

HOW INCLUSIVE SHOULD WE BE?

PREP FOR THE SESSION

Overview

Through exploring the value of inclusivity, particularly how a wider tent is not always better, learners will develop new insights that support their ability to identify when to pursue inclusivity and when to set boundaries.

At-a-Glance:

Is inclusion always good? What does it look like to open our communal “tent” a little wider - to actively consider how to include people with differing needs, abilities, and perspectives? And when might we decide to maintain boundaries that keep some groups or people out? In this resource, learners will explore inclusion through a music mashup, wisdom from the Passover Seder, and a mock debate.



Time Estimate:

- 60 minutes



Best Uses:

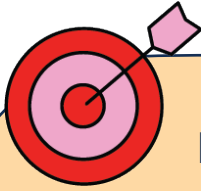
- Teens, young adults, parents, communal leaders, in person or virtual



Materials Needed:

- Speakers to play music for everyone
- [Print debate instructions](#) and give extra paper and pens for the teams to write notes on
- You may want to have a formal stand from which teams can debate
- Phone to keep careful track of time in the debate

LET'S GET STARTED



FRAME THE ISSUE

A “mashup” is a musical way of combining two different parts of a song to create a new sound (e.g. the lyrics from one song to the beat of another).

This technique can be used as a metaphor for how we can work more at integrating and including what might seem “too different” on the surface, but given a chance, can create something beautiful.

10 min



Facilitator plays a mashup the Jewish group, The Maccabeats, and prompts discussion:

- When have you been surprised or delighted by the coming together of two things that you did not think would go together?
- How about a time when you felt the two things really did not work together? How might the idea of a mashup be a metaphor for inclusivity in the context of our friend groups, communities, or people with different identities or views?



EXPLORE THE VALUE: INCLUSIVITY

Facilitator prompts group:

- What comes to mind when you hear "inclusivity"?

Here is one definition. I am curious to hear what you think. What might be missing?

Inclusivity is our ability to widen the circle of people who can feel a sense of belonging to a community. That community can relate to our circle of friends, work environment, Jewish community, neighborhood, or society.

Inclusivity can be expressed through our attitudes, actions, and aspirations for the kind of communities and society we want to build.

Facilitator prompts further discussion:

- Whose job is it to promote inclusivity? In what settings do you feel it is your responsibility?
- How much control do you think we have over whether others feel a sense of inclusion or belonging?
- When, if ever, might we decide not to pursue more inclusivity?

JEWISH WISDOM

Whenever we make a guest list for an event, dinner, or party, we need to consider, who do I include and who don't I include. This was the case back in Jewish history when Abraham and Sarah invited guests into their tents and remains true today when we make the guest list for our Shabbat dinners, Passover Seders, and other Jewish gatherings.

The Passover Haggadah (the book we read at the Passover seder) says the following in Aramaic:

This is the bread of anya that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.

Anyone who is famished should come and eat, anyone who needs should come and partake of the Pesach sacrifice.

Now we are here, next year we will be in the land of Israel;
this year we are slaves, next year we will be free people.

הָא לַחְמָא עֲנִיא דִּי אָכְלוּ אֲבֹהֵתָא בְּאַרְעָא
דְּמִצְרַיִם.

כָּל דְּכָפִין יִיתִי וְיִיכֹל, כָּל דְּצָרִיךְ יִיתִי וְיִפְסֹח.
הַשְׁתָּא הָכָא, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא
דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.

הַשְׁתָּא עֲבָדִי, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין.

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Ha Lachma Anya 3

40 min



Facilitator prompts group:

- What is this passage saying about who we should invite to our Seders?
- Where, if anywhere, have you seen this in action, where all that are hungry are invited in to eat at a Passover seder or anyplace else?
- What might be the challenges or risks to opening our homes to anyone who is hungry? What might be the benefits? How might it change the dynamic of the gathering?

Note to facilitator: You might decide to point out that sharing a text in Aramaic itself can give us a window into inclusivity and exclusivity. Aramaic was introduced to the Middle East by the conquering Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires. For this period, then (about 700–320 B.C.E.), Aramaic held a position similar to that occupied by English today. Back then, introducing a text in Aramaic would likely be an inclusive gesture. However nowadays Aramaic survives as a spoken language only in small communities in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran. How might the language we use communicate inclusivity or exclusivity?



ACTIVITY

Facilitator introduces the debate activity:

- Jewish communities strive to be inclusive, but inclusion also comes with challenges.
- Today, we'll explore two perspectives on inclusivity: Holding Differences vs. Setting Boundaries.
- This is not about "right" or "wrong"—rather, it's a chance to articulate values and understand different viewpoints.

Facilitator divides participants into two teams.

- Side A: "Inclusivity Challenges Us to Hold Differences."
- Side B: "Inclusivity Requires Boundaries."

Facilitator prompts each team to discuss their position and prepare key arguments using these guiding questions:

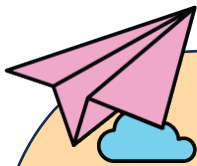
- What core values support your position?
- What examples illustrate your argument?
- How might the other side challenge your view, and how will you respond?
- Who will play the following roles during the debate: speaker, rebuttal responder, and closer.

Facilitator introduces the phases of the debate and invites the teams to start:

- Opening Statements (2 minutes per team): Each side presents their main argument.
- Rebuttals (2 minutes per team): Each team responds to the other's points.
- Final Statements (1 minute per team): Each team summarizes why their perspective is essential for Jewish communal life.

Facilitator prompts group:

- What values did each side emphasize?
- Did anything surprise you or shift your thinking?
- How do we hold both perspectives when making real-life decisions?



REFLECT AND PROMPT ACTION

Facilitator prompts group to reflect:

- What is something you think will be a challenge for you when it comes to inclusivity? What is something that you think will be easy for you?
- How might you personally model being more inclusive to others on a day-to-day basis?
- What steps might you take to include someone who is different from you? When, if ever, might you decide not to include someone who is different from you?

10 min

