

Mission Statements Program
Program for NFTY Study Theme Proposal
Hineini - Here I Am: NFTY Studies the Power of the Individual
Time Needed: 1 Hour, 50 Minutes

Touchstone Text: God tested Abraham, and G-d said to him, "Abraham," and he said, "Here I am." - Genesis 22:1

Goals:

- PPs will gain a better understanding of self.
- PPs will feel centered in the activities and groups that exist in their lives
- PPs will feel powerful as individuals and note their strength as a community

Objectives:

- PPs will select the values which are most meaningful to them
- PPs will write their personal mission statement
- PPs will discover ways to individually enact change

Materials

- 50 copies of **Appendix A**
- 50 copies of **Appendix B**, cut in half
- Pencils/Pens (1/PP)

People

- 1 PL
- 10 GLs (1/10 PPs)
- 100 PPs

Space

- One large room OR one room for meeting and enough breakout rooms for 10 groups

Timetable

00:00-00:05 Introduction, Split into Groups
00:05-00:10 Activities
00:10-00:35 Middot
00:35-00:40 Selections
00:40-00:50 Mission Statement
00:50-00:55 Share
00:55-01:00 Wrap Up Mission Statements
01:00-01:15 One of a Kind
01:15-01:40 I Can Do It!
01:40-01:50 Wrap Up

Detailed Procedure

00:00-00:05 Introduction, Split into Groups

PL will welcome everybody and will ask PPs to split into groups of ten.

00:05-00:10 Activities

GL will ask each PP to introduce themselves with their name and TYG. During this time, GL will distribute one copy of **Appendix A** and a pencil to each PP. After everybody has been introduced, GL will instruct PPs on what they are about to do: *“You should all have a piece of paper and a pencil in front of you. What you’re going to do now is write down each activity that you do in your life. Go ahead and put down NFTY and school, and then write everything else you do to fill your time that is a structured activity. Don’t write down sleeping or eating, but everything else is fair game.”*

00:10-00:35 Middot

GL will pass around 5 copies of **Appendix B** around the circle and encourage PPs to take a look. GL will introduce the idea of Middot by saying that Pirkei Avot lists 48 values, or Middot, that are required for the acquisition of Torah. PPs will take a minute to look over the middot. Then, PPs will be instructed to select the two or three middot that they will try to incorporate into each activity of their lives.

GL will demonstrate this with the group: *“Let’s do one together as an example. We’re all in NFTY, so the first box already says NFTY for you. So now, as a group, let’s come up with the two of three middot that we think are most important to NFTY.”* GL leads group in discussion of which middot are most important to NFTY. Then, PPs will be free to work on their own to pick which middot are most important in each of their other activities.

00:35-00:40 Selections

Once PPs finish, GL will ask each PP to pick which of their activities are the most important to them (3-5). Within those top 3-5, PPs will then select which 3-5 middot are most important to them. (These do not have to be one from each, but it can be a good guide if anybody is having trouble.)

00:40-00:50 Mission Statement

GL will introduce the idea of creating a mission statement: *“A mission statement is a one-sentence statement which describes the reason an organization exists. The best mission statements are clear, memorable, and concise. They differ in length. TED’s mission statement has only two words: Spreading Ideas. The average length of a mission statement is 12-15 words. Using the middot which you selected as the most important, create your own mission statement on the lines below your table. Remember, a mission statement describes the reason you exist and should be clear, memorable, and concise.”*

Example: *“I will create joy in other people by loving all creatures, having a good heart, and sharing the burden with others.”*

00:50-00:55 Share

GL will ask a few PPs to share their Mission Statements, if they like. No PP should be required to share. If PPs ask, they may receive feedback from others, but nobody should give feedback without being asked.

00:55-01:00 Wrap Up Mission Statements

GL will wrap up discussion of mission statements and allow PPs to take a short break before the next section of the program. If groups are far away, this time can serve as travel time back to the main area.

01:00-01:15 One Of A Kind

PL will get the room quiet, then PL will introduce the next activity: *"I hope you all enjoyed the previous period of introspection. Now you are going to try to find somebody who selected the exact same middot as you did. When you find them, sit down and share your mission statements, but until then, walk around and find your Middot Match."* During this time, GLs should walk around and facilitate the matching of PPs. After about 5 minutes (01:06), PL will quiet the room and ask if there were any matches. (If there were, PL should congratulate them.) PL will then ask PPs to find somebody who shares no more than two of the same middot as them. Once they do, PPs should share their mission statements. After a few minutes (this should be faster than the previous round), PL will say: *"I hope you all saw that it is more likely to be different than it is to be similar and that very rarely are two people the exact same. Now, with your partner, find four other partnerships, so that you will be in groups of ten."* (These do not have to be the same groups as earlier; in fact, it is recommended that PPs be in different groups than earlier.) GLs will find groups of ten and spread out throughout the room.

