



MEMORY



FRAMING

In Hebrew, there is no word for history; we borrow היסטוריה—*historia* from English. History is HIS (or hers or theirs!) story. What we do have is memory—*zikaron*. In Judaism, we talk of memory or of ME, the personal. How do we take what happened to someone else, albeit our ancestors, and make it something personally meaningful? Judaism requires action. By doing, we internalize and become part of a chain of tradition, thus personalizing history and creating memories.

What can we do to become a part of the story?



JEWISH CONTEXT

Zecher (זכר, “remember”) appears over 120 times in the Torah (Tanach), and is often used to both evoke emotion and inspire action. For example, we are told to remember the creation of the world by celebrating Shabbat, and we are told to remember the exodus from Egypt by re-telling and re-enacting the story through the Passover seder. In addition, there are particularly “Jewish ways” to remember, such as placing a stone on a grave when visiting a cemetery or lighting a candle on a person’s *yarzheit* (anniversary of death).



NOTES



EXPERIENCE #1

HAR HAZIKARON | הר הזכרון

Hadracha:

The mountain that houses both Mt. Herzl and Yad Vashem is known as Har Hazikaron or the Mountain of Memory. Both sites are imbued with memory, both individual and collective.

Activity:

Pick up two stones. When you hear a story that resonates with you, place one stone on that person's grave. With a marker or sharpie, on the other stone write the name of the person and keep that stone with you. When you get home, place it somewhere meaningful, or where you will see it often to remind you of that person's story, evoke memories of your experiences in Israel, and the meaning you derived.



EXPERIENCE #2

MASADA | מצדה

Hadracha:

What is the story that we choose to remember here? The sole account of Masada was written by Josephus Flavius, who wasn't up on Masada at the time. So what are we remembering when we visit? By visiting, we are creating a moment of living history; we are becoming story bearers rather than just storytellers. What is our part in this story, and how, where, and when will we share its message?

Activity:

Have a Jewish ceremony while on Masada. By creating new memories in relation to the site, we take our place in the story of the Jewish people. This could be a Jewish naming ceremony, a Bnei Mitzvah ceremony, or a combination of both.



EXPERIENCE #3

SHABBAT | שבת

Hadracha:

"The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time." — Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

A core component of memory is time. The difference between *experience* and *memory* is the time that has passed. Shabbat provides us with a unique opportunity to rest, reflect, and reset, as we process our experiences from the week and turn them into lasting memories.

Activity:

Kiddush! Before Shabbat, discuss the text, emphasizing the role of memory in this Jewish ritual. Take it one step further: consider writing a 'group version' of Kiddush. What memories would you evoke through your 'group Kiddush'? How might either of these versions be an opportunity to cement our memories and carry them with us throughout Shabbat and beyond?



REFLECTION

1. How do you remember? What helps you remember?
2. How can memory help us to remember, and also to 're-member' and connect to the Jewish people?
3. What stories will you choose to remember from your experiences in Israel?



TRADITION AND INNOVATION



FRAMING AND JEWISH CONTEXT

Jewish life, especially in Israel, is defined by the intersection of tradition and innovation. The notion of *hiddush* (חידוש), from the root *hadash* (חדש), or new, is central to Jewish tradition, thought, and practice. In spheres from the study of traditional religious texts to the most cutting-edge technology startups, the pursuit of new and different approaches to tried and true concepts is never far from the surface. Examples include the way we've recast daily Bible study for the masses in Project 929, the Hebrew language—for many years used only for prayer and study of religious texts—being rejuvenated as a modern, spoken language, or even the IDF being inspired by biblical battle plans.

The ability to maintain traditions while weaving them together with modernity impacts so much of the Israel experience, reflective of the nexus of tradition and innovation that typifies every aspect of Israeli culture.



NOTES



EXPERIENCE #1

MAMILLA MALL | ממיילא

Hadracha:

Located Northwest of Jaffa Gate, Mamilla Mall is one of the greatest juxtapositions of ancient and modern. Envisioned as a 'living bridge between the Old City and the New City of Jerusalem', Mamilla opened in June 2009, paying homage to original architecture by incorporating the facades of 19th century buildings from the original Mamilla Street while creating a modern, upscale shopping and dining experience.

Activity:

As you explore Mamilla during free time, take a photo capturing your perspective on the intersection of tradition and innovation. This can be individually or in small groups. Later in the day or on the bus, share and discuss what you observed relating to this theme.



EXPERIENCE #2

SHEKEL | שקל

Hadracha:

The name of Israel's currency, Shekel, honors the currency used in biblical times. The story of Israeli banknotes is not just a story of wear and inflation. Like street names, stamps, or coins, banknotes have symbolic, political, and commemorative significance—a reminder of our history every time we open our wallets.

Activity:

On the back of each banknote is a quote written in Hebrew. Have participants ask their Israeli peers or stop someone on the street and find out everything they can about the quote and the person who said it or wrote it. What other things do they notice about the Shekel? How does the Shekel itself reflect the intersection between tradition and innovation in Israeli life?



