

SHABBAT PAY IT FORWARD תעביר את זה הלאה

Evaluation: This Shabbat theme was part of a larger project for the Asaf Lebovitch Derech Eretz Shabbat. We were originally told that we needed to use the theme of Derech Eretz for the Shabbat, but it totally worked well for the campers. We really wanted to focus hard on not leading the campers in a certain direction but to allow them to decide how they felt about the ideas around giving back. Additionally, we wanted to think of creative ways to have discussion groups with the campers without simply sitting down and talking about the theme. Overall, I think that this Shabbat went really well for the campers. They really thought about the theme of giving back and what it means that the small acts of kindness we do are equally as important as the larger things.

Objective: To teach the chanichim about the power of the little kindnesses that we can do. Often times we focus on simply being a good person or on the larger things that we can do to help people, but we rarely focus on the little things. This Shabbat, we want to highlight that even doing little things that are nice to other people can be just as worthy.

Hachana: 5:40

For this part, we are going to do trust exercises to teach the campers that the world survives off of people supporting each other and doing good things for other people.

The campers will first break up into pairs and do trust falls with one another. We know that many of them will complain about being in Shabbat attire, but they can modify it based on their clothes. The trust fall, which can be seen as simply catching someone else, is really a way to show your partner how much you can trust him or her or how much they trust you. With a foundation like that, we can all build better friendships and can treat each other with respect.

Next, the campers will get back into the circle, and we will do a circle sit, where they all sit on each other's laps. We want them to understand that in this situation everyone needs to support someone else and everyone needs to be supported by someone else. It is this kind of dynamic, where everyone does something for others and requires other people's help, that the world is able to function. Therefore, we do little kindnesses for other people just as other

people do them for us.

Next, Abby will read a story of how people payed for the coffee of the person behind them, but it all started with one woman. We aren't going to tell the kids that the theme for Shabbat is paying it forward, but this story also relates to the idea that we all depend on one another.

End Frame: the world requires that everyone supports one another and that people do good things for other people. In order to make the world function well, just like the circle did, people need to help others will also accepting help in return.

Once we have finished, the boys will perform their secret piece.

The campers really enjoyed the story about the coffee. They had never really thought about what it meant to help someone out in a small way as something that can have such a large impact. The campers had fun with the trust falls and lap sit, but there could have been a better connection to the theme. We didn't tell them the theme of Shabbat until peulat erev, which they didn't really like, but was effective because it ensured that peulat erev was more successful.

Peulat Erev:

For peulat erev, we will have a variety of different kindnesses on slips of paper around the room. Each camper will get an envelope where they can put the papers. If they think that the kindness on the slip is a priority (top five most important), then they can put it in the envelope.

Once the campers have finished the activity, they will sit down where they are. Once they are all sitting down, we will go through every slip, and ask the kids to raise their hands if they chose that kindness. After we have gone through each, we will ask for any volunteers to explain their decision process and why they chose some over others.

After we have finished the kindnesses, we will introduce the idea of paying it forward. We will start this by reading to the campers a quote from the book/movie Pay It Forward. Then, we will explain to them what it means to pay it forward and how important and idea like that it.

"That's me and that's three people and I am going to help

them, but it has to be something really big, something they can't do by themselves. So, I do it for them and they do it for three other people. That's nine and I do three more..." (Pay It Forward)

Frame:

To Pay It Forward means that when a kindness is done for you, instead of being content with it, a person should do another kindness for someone else. Therefore, people are constantly doing good deeds for other people. But, people often focus on the larger deeds that can be done (like donating a lot of money or time), but the little kindnesses are just as important. The world depends on kindnesses that people do, and even the little kindnesses are important.

In order to stress the importance of doing these little kindnesses, we are going to give the chanichim each three small kindnesses that we want them to complete by mincha on Shabbat. These tasks will involve other people in camp. Once the campers have finished the tasks, we want them to explain that they should try to do the same/similar task for another person. They will hand that person the slip of paper. This will drive home the message of paying it forward throughout the camp.

The Puelat Erev went really well. It didn't take very long for the campers to walk around and think/choose the acts of kindness they found most important, but the discussion afterwards went really well. They all chose different acts or had different reasons why they chose the way they did. The campers also loved receiving their tasks for that Shabbat and comparing them to their friends. The kids were willing and excited to talk about what values they put into their envelopes which made the peulah last a little longer. A lot of these kids had ones that were more personal to them (for instance if they had siblings or parents at camp) and others were related to the staff or Jeremy.

