

## HOW DO WE BUILD COMMUNITY?

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### *Overview*

This resource unpacks the issue of **Immigration** through the value of **Community**.

### *At-a-Glance:*

This resource offers the opportunity to engage with the issue of immigration through the lens of community. By looking at difference models for immigration it prompts learners to think about building communities with a shared sense of common good. It closes with an opportunity for learners to make commitments surrounding immigration policy and to identify areas in their lives where there is space to build rich and diverse communities, and to act to bring them to fruition.



### **MATERIALS AND SET-UP**

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#### **Timing:**

30-35 minutes

#### **Best Uses:**

- Designed to be facilitated alongside a service activity component.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- Digital device to watch the video below
- Pen and paper for Make Meaning and Take Action Prompt



## FRAME THE ISSUE (5 MINUTES)

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### ***Read the passage below:***

Immigration is the international movement of people to a destination country where they do not possess citizenship in order to settle as permanent residents or naturalized citizens. Immigrants are motivated to leave their former countries of citizenship for many different reasons, including a lack of local access to resources, a desire for economic prosperity, to find or engage in paid work, to better their standard of living, family reunification, retirement, climate or environmentally induced migration, exile, escape from prejudice, conflict or natural disaster, or simply the wish to change one's quality of life. In general, research in the field points to extensive evidence of discrimination against foreign-born populations in business, the economy, housing, health care, media, and politics in the United States and Europe.

As we hold immigration as a value in and of itself, the resource below prompts us to think about it through the lens of community, teasing out tensions that arise in community-building in its broadest strokes.

### ***Facilitator prompts the group:***

▷▷ How do you experience issues of immigration in your own community? Share briefly.



## EXPLORE THE VALUE/JEWISH ANCHOR (15 MINUTES)

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### ***Read the passage below:***

The issue of immigration raises many questions about building communities and societies based on shared norms.

Community, while an intangible idea, is something whose presence can be observed, felt and experienced. It signifies a group of people who follow a way of life or patterns of behavior which mark them as different from people of another society, or from other people in the larger society in which they live or to which they have come. In the modern era - an age of mass migration with people of diverse cultures, ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs and identities migrating and immigrating all over the world - how can any given place maintain a sense of community and cohesive society? How can we at once be multicultural and also build communities of meaning and shared interest? How do we best build healthy, diverse and sustainable societies? How do these questions take form when we make policy decisions at work, and personal decisions in our homes? How do we support both local integration efforts in our communities and at the same time promote the rich multicultural tapestry of the places where we live?

**Facilitator prompts the group:**

- ▶▶ In your experience, have you seen cases where immigration hits up against community building? Explain the circumstances.
- ▶▶ Immigrants carry new culture and ideas into society. Where is this most manifest in your own communities?

**Read the following for context:**

Immigration involves the responsibility the broader community has to support immigrants and the mandate we all have to remember the long and challenging history of migration from which we all descend and which we've all inherited—in particular, the history of Jewish migration. The narrative which all Jews are born into is one of expulsion, migration and eventually landedness, thus making the issue of immigration a topic for which Jewish tradition has much to offer.

In the following video, through Jewish wisdom and lived experience, R. Lord Jonathan Sacks explores different models for immigration.

**Watch the video, “The Home We Build Together” (based on R. Sacks’ book by the same name) and answer the prompts below.**

Scan QR Code or [click here to watch](#).



*(Note for facilitator: select 2 of the questions below if time is limited).*

- ▶▶ What are the different models for “immigration” that R. Sacks lays out?
- ▶▶ What are your reactions to the different models?
- ▶▶ What is compelling about the final model he outlines? What is lacking in it?
- ▶▶ If you had to propose a structural model that would best assist immigrants in building a far-reaching community, what would it be?

**\*BREAK FOR SERVICE EXPERIENCE\***



## MAKE MEANING & TAKE ACTION (8 MINUTES)

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**Reflect on the service you just did by using the creative prompt below.**

- ▶▶ Use the word IMMIGRATION as a stem word and write an anagram poem (*see example below*) to express your thoughts on immigration and its relationship to community building. Share your poems with one another.

**Example:**

I

Miss

My old

Identity

Given the

Realities

About

The place

I now am, with its

Overwhelming

Newness

- ▶▶ As you think about immigration and community, identify one person who does not share your beliefs on immigration policy.
- ▶▶ Commit to sharing your poem and/or your thoughts on policy with them.
- ▶▶ What do you plan to say?
- ▶▶ Identify one area in your life where you see a space to build rich and diverse communities. What is it?
- ▶▶ List 2-3 action steps you can take to do so.



## CLOSE WITH INTENTION (3 MINUTES)

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***Read the passage below:***

The exploration we just took part in prompts us to look at the issue of immigration through the lens of community. It encourages us to think about the shared world we want to live in, and how to get there. We are living through an age of immense change, where borders – physical and metaphorical – are more fluid, and we are therefore pressed to think about different models for immigration that embody our collective Jewish values. In this rapidly changing age, how can we best build communities that have a shared sense of common good?

***Facilitator prompts the group and asks each person to respond to one or both of the sentences:***

- ▷▷ As a result of this conversation, an insight I now have about the relationship between community and immigration is ...
- ▷▷ Based on this conversation, one commitment I will take in the coming weeks is to ...