**Shacharit Rollercoaster Tefilot -- Peulat Erev**

**Length:** 45 Minutes

**Location:** Banot -- BAG, Banim -- Moadon Bogrim

**Participants:** Machon (& Nivonim, separately) Banim/Banot

**Materials:**

1. Index cards (personal experiences)

2. Pre-made siddur packets (5ish small pieces of paper stapled together)

3. Markers

4. Papers with specific scenarios on one side, emotions on the other

**Prep Time:**

• Hang up the scenario/emotion sheets on the walls around the room with the

emotion side showing.

**Goals:**

1. & Give chanichim an opportunity to reflect privately on emotional situations

2. & Provide safe space for that individual reflection in a communal setting

3. & Encourage chanichim to explore multiple modes of reflection and expression

4. & Introduce idea of prayer as personal expression rather than hard-to-access Godtalk

**Description:**

1. Briefly **introduce peulah** -- explain that they’ll be creating their own siddurim, and

that this is something we’ll do individually. Encourage chanichim to take it seriously and

to doing each activity on their own, rather than with friends.

2. Hand out packets and markers. Make sure everyone writes their name on the front

page of their personal siddur.

3. Explain that there are sheets around the room with different emotions written on

them. Tell chanichim to walk around to the different sheets, and to **draw a picture of**

**each emotion**. Each picture should be on a separate page of the siddur packet, and

they should all be on the front sides of the pages (they will be using the back sides of

the pages later). Chanichim do not have to draw pictures for every single emotion

posted on the walls â€“ just as many as they have room for in their siddur packet, and

whichever ones resonate most for them. (Give 5-8 min for this exercise)

4. Once everyone has finished their drawings, flip the sheets on the walls to show the

scenarios. Tell chanichim to go around the room again, this time **reading each**

**scenario and then writing a short prayer** about it in response or reflection. Explain

that prayers do not necessarily address God or relate to Judaism. Instead, they can be

expressions of your own feelings and thoughts, and can hopefully feel accessible and

relevant for you individually. The prayers should go on the backs of each page in the

siddur booklet, so that each page now has a drawing on the front and a prayer on the

back. (10 minutes)

5. Regroup in a circle and hand out index cards. Explain the **personal experience**

**cards** â€“ each person should write something personal that they associate with strong

emotions. This can be something they have experienced or felt, or something about

them that they feel is important or defines them. Give a couple examples (“I was a

huge tomboy when I was younger.” “I feel most comfortable and happy with myself

when I’m playing basketball.” “I think about the fact that I’m an only child almost every

day.” etc.) to help get them started. The cards should remain anonymous! (5 minutes)

6. Collect markers, siddur packets, and personal experience cards (keep these in

separate piles so passing them out in the morning is easier). Chanichim can leave as

they finish. It’s important that the room stays quiet while everyone is finishing up so that

each person has their time and space to reflect in the way that they want to.

**Shacharit Rollercoaster Tefilot**

**Length:** 45 Minutes

**Location:** Banim -- BAG, Banot -- Moadon Bogrim

**Participants:** Machon (& Nivonim, separately) Banim/Banot

**Materials:**

1. Personal experience cards from night before (edited if necessary)

2. Chanichim’s siddur packets from night before

3. Siddurim (Sim Shalom)

**Prep Time:**

• Arrange benches in a circle

• Place a Siddur Sim Shalom at each seat (or every few seats if people will be

sharing)

• Read through personal experience cards + replace/modify anything inappropriate

**Goals:**

1. & Give chanichim a better understanding of content in t’filot

2. & Provide opportunity for connection to t’filot

3. & Help chanichim see tefilah as an emotional journey

**Description:**

1. Hand out siddur packets â€“ each chanich/a should receive their own siddur packet

from the night before.

2. **Introduction**

- Encourage chanichim to read the English texts in Siddur Sim Shalom

- Encourage chanichim to use whichever siddur they want to use, or to move back and

forth between the two siddurim

- Give chanichim a couple minutes to look through their siddur packet

- Encourage chanichim to think about tefilot in a new way this morning â€“ to think

about their own emotions and how they might relate to tefilot

3. **Suggested matbea** (amend as you see fit):

- p. 8, Elohai Neshama -- read out loud together in English

- Hand out personal experience cards randomly. Chanichim should receive the card of

an edah-mate, and should have a couple minutes to read it before continuing.

- p. 88, Halleluyah -- point out the expression of joy, sing together

- p. 94, Barchu, Shema, Amidah

- p. 129, Tachanun -- have a volunteer read introductory paragraph out loud. Explain

that we will do Tachanun in its original form â€“ **personal meditation**. Encourage

chanichim to take a few quiet minutes to be alone with themselves and their thoughts as

they start this new day. Chanichim can reflect on whatever they would like during this

time -- it’s not designated for thinking about prayer, God, religion, etc. Give 3-5

minutes for Tachanun meditation.

- p. 158, Kaddish Shalem, Aleinu, Kaddish Yatom

- Shir Shel Yom

4. **Discussion Questions**

- Segue into discussion by explaining that we felt and expressed different emotions at

different points in the service. There were highs and lows and everything in between,

just like a rollercoaster! These varying emotions come from both the texts in the siddur

and the conditions of our own lives each day. The fixed texts reflect different behaviors,

ideas, and themes, which all relate to some sort of emotion, and reading/reciting those

texts may make us feel those emotions. At the same time, there are other factors in our

lives that affect how we feel when we pray. We may be feeling tired in the morning, or

we may be excited to spend time with friends at breakfast, or even feeling like we want

to focus on the prayers but keep getting distracted. These factors change each and

every day, which makes each new prayer experience unique and different.

1. Identify (to yourself, not out loud) the emotions behind the experience on the

card your received.

2. How did reading that at the beginning of the service affect your prayer

experience?

3. Did any specific prayer stand out to you? Why?

4. How did having your homemade personal siddur with you affect, shape, or

change our prayer experience?

5. How can we take today’s experience into our future prayer experiences to

make them more meaningful, productive, or worthwhile?

5. **Wrap Up:**

There were a lot of different emotions present during t’filot. Today you might have been

able to hone in on one or two (or more) based on the personal experience card your

received and what you drew and wrote in your personal siddur. Tomorrow, you may be

feeling different, and we hope you can use whatever emotions you’re experiencing then

to shape your tefilah experience into one that fits your mood and allows you to have a

meaningful experience.