



PUTTING THE “I” IN COMMUNITY

PREP FOR THE SESSION

Overview

This resource explores **diversity** and **individuality** (in Israel and beyond) through the value of **Community**.

At-a-Glance:



This resource was created in partnership with Unpacked for Educators.

This resource delves into the concept of community by addressing the delicate balance between individual needs and collective interests, and how those play out in building Israeli society. Participants will reflect on the significance of their own cultural heritage in shaping their identities and explore strategies to maintain their uniqueness while contributing to a unified society. Through watching videos about the diversity of Israeli society, it encourages a deeper understanding of how to balance the needs of the individuals amongst the needs of the group. The session concludes with commitments to actively contribute to an inclusive community while authentically expressing one's unique place within it.



Time Estimate:

35 minutes



Materials Needed:

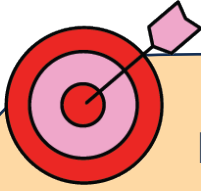
- Digital device to watch video



Best Uses:

- For teen and young adult audiences
- For both individual and group reflection

LET'S GET STARTED



FRAME THE ISSUE

Read the following for context:

Maintaining our unique cultural identities while actively participating in a blended, unified society can present both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, our cultural identity is a vital part of who we are, shaped by our Jewish heritage, traditions, and personal experiences. It adds depth and richness to the mosaic of diversity within a society. On the other hand, the question arises: do we need to compromise our individuality for the sake of a uniform society, or is diversity and the ability to express our unique identities the hallmark of a vibrant community? How does this all play out in modern day Israel?



Facilitator prompts the group:

- What aspects of your cultural background and heritage define you most profoundly? How do they shape your sense of self?
- What are times when you felt challenged by the need to conform to societal norms and expectations in a community? How did you navigate these situations?
- What are times where your unique identity contributed positively to a diverse community?

6 min





EXPLORE THE VALUE: COMMUNITY

5 min



Community is often regarded as a source of connection, support, and shared values, but it also raises questions about the balance between individuality and the collective. How do we maintain our individual identities while actively participating in a close-knit community? Is it necessary to conform to certain community norms or expectations to truly belong, or can we embrace our uniqueness within the collective? How do we navigate the tension between our personal desires and the needs of the community, and when is it appropriate to prioritize one over the other?



Facilitator prompts the group:

- Reflect on a time when you felt deeply connected to a community. What did that sense of belonging look like practically, and how did it impact your individual identity?
- What are times when you felt embracing diversity within a society enriched your experience of community?
- What are times when you felt pressure to put the community's needs over your own individual identity?
- How do your answers above relate to your relationship with Israeli society?

10 min



ACTIVITY/JEWISH ANCHOR

Scan the QR Code or click here to watch two excerpts from the Unpacked video “Who are the Israelis, really?” (0:35-2:49 and 4:13-5:27).



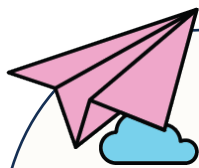
Facilitator prompts the group:

- What is something that resonated with you, especially as we consider the tension between navigating our individuality within our communities?
- What are some of the challenges Israel faces in being a diverse, multicultural society?
- With all the diversity within the Jewish people, what ultimately unites us as a people?

Then, reflect:

- What is stronger: the shared Jewish roots of various groups or the specific cultures that each group arrived with?
- What are some ways to maintain your cultural uniqueness, while still feeling part of a blended, unified society?

5 min



PROMPT ACTION

Facilitator shares the following prompt with the participants:

Please take two minutes to respond to the following prompt in writing:

- Even though expressing my unique identity can sometimes feel challenging in a unified society, I can celebrate my individuality through_____.
- As a result of this session, I will be more intentional about promoting diversity and individuality within my community through_____.



Facilitator prompts the group:

If you are comfortable, please pair up with another participant and take turns sharing your answers.

Then, discuss the following:

- How can you encourage and celebrate different cultures in your community while keeping everyone together?
- How can you show that being yourself is important in your community?

3 min



CLOSE WITH INTENTION

In this resource, we explored the complexities of maintaining one's cultural identity while actively participating in a diverse, unified society, using Israel as a backdrop. We highlighted the value of community and the delicate balance between individuality and collective identity. We discussed the similar challenges Israel faces trying to integrate immigrants from a wide range of countries and backgrounds into one society. Ultimately, being part of a diverse community means choosing when the needs of the group come first, and when you need to highlight your own individuality.



Facilitator prompt:

List three words you are taking away from this experience that connect to the value of community in Israeli society today.