01:15-01:40 Organizations

Once PPs are in groups of 10, GL will ask PPs to go around in the circle to say their name and which middot they selected as the most important. GL will explain that they are going to create an organization in each person. For each person who wishes, the group will use that person's mission statement to create an organization's mission statement. If there is extra time, GL should have the group flesh out the details for one PP's organization, such as location, how many people it will need, etc.

Example MS: *"I will create joy in other people by loving all creatures, having a listening ear, and sharing the burden with others."*

Example Organization would help other people by listening to the problems in the community and helping people implement their solutions.

01:40-01:50 Wrap Up

GLs will lead their groups in a closing activity: *"On the back of your mission statement paper, write your name in the middle and draw a circle around it. Then, around your name, write the names of people who can help you. Your parents, your school friends, your NFTY friends,*

your coach and your siblings are all great examples. Circle their names, too, and draw lines to connect you to them. On those lines, write down how each of them can help you. Maybe your uncle owns a printing company and he can supply you with brochures. Maybe your school friends can help you do research. Any way that they can help you, write it down.” After a few minutes (01:48), GL will wrap up the program: *“Remember, no man is an island. In Genesis, we read that G-d said ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper.’ Remember that even though you have the power to do it alone, there is a full community of people who are able to help you.*

Appendix A Activity Chart

Activity	Middot
NFTY	

Personal Mission Statement:

Activity	Middot
NFTY	

Personal Mission Statement:

Appendix B Middot

In Pirke Avot 6:6, we read:

Torah is greater than priesthood and royalty.

Royalty is acquired through thirty virtues, priesthood through twenty-four, and Torah is acquired through forty-eight things:

1. A Listening Ear
2. A Minimum of Frivolity
3. A Minimum of Pleasure
4. A Minimum of Sleep
5. A Minimum of Small Talk
6. A Perceptive Heart
7. Absorb Knowledge and Add To It
8. Acceptance of Suffering
9. An Understanding of the Heart
10. Asking and Answering
11. Beloved
12. Calmness in Study
13. Cleaving to Friends
14. Concentrate on One's Studies
15. Contentment with One's Lot
16. Distance Yourself From Honor
17. Fear
18. Good Heart
19. Guarding One's Speech
20. Happiness
21. Judging Others Favorably
22. Knowing One's Place
23. Limited Knowledge in Worldly Concerns
24. Love of Being Straightforward
25. Loving All Creatures
26. Loving God
27. Loving Reproof or Rebuke
28. Loving Righteous Ways
29. Moderation in Business
30. Modesty
31. Not Being Arrogant with One's Learning
32. Not Delighting in Rendering Decisions
33. Orderly Speech
34. Quoting One's Sources
35. Refraining from Taking Personal
Credit for What is Good
36. Set Others on the Path of Truth
37. Setting Others on the Path of Peace
38. Sharp Discussion with Students
39. Making One's Teacher Wiser
40. Slowness to Anger
41. Studying in Order to Perform Mitzvot
42. Studying in Order to Teach
43. The Study of Torah
44. To Attend to the Sages
45. To Determine Exactly what One Hears
46. To Learn by Repetition
47. To Share the Burden with One's Friend
48. Trust in the Sages

Text Study #1: The Scale

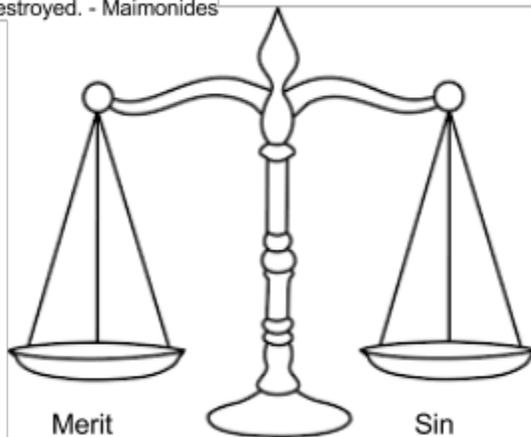
GL distributes one copy of **Appendix A** to each PP and have one PP read the text on the top of **Appendix A**. GL will the lead PPs in the following discussion:

1. What do you think this quote means?
2. How can we apply this to our daily lives?
3. Why is it important that we live as if the fate of the world depends on us?

