Global Jewish Peoplehood Learning Series

Inclusion – what role can we play?

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Before we begin to learn together, let's take a few moments to think about how we can collectively create an inclusive environment.

1. Welcome

Before we begin, we need to agree on a few things:

• In order for our conversation to be as rich as it can be, we need everyone to feel safe to really share and really listen. Therefore, what is said in this conversation stays in this conversation, and may not be repeated outside it.

• Our aim is to create a space where we can understand others and understand ourselves, not to give advice or to argue ideas of objective truth. With that in mind, in this conversation we will agree to speak in the first-person, about our own truth.

• We will be mindful of when we step into the conversation, and when we step back to make room for others to speak.

• We will assume good faith in one another.

• We will open ourselves to listen and learn from one another.

• We won't rush to fill the silence.

2. Ask and Share

We are here in response to the question, "How can we be inclusive?" Within this question are other questions: Who are 'we'? What does it mean to be inclusive? Who is inclusive of us? How do we take actions towards inclusiveness?

To get us started, please take a moment and think about this question: When you hear the word 'inclusive,' is there a person who comes to mind? Do you have a story to share about them? Take a moment to bring a story to mind.

Use the space below to write some notes to yourself. After two minutes, we'll introduce ourselves by sharing who came to mind.

3. Texts

Inclusion is about being and feeling part of a whole. Read the following texts and answer the accompanying questions in small groups.

We All Stood Together- Merle Feld

My brother and I were at Sinai
He kept a journal
of what he saw
of what he heard
of what it all meant to him
I wish I had such a record
of what happened to me
It seems like every time I want to write
I can't
I'm always holding a baby
one of my own
or one of my friend
always holding a baby
so my hands are never free
to write things down
And then
As time passes
the particulars
the hard data
the who what when where why
slip away from me
and all I'm left with is
the feeling
But feelings are just sounds
The vowel barking of a mute
my brother is so sure of what he heard
after all he's got a record of it
consonant after consonant after consonant
If we remembered it together
we could recreate holy time
sparks flying

Genesis Rabbah 100:7

A society and a family are like a pile of stones. If you remove one stone, the pile will collapse. If you add a stone to it, it will stand. [Translation by Areyvut]

חבורה ומשפחה כך הן דומים לכיפת אבנים את נוטל ממנה אבן אחת וכולה מתרועעת את נותן עליה אבן אחת וכולה עומדת

Questions:

Interpretive Questions:

1. What do you think the phrase Holy Time means?

2. How can the protagonist of the poem be fully included in the experience?

Reflective Questions:

1. In experiences and communities you identify with, how might you identify people who feel excluded or marginalized?