

Kandi Bracelets: Symbols of Friendship, Tools of Awareness

Keeping the Spirit of Hostages Alive

Facilitator Guide

How can an element of pop-culture help bring awareness to the hostages that were abducted from the music festival and from other locations in Israel on October 7, 2023?

Can we harness the power of a bracelet, a symbolic representation worn on our wrist, to spread the message of hope to those around us?

Info For Facilitator



Target Audience:

Upper middle school or high school students (8th-12th graders).
Appropriate for a school/ youth movement/ camp or congregational school setting.



Length Of Program:

About 60 minutes



Materials & Prep:

- Computer and screen to show photos (If technology is not available, the photos can be printed).
[Link to Canva Slide Deck](#)
- Art supplies to make kandi bracelets (i.e., variety of colorful beads, elastic wire, Hebrew letter beads, English letter beads, etc). Depending upon the size of the beads and bracelet, each bracelet will require 15-20 beads.



Note for Facilitators:

In this activity, we try to connect students with the hostages, by creating kandi bracelets with their names. In an age-appropriate manner, please preface the conversation by helping students understand that this is not a historical event that we are looking back on years later, but rather an event taking place in real time. It is likely that some of the hostages, no matter how much we hope and pray for their safe return, might not come back safely, potentially dying in captivity or never being returned to their families at all. Even if they don't come back or come back alive, keeping their name and memory alive is equally significant.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Appendix with Overview of the Events of October 7th

FRAMING THE ISSUE

During the holiday of Sukkot, on the weekend of October 6-7, 2023, thousands of young Israelis and foreign nationals attended a music festival at Kibbutz Re'im in Southern Israel. The Supernova Sukkot Gathering, known as 'Nova', expressed the values of "free love and spirit, environmental preservation, and appreciation of rare natural values that the festival embodies."⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

At 6:30 am on October 7, 2023, festival goers at Nova were attacked by Hamas; hundreds of people were chased, murdered, and taken hostage by Hamas.⁽²⁾ The final figure communicated by police on November 17, 2023 was 364 dead, including 17 police officers, and 40 young people were abducted from the festival.⁽³⁾

Human dignity, valuing life and honoring the right of all humans to live free, was denied to countless Nova festival goers on October 7th. While there may be little that we can physically do, from thousands of miles away, to console those who lost family members and friends or who have family members or friends being held in captivity, there are small things that we can do to show care, compassion, and keep the names of those in captivity alive.

LET'S EXPLORE

Symbolic Representations:

Facilitator Introduces:

There are some political actions that can be taken by adults to put pressure on the leaders to release the hostages. In addition there are spiritual, mitzvah-oriented, and representational actions that we can ALL take to make sure that the hostages are kept in the forefront of our minds. Some communities in Israel and other places around the world have created symbolic installations that represent the hostages taken into Gaza.

Facilitator shares six examples of symbolic installations with the learners (using [the slideshow](#)) and guides a conversation using the following questions:

1. What might these installations have in common?
2. What is your emotional response to seeing these installations?
3. Public displays can evoke powerful emotions. What might be the purpose and/or intended outcome of attaching emotions to the hostage situation?
4. The flag installation is at a person's home. What might be the reason that someone would want this in their front yard? Why might they NOT want this in their front yard?
5. Have you seen anything like this around another tragedy or incident? If yes, share. How does this one feel different?

Symbolic Representations to the Hostages



Sources of the Symbolic Representations:

- i) United Nations; A field of "KIDNAPPED" posters and shoes; 10/25/2023
- ii) Dizengoff Square, Israel; Large teddy bears painted with red paint and carrying photographs of the children held hostages by Hamas terrorists in Gaza; 10/25/2023
- iii) Concord, Massachusetts; 1,500 Israeli flags; 10/27/2023
- iv) Tel Aviv, Israel; Memorial for the more than 220 people captured by Hamas militants; 10/28/2023
- v) New York City, NY; Kidnapped posters adorned a Shabbat (Sabbath) table set for children amid a larger Shabbat table to symbolize the plight of the hostages held captive; 10/27/2023
- vi) Tel Aviv, Israel; Photos of hostages kidnapped; 10/17/2023