EXPERIENCE #3

TEL AVIV | תל אביב

Hadracha:

Tel Aviv was named after the utopian place depicted in Theodor Herzl's 'Altneuland' or 'Old New Land', where gardens and indoor plumbing were to be an integral part of modern life. 'Tel' refers to a hill made up of layers of ancient civilizations and 'Aviv' is the season spring, known for renewal and rebirth. In fact, when Tel Aviv was first established it was billed as the 'first Hebrew city', committed to using the revived Hebrew language as the lingua franca. It is no coincidence that Tel Aviv is now considered a hub for innovation.

Activity:

Try something new! Throughout your time in Israel, seek opportunities to experience/taste/say something new and different. Need your morning coffee? Try ordering for yourself a *hafuch*, an Israeli version of a latte. Are you ALWAYS on your phone? Join the 'unplugged' movement and switch your phone off for Shabbat in Israel to be totally present in every moment. Try to replace a phrase you normally use in English with a new Hebrew one.



REFLECTION

1. What happens to tradition in the face of innovation?
2. How can innovation enrich a traditional framework?
3. What are examples of where tradition and innovation intersect in our own lives?



DIVERSITY



FRAMING

Unity is a Jewish value; uniformity is not. We see examples of this everywhere we look in Israel, a nation of immigrants, whose citizens trace their roots to literally 100 different countries, cultures, and traditions. Diverse communities celebrate their individual foods, holidays, languages, clothing, and more, even as they come together as Israelis. This same concept links Jews around the world: we seek unity as we embrace our diversity.



JEWISH CONTEXT

בן זומא אומר, איזהו חכם, הלומד מכל אדם

Ben Zoma said: Who is wise? He who learns from every person, Pirkei Avot 4:1

This kernel of Jewish wisdom carries an important lesson for us. We learn from every one of our participants, and every one of our participants learns from the people they meet in their group, on the streets of Israel, and in their own home communities.



NOTES



EXPERIENCE #1

SHUK MACHANE YEHUDA | מחנה יהודה

Hadracha:

Shuk Machane Yehuda dates back to the 19th century and Ottoman rule. The locals brought produce to sell which served the new neighborhoods in the area. Today, walking through can be sensory overload: the colors, smells, tastes, sounds and languages can be overwhelming.

Activity:

Ask participants to buy a food item they have never tasted before and bring it back to the group. You could even divide them up: the fruit group, the pastry group, etc. to ensure a well-rounded feast later. They should try to learn: name of the food, where it originated, how or when it is eaten, any symbolism connected to it, and/or a story about the person who sold it to them. Later, they can share their food, their learnings, and their experiences.



EXPERIENCE #2

ROTHSCHILD BOULEVARD | שדרות רוטשילד

Hadracha:

On May 14th 1948, the State of Israel was established at 16 Rothschild Boulevard—now called Independence Hall. Right outside of the building sits a statue of Tel Aviv’s first mayor, Meir Dizengoff with a quote that shares his unique vision for the city: *“It is not the houses, streets or gardens that constitute a city—but the qualities of its residents: the language, the love of work and creating, the equality, the freedom, the belief in our power and the desire to live a life of dignity and self-reliance.”*

Activity:

Tel Aviv is all about the people, and their diversity is what makes it interesting and inspiring. So, speak to the people passing by! Where do they live? Where are they from? What brought them to Tel Aviv? What do they love about Tel Aviv?



EXPERIENCE #3

THE GROUP | הקבוצה

Hadracha:

Look no further than the people in this group—North Americans and Israelis, all of different backgrounds and experiences, coming together for a shared experience. What do we bring with us by virtue of who we are, how we were raised etc., and what can we learn from each other? What are the unique perspectives and personalities that make up our group?

Activity:

Play “Gam Ani - Lo Ani.” Introduce the Hebrew words ‘גַּם אֲנִי’ (gam ani, me too). One participant starts by talking about themselves and everyone else listens for something that applies to them too. As soon as someone hears something that applies to them, they should say ‘gam ani’ and step into the circle. *‘My name is Rachel and I am the third of four siblings.’ ‘Gam ani! My name is Nadav, I’m also the third of 4 siblings and I was born in Israel’ ‘Gam ani! My name is Michal, I was born in Israel and I have a pet dog’....Next, introduce the Hebrew words ‘לֹא אֲנִי’ (lo ani, not me). The game works in the same way: simply step forward if you do not share what was said by the person in the middle of the circle.*



REFLECTION

1. In what ways do you experience unity or uniformity?
2. What is the meaning of communal unity and how do I find individual expression within that?
3. How does Israel promote and/or hinder unity and uniformity?



THEME:



FRAMING

[WRITE YOUR FRAMING HERE]



JEWISH CONTEXT

[WRITE THE JEWISH CONTEXT HERE]



NOTES



EXPERIENCE #1

[WRITE YOUR IDEA HERE]



EXPERIENCE #2

[WRITE YOUR IDEA HERE]



EXPERIENCE #3

[WRITE YOUR IDEA HERE]



REFLECTION

[WRITE YOUR REFLECTION QUESTIONS HERE]