

FOMO OR JOMO – FEAR OR JOY OF MISSING OUT?

Overview

This resource unpacks the issue of **Digital Overload** through the value of **Presence**.

At-a-Glance

This resource provides an opportunity to engage with the value of presence in the context of the digital world in which we live. It provides an opportunity for learners to assess the different choices they may have before them at a given moment, and what is competing for their attention and presence. Through listening to a classic song and putting it into conversation with the Jewish text upon which it is based, it presents a Jewish angle on what it means to live a good life based on presence in the moment and an understanding that everything has its proper time and place. It concludes with an opportunity for learners to strengthen their sense of being where their feet are, and being prepared to miss out on some things as they immerse themselves with full presence into others.



MATERIALS AND SET-UP

Time Estimate:

50 minutes

Best Uses:

- For a full group activity or in pairs
- For a wide range of learning modalities

Materials Needed:

- Digital Device to listen to the song in the Jewish Anchor section
- Paper and pens for the Make Meaning and Take Action Prompt



FRAME THE ISSUE (10 MINUTES)

Read the following for context:

We live in a moment when our options for experiences, opportunities, and information seem limitless. On the one hand, the range of what is available for us to be a part of is incredible in its scope. The digital world we live in gives us glimpses into and information about concerts and parties, events and gatherings, of every kind, every minute, everywhere.

On the other hand, the huge range of where we could potentially be and what we could be focused on at any given moment can be overwhelming and distracting. It feeds into an inability to commit and a constant fear that there may always be somewhere to be or someone else to be with that is more desirable.

Facilitator prompts the group:

- ▷▷ When was the last time you felt this way?
- ▷▷ Where were you and how did you decide where to be?
- ▷▷ What pulled you in another direction?
- ▷▷ When was the last time you felt fully “present” in an activity?



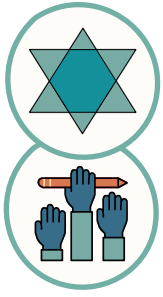
EXPLORING THE VALUE (5 MINUTES)

Read the following:

The Value of Presence:

In its simplest terms, presence is the fact that someone, or something is in its place. But that short statement leads to a whole chain of questions to consider as a follow-up. We won't be discussing these right now, but think to yourself for a moment about what these questions raise for you: What does it mean to be in the “right” place? How do you determine what that is? What happens when you are fully present at a given moment or event? What happens when you are not? What is lost by making a choice to be fully present in one place or activity as opposed to being somewhere else?

The exploration below will allow us to dig deeper into what it means to be fully “present” at any given moment in time.



ACTIVITY + JEWISH ANCHOR (15 MINUTES)

A Time for Everything

- ▶▶ Listen to the song Turn! Turn! Turn! (1965) by the Byrds at [this link](#), or at this QR Code.



Facilitator prompts the group:

- ▶▶ What feelings are evoked when you listen to this song?
- ▶▶ What is its underlying message?
- ▶▶ *Optional:* Think of (or play out loud) some contemporary song lyrics that have a similar theme or message. Discuss them with one another.

Read the following:

The lyrics to the song are based almost entirely on פסוקים, *pesukim* (verses) from תנ"ך, *Tanakh* (the Hebrew Bible), from the book of קהלת, *Kohelet*.

In trying to capture what is a good life, *Kohelet* states that a good life is to partake of life in the present. Everything is ordered in time and people are subject to time.

Read the following from Chapter 3 in Kohelet and answer the questions below:

A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven:

A time for being born and a time for dying,

A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;

A time for slaying and a time for healing,

A time for tearing down and a time for building up;

A time for weeping and a time for laughing,

A time for wailing and a time for dancing;

A time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones,

A time for embracing and a time for shunning embraces;

A time for seeking and a time for losing,

A time for keeping and a time for discarding;

A time for ripping and a time for sewing,

A time for silence and a time for speaking;

A time for loving and a time for hating;

A time for war and a time for peace.

What value, then, can the man of affairs get from what he earns?

I have observed the business that God gave man to be concerned with:

He brings everything to pass precisely at its time.

Facilitator prompts the group:

- ▷▷ In figuring out how to live a good life, why do you think the author of Kohelet places such a focus on having a set time for everything?
- ▷▷ What might that way of living come up against? (i.e. – what is not good about having a set time for everything?) Does it limit you in any way?
- ▷▷ How does this text enhance your understanding of the power of “presence”?



MAKE MEANING & TAKE ACTION (10 MINUTES)

Be Where your Feet Are

Read the following:

Gaining opportunities and being prepared to miss out on others, is a muscle we need to exercise, and the first step is to be aware of the consequence of each choice. Now is a chance for you to think about your ideal day, considering how you can show up with presence – where your feet are, and not always fearful of where they are not.

Facilitator prompts the group:

- ▷▷ Think of 5 core commitments that you have in your day. (school, sports, etc)
 - Now, choose **three** of those where you can commit to being **fully present** for tomorrow. List them below.
 - Who stands to gain from the three that you have selected?
 - Who loses out from the two that you have omitted/chosen to skip? What will you tell them?
- ▷▷ Tomorrow as you go about your day think about your three core commitments, and “where your feet are.”
 - How will you commit to being fully present in those spaces?
 - What are some things you need to do to make sure your mind does not pull you to want to be in other places? Specify them in writing.



CLOSE WITH INTENTION (5 MINUTES)

Read the following:

In the exploration we have just experienced, we took a contemporary issue – digital engagement with the world – and explored it through the value of presence. Doing so offers a way for us to think about the vast range of options we have before us at any given moment, and the value of making decisions where we can be fully present and not be fearful that we are missing out on something better. Today’s conversation provided a chance for us to explore how recognizing a set time and place for everything can strengthen our ability to show up “fully” in life and gain the most from it.

Facilitator prompts the group:

Go around the room and ask everyone who wants to share a reaction to one of the following prompts:

- ▶▶ As a result of this session, I now think differently about ...
- ▶▶ To strengthen my own sense of presence when the options before me seem limitless, I will now...