Peulat Shabbat:

This session will be a conversation where the chanichim can reflect on the tasks they completed. We want them to think about how they felt about it and how the other people they interacted with felt about it.

Questions to ask:

1. What was your experience with the tasks?

2. How was your initial reaction with the other person?
3. Were they willing to pay it forward?
4. Did you think that the nice thing you did for someone else was appreciated?
5. How did doing this feel? Forced? Neutral? Good?

*What do you think is more important (big deeds or smaller ones)?

After the discussion about their individual tasks, we want to talk about how Judaism highlights the idea of doing small kindnesses. Throughout the Tanach, there are many commandments that command us to perform small kindnesses. Most people would not pay attention to performing these acts, but the simple fact that they are mentioned in the Torah means that they have some significance.

Sources:

וְאִם-לֹא קָרוֹב אֲחִיךָ אֵלֶיךָ, וְלֹא יָדַעְתּוּ--וְאִסְפָּתוּ, אֶל-תּוֹךְ בֵּיתְךָ, וְהָיָה עִמָּךְ עַד דְּרֹשׁ אֲחִיךָ אֹתוֹ, וְהִשְׁבַּתוּ לוֹ. **2** And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, and thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it home to thy house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother require it, and thou shalt restore it to him.

This text teaches that when we find our neighbors lost or missing possession, we must make it our mission to return it to them, even if we don't know who they are. A way that the chanichim can apply this to their lives is that when we borrow something from other people, like for the camp out, we should make it our mission to return the items as soon as possible.

וּכִי יִקְרָא קוֹן-צִפּוֹר לְפָנֶיךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּכָל-עֵץ אוֹ עַל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲפֻרָּחִים אוֹ בִּיצִים, וְהָאֵם רֹבֶצֶת עַל-הָאֲפֻרָּחִים, אוֹ עַל-הַבִּיצִים--לֹא-תִקַּח הָאֵם, עַל-הַבָּנִים.

6 If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young;

This text teaches us that if ever we are to take eggs from a nest, we must first send the mother away so that she doesn't have to witness

her children being taken. A commandment like this may seem so small, yet the Torah mentions it because we would be doing a kindness to the mother, so she doesn't have to suffer from seeing her children being taken.

33 And if a stranger
sojourn with thee in your
land, ye shall not do him
wrong.

לֹג וְכִי-יָגוּר אִתְּךָ גֵר,
בְּאַרְצְכֶם--לֹא תוֹנוּ, אִתּוֹ.

This text teaches us that if there is someone who is not part of our nation, we should not be mean to him or her. The campers can understand this as if there is a new camper or a new staff member to the eidah, they can take the opportunity to introduce themselves and get to know the new people. (They can connect this to their tasks if some of them had to interact with other eidot.)

14 Thou shalt not curse the
deaf, nor put a stumbling-block
before the blind, but thou shalt
fear thy God: I am the LORD.

יָד לֹא-תִקְלַל חֵרֵשׁ--וְלִפְנֵי עוֹר, לֹא תָמוּן מְכֻשָׁל;
וַיִּירָאֵת מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ, אֲנִי יְהוָה.

This text talks about the idea that we shouldn't put any obstacles in front of a blind person. It doesn't specifically refer a blind person, but that we shouldn't do anything to make someone else's life harder. The chanichim may or may not think that this one is as small as the other ones.

Questions to Talk About:

1. What is the meaning of each of these commandments (have them explain them, not just read the translation)
2. Are there ways we can connect these commandments to our lives either at camp or at home?
3. Does the fourth text (about a stumbling block in front a blind person) relate to the other three? Is the commandment in this

- text as subtle as the other ones?
4. What is the significance of these commandments?
 5. Do you find them to be important in our lives today? Explain why yes or no
 6. Was it necessary for the Torah to mention these commandments or do you think they should just be implied?
 7. What does it say that the Torah is including these commandments with other commandments, like don't commit adultery or you shouldn't bear false witness?

For the most part, this part of the program went pretty well. Many of the campers had accomplished their tasks by mincha (especially since we told them they needed to). The campers also liked having the discussions about how the small things counted for something big, even in Judaism. They were interested to read about some of these commandments, but not all of them. Some other texts would work better, but they liked the idea that Judaism highlights the importance of doing smaller acts of kindness. Since this eidah only had 37 campers at the time, it was easy to make tasks for each individual camper. It might be harder with a larger eidah, but having the personal tasks made it better for the campers. Also, the campers liked the Friday night activity a lot because it gave them the chance to choose for themselves what they find to be important while also giving them the chance to say why.