GL will then close out the program: "Take a minute to reflect on how you have acted the past few days. Have you saved the world or destroyed it?"

Appendix A

One should see the world and himself as a scale with an equal balance of good and evil. When he does one good deed, the scale is tipped to the good: he and the world are saved. When he does one evil deed, the scale is tipped to the bad: he and the world are destroyed. - Maimonides



Text Study #2: The Burning Bush

GL will introduce the activity: "In Exodus, we read that Moses saw a bush which was on fire, but was not being consumed. Moses immediately recognized that something divine was happening. Curious, he approached the bush, and the rest of the story continues on." GL will then lead PPs in the following discussion:

1. What would happen if Moses had contained his curiosity and didn't approach the bush?
2. Are there any times when you've thought that maybe G-d was trying to talk to you? What do you think G-d was trying to tell you?
3. In Jewish texts, whenever the word "Hineni" appears, a sudden shift takes place right after it. The word signals that a person is ready, willing, and able to do G-d's work. If G-d contacted you right now, what would G-d tell you to do? Would you do it?

Activity #1: Gallery In Their Shoes

PPs each receive a half-sheet of paper and a pencil. GL/PL will say: "Draw yourself and your surroundings on the paper." After PPs get the chance to draw for a few minutes, GL/PL will hand out highlighters and say "highlight where you drew yourself". After PPs highlight their drawings of themselves, GL/PL will say "set the paper on the floor and walk around. Sit at another paper and take a look from someone else's perspective. Think about these questions to yourself: Where are you in their picture? How big is this person in their own perspective? Where does this person exist in their own picture--the middle, the edges, elsewhere?"

Activity #2: Musical space

PPs will each pick up a musical instrument. GL will ask one PP to start with a basic beat and point to each PP to join in with their own rhythm. GL will record the sound of the group. GL will then walk around the circle and tap each PP on the head to start or stop playing. After the group has played with each PP missing individually, the group will stop and the GL will play back the recording to the group.

Activity #3: Superheroes

PPs will each receive a white eye mask and coloring utensils. They will write their superpower on the inside of it and decorate the outside of it. One they are done, PPs will go around the circle and say their superpower, then GL will lead them in the following discussion:

1. What influenced your decision to choose the superpower that you did?
2. Why did you decorate your mask the way that you did?

Activity #4: The Struggle

GL: "Mordechai Anielewicz, the leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, once said, 'The most difficult struggle of all is the one within ourselves.' On a piece of paper, write down what you think is holding you back from reaching your full potential. Make sure you don't put your name on it." After PPs are done, GL will collect the papers and have the PPs spread out. Then, GL will redistribute the papers randomly to PPs. With their new paper, PPs will write advice to the original author, helping them overcome their struggle. When PPs are done, GL will collect the papers and tape them to a wall in another room. One at a time, PPs will be able to go to the room and retrieve their paper from the wall.

Activity #5: This I Believe

PL1 will say: *What is the core belief that drives what you do every day? What has shaped who you are today? What has challenged your beliefs? How do your beliefs affect your everyday actions?*

PL1 will say: *These are all questions you must ask to affirm who you are, and why you do what you do.*

PL2 will say: *Today we will be writing "This I Believe" statements. These are short statement that should explain a core belief of yours.*

PL1 will say: *Your statement could be a long unending paragraph with your musings on life, or some original poetry, or it could be the transcript of a conversation you had.*

PL2 will say: *It could be a story of an event that shaped how you look at the world, or lyrics to your favorite song, or it could be about what you learned from a past relationship.*

PL1 will say: *There are only 3 rules. Be Honest, Be Specific, and end your statement with the phrase "This I Believe"*

PL2 will say: *The time is now _____ you will have until +(+30 mins) to work on your essay.*

PPs write their This I Believe statements

Activity: #6: Who Am I?

PPs will write down ten words that describe themselves. Then, GL will have PPs count how many of the words were physical traits (hair color, race, sex) and how many were personality traits (funny, smart, friendly). GL will have PPs line up against a wall based on the number of traits of each type they had, from ten physical traits and zero personality traits to zero physical traits and ten personality traits. PPs will sit down in a circle and GL will lead them in the following discussion:

1. What did you notice about how you lined up?
2. Why did you pick the traits that you did? Did you have to decide to select some but not others?
3. Do you think people are defined more by their physical traits or their personality?