



SUMMER CAMP JOURNAL LEADERSHIP GUIDE

Thank you for choosing to use this camp staff journal. We know staff mental health needs are important, and we hope this resource offers an opportunity to better support the staff's mental health over the summer.

This is a guide to introducing the journal to the leadership staff, so you can present it to the camp community during the general staff week. This introduction can be facilitated by anyone on the staff – the mental health professional, director, assistant director, etc. Remember, as the camp leadership team, this journal is for you as well! You can role model using this resource for the camp community.

What is this resource?

This journal is designed to be a resource the staff (including you!) can use to reflect on the camp experience. The activities are grounded on five caregiving principles that support healing and resiliency:

סִכַּת שְׁלוֹם
SUKKAT SHALOM
A SENSE OF SAFETY

אִמִּיץ לֵב
OMETZ LEV
COURAGE

גְּבוּרָה
G'VURAH
SELF AND COMMUNAL EFFICACY

קְהִילָה
K'HILLAH
SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

חֶסֶד
CHESED
HOPE ATTAINED BY REACHING OUT TO ASSIST OTHERS

The journal includes different questions and activities to help staff members navigate challenges and celebrate successes. Each principle has one to two journal prompts which can be used in any order. There are activities and readings throughout the journal in addition to the prompts that may be meaningful. This is a personal journal; please encourage people to write in whichever language is most comfortable and to draw and doodle as much as they want. As leadership staff, you will guide them in using the journal and answering questions.





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How will this resource support staff?

The journal can be used to encourage staff to exercise self-care and take care of both their physical and mental health needs throughout the summer. This journal can also be a resource for members of leadership staff to care for their own mental health.

Steps for using the journal:

Introduce the journal to your leadership staff.

- Review the “what is this resource” and “how will this resource support staff” sections.

Together, familiarize yourselves with the journal.

- Read through the journal, including the prompts, additional activities, and readings. You do not need to complete it in a certain order. Understanding the different pieces will help you suggest what to use based on the staff’s needs during the summer.

Identify how you want to utilize this resource, both as a camp and in smaller groups.

- How do you want to divide into smaller groups? e.g., units, cabins, specialty teams, etc.
- How frequently do you want to use the journal?
- How do you want to build in time for staff members to use it?
 - Do you want to provide individual or group time to work on it?

Decide when you are introducing the journal during staff week.

- Introduce the journal to the camp community.
 1. Who will introduce it?
 2. How do you want to frame it?
 3. How does it fit into your mental health mission at camp?
- Start the journal in small groups.
 - Use the introduction and kavanah-setting page in the journal to frame the resource.





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Tips for using the journal

- Self-care and mental health are a priority at camp. This journal is a tool you can use to help staff create time to care for themselves and get support from others.
- You are already connecting with the members of your staff to see how they are doing and encouraging them to care for themselves over the summer. This journal is a tool to help staff identify tangible ways to think about their self-care.
- Build in time when the staff can and will use the journal.
- Staff members can use the journal to develop deeper relationships and remind themselves they have a support system with each other.
- By using this journal, you can help normalize the reality that camp can be stressful, mental health needs are valid, and it is necessary to practice self-care.
- Prompts and activities can be used in any order.
- Journaling may be completed in group or individual settings.
- Encourage staff members to engage with additional items in the journal, e.g., coloring pages, breathing exercises, prayers, etc.

You do not need to be a mental health professional to facilitate using this journal; anyone may use it in whichever way makes sense to them. Mental health is a priority for the entire camp staff, and this tool is a great way to address these needs.

Printing the journal

Follow the format for printing suggestions below to ensure the journal prints as a booklet. Please note: The pages will appear out of order in the PDF. Follow the format suggestions to ensure the pages are printed in the correct order to create a booklet.

- Format for printing
 - Landscape
 - Double-sided, flip on short-edge
 - Scale to fit, print entire image
 - Color or Black & White (this is your preference)
- Creating the journal
 - Fold pages in half to create booklet
 - Staple or hole punch and tie booklet together



Foundation for Jewish Camp:
Community Care Resources



BeWell, an initiative of Jewish
Federations of North America



The Blue Dove Foundation