



CAN I GO OUT TO LUNCH AFTER VOLUNTEERING AT A FOOD BANK?

PREP FOR THE SESSION

Overview

This resource explores our **relationship with Food Insecurity** through the value of **Intentionality**.

At-a-Glance:

This resource explores the value of intentionality as it relates to the different realities we experience when it comes to food insecurity, and the toggling back and forth between different experiences as we volunteer. The resource is designed to be facilitated in sections, with a break in between for the service activity. Prior to the service activity, a question will be posed to learners to consider during their service. After service, they will have an opportunity for reflection and processing.

**A note for the facilitator. This resource can be modified to accommodate volunteering on a variety of issues, particularly housing justice and homelessness.*



Time Estimate:

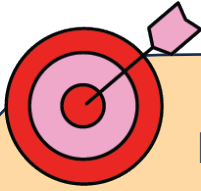
30 minutes



Best Uses:

- To be paired with a service activity component
- For teens and young adult learners
- For an activity with embodied movement

LET'S GET STARTED



FRAME THE ISSUE

Facilitator opens with a prompt to individuals:

- Tell us about what you ate for breakfast or what you plan to eat for lunch/ dinner.

Facilitator continues:

- Now that we've opened with a discussion of food, let's start our exploration by answering the question – what is hunger?

Facilitator takes responses, then continues below:

Hunger is the feeling someone has when they don't have food. We've all experienced that. Now, let's distinguish that from food insecurity. Food insecurity is the consistent lack of food to have a healthy life because of one's economic situation. While all of us are entering today's service having felt hunger at some point in our lives, it's likely that not all of us have experienced food insecurity.

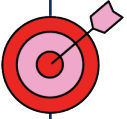


Facilitator prompts the group:

- How does it feel to enter this space *without* the lived experience of the people we'll work with today?
- What are three words that capture how you are showing up to this service opportunity right now?

7 min



***Facilitator continues reading:***

Consider the reality - it's likely that some of us had breakfast this morning at our home or grabbed something to eat on the way here. It's also likely that some of us had comfortable place to sleep, had a shower this morning. Beyond that, it's likely that some of us had more needs met like having a physically and psychologically safe space to call home. Those small things can be big privileges to some of the people we'll spend our time with today. Let's just hold that for a moment. It's not a reason to feel guilty. It's a reality.

Given that we're together as a group, some of you came with friends, it is likely some of you will go out for lunch/dinner after this, where you might spend more than a week's worth of groceries for a client today.

***Facilitator prompts the group:***

- This situation is ironic, but is there anything wrong with it? How does this make you feel?



EXPLORE THE VALUE: INTENTIONALITY

Facilitator reads:

Toggling back and forth between these different realities and lived experiences can be disorienting. Thinking about our own experiences alongside what is likely the vastly different experiences of others, leads us to ask - What can we bring into our service today? What should we hold back?



Facilitator prompts:

- When might you have felt this dissonance before? What did you do about it?

Facilitator continues:

One way we can explore our feelings around this privilege of food security is to dive deeper into the value of intentionality, or having *kavanah* (intention). When we are deliberate about and aware of every act that we perform and every experience that we have, then we are being intentional. It's mostly a mental state of mind, but it demonstrates itself in the actions we take.

The notion of having *kavanah* is most often raised in the context of *tefilla*, prayer, but can be broadly applied to how we move in the world. In many ways, intention can look like a mindset we hold during our volunteering. What are those mindsets? They can be attitudes we try to hold or specifically not hold. Or, it can be what we want to lean into.



Facilitator prompts:

- What *kavanah* elements can we plan to experience today?

5 min





JEWISH ANCHOR

8 min



Facilitator prompts the group:

- Look at the image below. What does it conjure in your mind? Why? Share your responses.



Footsteps

Facilitator continues:

One classical element in establishing an intentional mindset in *tefillah*, Jewish prayer, is movement. Before reciting the Amidah, which is the central Jewish prayer of gratitude and request, Jewish tradition encourages us to take three steps forward to get into the mindset of approaching the Divine. As we step into a different reality, these steps give us a formal way to bring our *kavanot*, intentions, into this space or routine ritual.

*** PROMPT BEFORE SERVICE ***

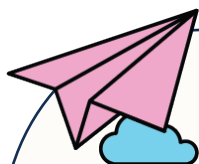
Together I'm going to invite us to take three steps together and formally bring our intentions into this work. You can say them out loud or to yourself, but the goal is that we'll hold these intentions with us throughout our service time.

[If people are standing in a circle, which is ideal, make sure folks have enough room to take steps forward without getting too close.]

1. Forward step. Deep breath. What are your hopes for today?
2. Forward step. Deep breath. What do you anticipate feeling today?
3. Forward step. Deep breath. Why are you here?
4. Exhale

BREAK FOR SERVICE EXPERIENCE

5 min



PROMPT ACTION

Facilitator draws people back together:

As we return from our service activity, consider the *kavanot* you made before volunteering. As we toggle back and forth between worlds, and differing experiences, let's remember that we carry our *kavanot* out of this experience as we re-enter the wider world.

Not surprisingly Jewish prayer also offers practice of taking three steps backward and pause when completing prayer. This allows us to hold on to the strands of that divinity and let them linger within us.

Together I'm going to invite us to take three steps backwards together and formally bring our intentions out of this work.

1. Backwards step. Deep breath. What did you experience today?
2. Backwards step. Deep breath. What feelings surprised you?
3. Backwards step. Deep breath. How will you carry this experience forward?
4. Exhale

Facilitator continues:

Before we leave, let us share one tangible way in which we can carry this experience with us.



Prompt:

- Before your next meal, what you can do to hold what you felt, experienced, saw, and heard today?
- Is there a new context or knowledge that you can share with us? Is there a different food choice you can make?

Let's go around and share those out loud with each other.



CLOSE WITH INTENTION

Facilitator prompts the group:

After today's service activity and conversation, share one word that captures how you are feeling as you walk away _____.

Go around in a circle and have each participant share.

3 min

