

MAGSHIMIM TISHA B'AV PEULAT EDAH

PART ONE:

The story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza  
Performed as a skit by 3 counselors

The Talmud (Gittin 56) tells of a man wanted to throw a party for all his friends, so he drew up a guest list and instructed his servant to send out the invitations. One of the men on the guest list was named "Kamtza," but the servant made a mistake and invited "Bar Kamtza" instead. Oops -- Bar Kamtza was actually a sworn enemy of the host!

When Bar Kamtza received his invitation, he was very grateful to think that the host had finally made amends. But when Bar Kamtza showed up at the party, the host took one look and told his servant to immediately eject Bar Kamtza from the premises.

When asked to leave, Bar Kamtza said: "I understand the mistake. But it's embarrassing for me to leave the party. I'll gladly pay the cost of my meal if you'll allow me to stay."

The host would hear nothing of this, and reiterated his demand to have Bar Kamtza removed.

Bar Kamtza appealed again: "I'd even be willing to pay half the cost of the entire party, if only I'd be allowed to stay."

Again the request was denied. At which point, the distraught Bar Kamtza pleaded: "I'll pay for the entire party! Just please don't embarrass me in this way!"

The host, however, stuck to his guns and threw Bar Kamtza out. The rabbis had observed this exchange did not protest, and Bar Kamtza took this to mean that they approved of the host's behavior.

The Talmud reports that Bar Kamtza was so hurt and upset, that he went straight to the Roman authorities and gave slanderous reports of disloyal behavior among the Jews. This fueled the Romans' anger, and they proceeded to attack and destroy the Holy Temple.

PART TWO:

Split into 6 groups

Hand one photograph to every 2-3 campers. There will be three different photographs used twice in each group. (6 total)

Give the group a few minutes to study the photograph and come up with a description of the person:

1. What is my name?
2. How old am I?
3. Am I in school or do I work?
4. If school, what grade am I in?
5. If I have finished school, what grade did I complete? (high school, college, graduate school)?
6. If I work, what is my job? Am I a manager or a worker? Do I work hard? How much money do I make?
7. Am I married?

8. Do I have children?
9. What do I like to do when I am not working?
10. What three words would I use to describe how I look?
11. What three words would I use to describe my personality?

Each pair presents their photograph and description.

Discuss:

- Which group's answers were most different from each other?
- What are the challenges and possible consequences of making assumptions about someone based only on how they look?
- How is it possible that different people can get a completely different perception of the same person?
- Would you consider that stereotyping? Would you consider it a form of discrimination? You may want to review the definitions of each. (Stereotyping is making assumptions or judgments about someone based on a particular feature or group to which they belong while discrimination is actually treating someone differently because of the group, class or category to which they belong. Given those definitions, the action would be closest to stereotyping).
- Do you think people at camp make judgments about people based on how they look? Share examples.
- Have you ever judged someone incorrectly based on how they look?

PART THREE:

Counselors will then read a few situations and ask the campers to:

- Explain how it illustrates prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination
- Explain how it is harmful
- Explain what you would say to the person who is responsible for the or the victim of the offensive behavior

1. Josh doesn't like people with special needs. He actively avoids Amitzimers and when they try to talk to him he turns away and makes faces at his friends.
2. Jessica's friends tell her that Sarah is mean. Jessica has never talked to Sarah but she makes rude comments about her hair and her clothes to other people.
3. David heard there was going to be an Israeli camper in his bunk. He has never met an Israeli, but he heard that Israelis cannot speak English well so he doesn't bother to say hi.
4. It is Yom Berkshirse and Shira sees a Berkshires shirt on the basketball court. She steals it because she says that all Berkshirse girls are rich snobs and they won't notice if their shirt is missing.