PLUR Culture: Peace, Love, Unity, and Respect

PLUR culture refers to the "vibe" around rave or EDM (electronic dance music) festivals or events. PLUR is an acronym which stands for: Peace, Love, Unity, and Respect. Part of PLUR culture is to hand make and exchange colorful bracelets or other accessories made of beads. It is called kandi. ⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾

To understand PLUR culture, kandi and the handshake, [watch this video.](#)



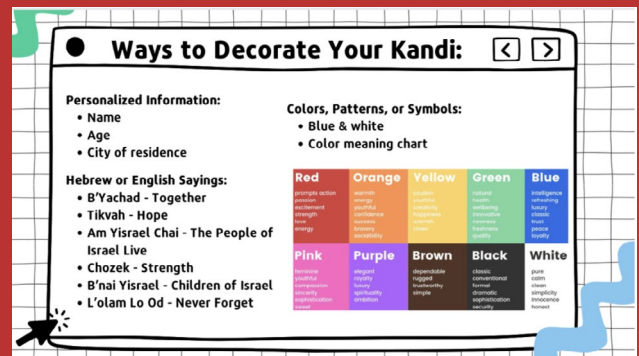
TAKE ACTION!

We will now transition into doing something meaningful and representational, similar to what the symbolic installations that we just discussed have done, so that we can help keep the spirit of the hostages alive.

In this activity, students will create kandi, a significant part of PLUR culture, representing a strong connection made between two people at a rave or festival, as the tool to symbolically represent the hostages, especially to remember the young hostages abducted at the Nova festival.

The bracelet making project can take on one of the following forms:

- Create a bracelet dedicated to a specific hostage, allowing the students a visual and tangible way to connect to a person who is captive, passing along their hope that they will be returned to their family safely and quickly. For a list of names, photos and status of current hostages, click [here](#).
- Students can make multiple bracelets to wear together or give away and exchange them, allowing them to learn about a hostage, share with others what they learned and have a symbolic representation of their hope and prayers for their safe return.
- Some ideas for decorating the bracelets include:
 - Personalized information such as name, age, and/or city of residence
 - Colors, patterns or symbols (such as: blue & white, color meaning chart⁽⁶⁾, symbolic beads, etc.)
 - Hebrew or English sayings such as (English and Hebrew transliteration below)
 - » B'Yachad – Together
 - » Tikvah – Hope
 - » Am Yisrael Chai - The Jewish People Lives
 - » Chozek - Strength
 - » B'nei Yisrael - Children of Israel
 - » L'olam Lo Od - Never Again



While students prepare their bracelets and learned about specific people who were taken captive, they can discuss the following questions with a partner:

- How do you think the experience of being a hostage might differ based upon the age of the person?
- How might the experience be for a civilian versus a soldier in the IDF?
- What else would you like to know about the hostages at this time?
- How might the hostages hope that Israeli society and its allies are responding to their captivity?
- What feelings do you have after learning about the hostages and looking at the bracelet you have made?

**Note that making bracelets to keep the flame lit for Prisoners of War (POW) and those Missing in Action (MIA) originated from college students following the Vietnam War. It was their way of remembering American prisoners of war suffering in captivity in Southeast Asia.⁽⁷⁾*

CLOSING INTENTION

Each one of us can demonstrate human dignity and compassion for those who remain in captivity through the simple act of creating and wearing a bracelet. Ask students to respond to the following debrief questions:

- What part of today's lesson stands out most to you?
- What did you learn about yourself during the program today?
- What is one action you want to take as a result of today's program?

Sources and References:

1. [Article with videos giving an overview of the Nova festival](#)
2. [Nova festival event registration site](#)
3. [Wiki article giving overview of Nova festival](#)
4. [Rave or EDM kandi](#)
5. [PLUR, kandi, & handshake video](#)
6. [Color meaning chart](#)
7. [POW bracelet history](#)