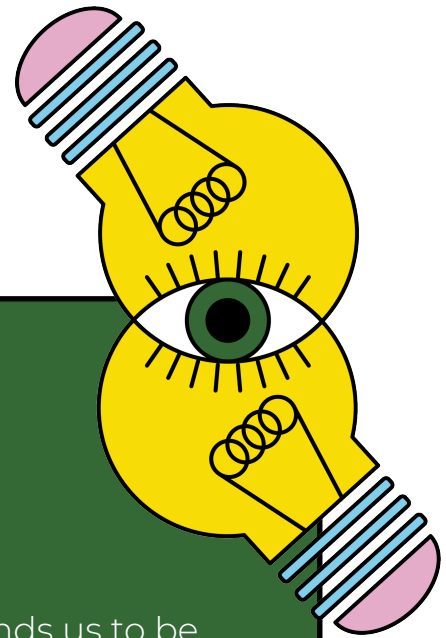


Bringing People In Yachad



Each morning when we wake up, today's blessing reminds us to be grateful for the opportunity to open our eyes and live another day. When we use our eyes to look out, it's easy to see those who are physically around us — and as a result, we are often attuned to their presence and needs. But what about those who may be farther removed from our inner circles? Or what about those who may be physically close but emotionally distant?

For individuals who live with disabilities, feeling excluded or invisible to those around them can be a common occurrence. While we may not do so intentionally, our eyes may remain figuratively closed to those who are different. How do we invite these people in and create a space where they feel a sense of belonging? What practical steps can we take to create a more inclusive environment?

We invite you to take part in the following inclusion tasks which we hope will transform the world into a place where all individuals, regardless of abilities or disabilities, feel seen and cared for.

We are grateful to our
partner Yachad for
preparing these activities.



#gratitudedays

*Days of
Gratitude*

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Activity 1: Pick up the phone and call...

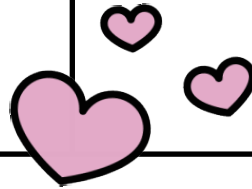
Over the past few months, our world has been forced to social distance. This has created clear and potentially difficult barriers to social interaction. As a result, people may feel isolated or alone as they are stuck inside their own home.

Without even realizing, we may take our social interactions for granted. Yet, some people may spend an entire day without interacting with even one other person. Thinking of others during this time period and reaching out, especially to those who you haven't seen for a while or who may be going through a difficult time, can go a long way.

Pick up the phone and call someone to let them know you are thinking of them; catch up and reconnect.

Takeaway Task:

Tell us who you called to reconnect with [here](#). What reactions did you notice while on the phone?



Activity 2: Use inclusive body language

It's not always easy to notice, but the way you stand in a conversation says a lot about how interested you are in that conversation and how open you are to an outsider's involvement. If you and your friends are standing close to one another, shoulders practically touching, it becomes especially difficult — perhaps impossible — for another person to feel comfortable entering into that seemingly intimate conversation.

There are many ways to display more-inclusive body language. Simply taking a step back and opening up the circle to allow others to join creates the impression that you're eager for others to participate in your conversation. For individuals who may find it difficult to interact in social settings, creating these spaces and extending invitations will be much appreciated.

Takeaway Task:

Think of a way to exemplify inclusive body language in a conversation and share it with others [here](#).

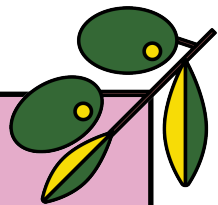
Activity 3: Proactively invite people into your conversation

We have all been there. Glancing around the room on the first day of camp, a networking event, or community dinner, wondering, “Will I have anyone to talk to? It looks like everyone already knows each other!” The reality is that entering a conversation can truly be a difficult experience.

But you probably also remember that one person who came over to you and said, “Hey, I want to introduce you to my friend,” changing your entire experience and allowing you to feel part of the community. When you think back to that moment, how much gratitude did you feel for that person? Try to pay it forward and make sure that the next time you are in a social setting, you’re cognizant of those who might not be familiar with the crowd or have a harder time expressing themselves, and invite them into a discussion.

Takeaway Task:

We would love to hear if you put this into action! **Let us know how it went [here](#).**



Inclusion is not a program or service. It’s a mindset and attitude that affects the way we interact with those around us and the world at large. When we adopt this mindset, we hope that as we open our eyes each morning, we do so knowing we are looking out at the world, seeing and appreciating all the individuals G-d has created.

We hope that participating in our inclusion-oriented tasks this week inspires you to adopt these practices for many weeks to come. Thank you for participating.