bible every evening. You love the State of Israel since you see it as paving the way to the Second Coming of the Messiah. In general, you live a very honest and moral life style. You strongly oppose abortion and are very active in the Pro-Life movement.

Education

You prefer religious education for your family and for all families. You have favored prayer in public schools but know that this view has not prevailed. In addition to the private school system, your church has a well-developed educational program. It teaches faith, moral education and loyalty to a fundamentalist educational approach. You sometimes prefer home schooling to the public school system, to protect your children from "evil" influences.

Culture

You are active in most aspects of cultural life in your community. You see some of the more liberal expressions of culture, especially in the media, as an insult to Christian values and teachings, and this upsets you. You support the high levels of music, dance, theatre, movies, and sport on condition that they stay within reasonable bounds of good taste, moderation, and morality. It seems that there are more and more tasteless, anti-Christian performances that are called "culture".

Economics

You oppose the over-involvement of the federal government in supporting welfare programs. You believe in the value of work. Welfare programs should be discouraged. There should be no "free" handouts by the government. Welfare recipients should be given an education so they can learn a skill and start to work. At the same time, you pity the unfortunate, and perform acts of kindness and charity for the downtrodden.

Politics

You are very conservative. You favor the traditional values upon which your country was founded. You believe that too much personal freedom can bring about anarchy. You are committed to the basic values of God, loyalty, honesty, hard work, the centrality of the family, and minimal government intervention in the lives of citizens.

NOTE:

These descriptions are generalizations. They do not cover all those who identify with the title. For the purposes of this program, they serve as examples of basic values.

B. Suggested Questions for Each Value Group

Religion

Do we need centers of worship for everyone on the island?
 Can Jews and Christians share the same place of worship?
 Do we have mixed seating at prayers?
 How will we count a minyan at Jewish services?
 Who leads the services? Men only?
 How will we special dietary needs be met?
 Should we have different days of rest?

Education

Can we have all the children together for education?

Should religious values/beliefs be incorporated into our island school?

If so, what should these values be?

Culture

What is culture to each "family" group? How do we define it?

Do we have the resources for a cultural community on the island?

Do we agree on what our children can watch, see, do?

Economy

How should we run our economy?

Should we have a collective economy? Barter system?

Do we create it together or does everyone do their own thing?

Do we need create our own currency?

Should any kind of occupation or skill take preference?

Politics

What form of rule should be on the island?

Should men and women be allowed to rule on an equal basis?

Should we establish a set of laws?

Do we need a leader or does everyone have equal say?

Perhaps we should have a representative from each "family".

There may be areas in which each "family" will be required to compromise so that all the "families" can live together. The value groups may decide that it's better to have separate religious events but joint cultural events. It is important to remember that this is an exercise in:

a. Identifying a clear values system.

b. Identifying those areas where consensus and compromise can contribute to building a peaceful community.

c. Identifying those areas where there is no possibility of compromise and where we just have to "accept".

Summary Questions

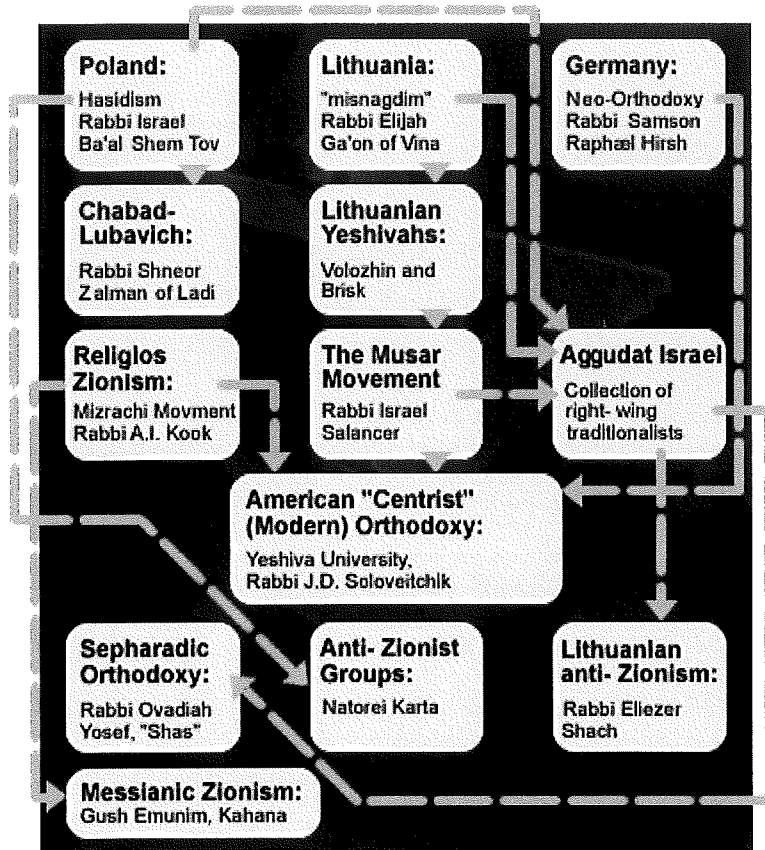
1. On which topics was it easy to compromise?

On which topics was it difficult to compromise?

2. How similar or different were the relationships between the families in the simulation to what you know of in your community?

3. What can we learn from this program in terms of our community at Ramah and within the Eidah?

SOME VARIETIES OF ORTHODOX JUDAISM



This program was developed by SimRon Interactive Programming