

Saturday Morning Workshops

#KNOWLEDGE

Each of these workshops have been designed to increase participant's Judaic knowledge; challenge them to think about they can inspire others; and consider how they can create concrete experiences for others related to this new Judaic knowledge. There are 16 choices and each one is connected to the overarching theme of Gender & Sexuality, Israel, Mindfulness & Mussar, or Social Justice.

IDENTITIES IN CONFLICT - MAKING SENSE OF THE DUAL NARRATIVE OF ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS

Scott Brockman, Executive Director, American Friends of Neve Shalom Wahat al-Salam

Come learn as we dive deep into the identities and stories of Israelis, Israeli Arabs, and Palestinians through the experiences of the only deliberate bi-national village in Israel, Neve Shalom Wahat al-Salam - The Oasis of Peace. Neve Shalom was envisioned as a living example of how three religions and two peoples with distinct identities can co-exist. After close to 50 years this small village of 60 families has created an incubator for peace activism and learning for all.

WHAT IS GENDER & WHY DO WE CARE?

Rabbi Tamara Cohen, Chief of Innovation, Moving Traditions

Nicole Nevarez, New York Director, Moving Traditions

Meet Moving Traditions: The Rosh Hodesh It's A Girl Thing and Shevet Achim: the Brotherhood folks. Explore a more complex understanding of the newest hot topic in our culture - GENDER! Get some answers for: *What is gender? How does it work? What is changing about the definition/expression of gender today?* Fun and interactive activities will challenge you to think about yourself and the way you see the world, and to explore some of the "rules" about teen life, like: how to dress, the dos and don'ts of hooking up, life online, the risks and benefits of being a leader... We'll also consider what it means to be a Jewish man/boy/woman/girl/trans/non-binary person today. Join us to learn, clarify and discover what gender means to you and why it matters. And if you are already passionate about gender matters and you are ready to take action to effect change, start here!

PRIVILEGE, POWER, AND JEWS--OH MY!

April Baskin, Vice President of Audacious Hospitality, Union for Reform Judaism

Emilia Diamant, Executive Director, Jeremiah Program

Privilege, power, oppression. These are essential, critical issues at the center of most of our news in America today. Black Lives Matter, marriage equality, the wage gap--there's no way to avoid the questions around who has power, who needs more, and how we work to create a more just world. Specifically, this session will focus on the issue of racial justice in America, and give participants an understand of how white supremacy and white privilege operate in our systems, our schools, and sometimes ourselves. This will allow us to ground our work in an understanding of justice and equity for America.

VOLUNTOURISM VS SERVICE LEARNING

Jonah Frelander, Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Development, URJ Mitzvah Corps

Volunteering locally and abroad can be a fulfilling experience for volunteers, but not always for the community being served. This workshop will provide a blueprint for Service Learning as an effective model of community engagement and learning.

RESILIENCE AND LEADERSHIP

Melissa Frey, Director, URJ Kutz Camp

What's the distance between the leader you are and the leader you aspire to be? Do you know your leadership elasticity? Did you know that resilience has been cited as the most important core competency for this generation of teens to thrive in school, in relationships, and in the workplace? Learn more about yourself, and then how to facilitate this conversation through peer-engagement in your home congregations, communities, camps, and beyond.

ENVIRONMENT: RESOURCES AND ISSUES

Rabbi Everett Gendler, Gendler Grapevine

Meeting the day after Autumnal Equinox, we will begin by noting some traditional Jewish awareness of seasons and their succession. Related to this, reference will be made to climate change and its possible effects upon seasonality. One issue of seasonal climate change is its possible effects upon agriculture. Here we shall focus on one of the fundamentals of agriculture, the seeds from which plants grow. After considering some traditional reactions to seeds from Jewish, Greek, and Native American cultures, we will take note of issues of genetic modification, industrial agriculture, world hunger. We will also offer a possible Sukkot seed planting project. With Sukkot soon to be celebrated, we will consider some possible ways to illuminate the Sukkah, including one seasonal innovation that some may find appealing, others appalling. Connected to this, we'll also consider the ancient ceremony of Ushpizin, the return of the ancestral spirits associated with the Sukkah. Appropriate poetry will be considered.

TAKING BACK THE Z: WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE ZIONISM - AND WHY NOW?

Rabbi Neal Gold, ARZA

Using some classical Jewish texts - ancient and modern - we'll explore how progressive Jewish young people can reclaim and reignite the term "Zionism" - and why now it just might be more important than ever, for American Jews and for Israel itself.

HAZAN ET HA-KOL: FOOD JUSTICE AND JUDAISM

Rabbi Andrew Goodman, Assistant Director, Recruitment & Admissions, HUC-JIR

In the Birkat hamazon, we praise God for providing food for all. We can say that knowing that we are fortunate enough to have clean, healthy, delicious food to eat whenever we want it. However, in our world, we also know there is so much hunger. Food, a necessity for all humans, has become increasingly problematic and, with access, affordability, quality, nutrition, and ethics factoring into the equation, the systemic problems in our food system are not easy to solve. In this workshop, we will explore the scope and significant factors of the issues around food justice. We will also learn how our Jewish tradition can inform our mandate for food justice in our world.

GIVING AT THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM: SOCIAL JUSTICE PHILANTHROPY

Briana Holtzman, Director, Jewish Teen Funders Network

Jewish. Social Justice. Philanthropy. This interactive session explores the intersection of all three and introduces attendees to the practice of social justice philanthropy, rooted in Jewish values, tradition, and text. We all make choices when we give - should I give locally or to those in need around the world? How do I decide what cause is most important? Do I focus on the need right in front of me or change a broken system? Social justice philanthropy focuses on the root of the problem, supporting organizations that work towards structural change and increase the opportunity of those they serve. Wondering what Jewish texts, both modern and historic, say about that? A lot actually... to start, when we get to the root of tzedakah (charity), we find tzedek (justice). We'll dive into words, and spring into action considering how our Jewish giving, philanthropy, can be a catalyst for change.

INNOVATION & TECH: THE GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

Greg Kellner, Director, URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech

Science and Technology can be found in every part of our lives and each day it seems as though there are new innovations that are supposed to be helpful and make our lives easier, but also come with complicated moral and ethical issues. Often times our local and national laws can't catch up with the speed at which innovation is moving. From issues surrounding data privacy, net neutrality, personal use of drones, self-driving cars, private space travel, our world is quickly evolving. In this session, join the 6 Points Sci-Tech professional team and use real world examples to explore current issues in tech and imagine what the future holds and how you can be a part of shaping it with Jewish principles and values.

MUSSAR AND MINDFULNESS

Evan Mallah, Board Member, URJ Eisner & Crane Lake Camps

In a world driven increasingly by speed, crushing expectations and overwhelming stress, mindfulness practice offers us the opportunity to slow down, check in with ourselves, develop compassion and alleviate suffering. Together, we will learn, practice mindfulness and discuss the potential implications of this deep practice. No prior experience is required – this is an introduction to the transformative Jewish practice of Mindfulness. Most importantly, we will collaborate to determine the possibilities of bringing this practice home and sharing it with others. Topics will include: 1) How does mindfulness facilitate discovery and embodiment of your divine purpose, your passion? 2) Is mindfulness simply the pursuit of personal happiness and wellbeing? 3) Does focusing on Tikkun HaNefesh (repairing the soul), and engaging in mindfulness practice, facilitate Tikkun Olam?

UNPLUG AND REFLECT LIKE STEVE JOBS

Dina Mann, Partnership and Outreach Manager, Reboot

Always on insta? Snapchat with your friends more than you talk to them? Do you only communicate with your parents through text? If so, come on over and let's unplug together. In this session, we will look through texts that encourage a weekly digital detox habit, create our own Sabbath Manifestos and talk about plans for the year ahead.

IS THERE A "VANILLA?" WHAT GENDER & SEXUAL DIVERSITY MEANS FOR US & OUR COMMUNITIES

Justin Rosen Smolen, National Director of Youth Programs, Keshet

Is there a "normal" way of expressing one's gender or sexual orientation? What does it mean to move from a "normative" understanding of gender and sexual orientation to one that understands, respects, and values diversity? What do Jewish and philosophical texts have to say about normativity, power, and how we exist in relationship with others? What does "other" even mean? How might these ideas shape your self-understanding as a person and as a leader? Join Justin Rosen Smolen, National Director of Youth Programs at Keshet, for an interactive workshop exploring these questions and themes.

BEGINNING WITH EVERYONE IN MIND: FOUNDATIONS IN UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Les Skolnik, Education Consultant, Teen Engagement, The Jewish Education Project

Are you a teen leader struggling to meet the needs of a diverse group of peers? Do you have teens with a variety of special needs that attend your programs? Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to education that works for all types of learners and is different from Differentiated Instruction. This workshop will provide participants with a foundational knowledge of UDL and its origins. Participants will learn the three main ways that distinguish UDL from other types of approaches to education, learn how to write program goals and objectives grounded in UDL, and will discuss ways to implement aspects of UDL in their programs.

UNDERSTANDING NARRATIVE

Josh Warhit, Northeast High School Coordinator, StandWithUs

Many challenges for Israel advocates, and in general for those striving for peace in the Middle East, have centered around narrative. Developing Israel's narrative and recognizing the importance of different stories (narratives) involved have been particularly lacking. Participants will use the "Golden Circle" method to develop an Israel narrative, will learn about different narratives involved in the complicated Middle East, and will learn to develop their own personal narratives about Israel, that is, their personal "Israel stories." This program should inspire participants to further develop both their personal connection to and knowledge of Israel.

THE ISRAELI INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

Carine Warsawski, Co-Founder, Trybal Gatherings

Israel has the highest density of startups in the world, attracting more venture capital per capita than any other country. With an extremely vibrant startup ecosystem, strong technological talent, and a very small domestic market, Israelis have had to innovate to get the attention of global markets since its early days. So, how do they do it? Come learn about the entrepreneurial spirit that is driving Israel to be regarded globally as the "Startup Nation" and some of the unique leaders and products that are putting Israel on the map.