



TZADDIK: CONVERSATIONS

SHARING THE BURDEN

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

The guiding questions of this TZADDIK Conversation are:

How can “helping shoulder another’s burden” impact our activism?

How can we become more attuned and responsive to others’ burdens?

The intended outcome for participants of this conversation is that they:

Grasp the difference between working to solve a problem, and helping to shoulder another’s burden

Cultivate a sense of empathy that will:

- ✚ lead them to become more involved in social justice work and
- ✚ give them a feeling of connection and parity with those they are working to help



On the following pages is a suggested step-by-step set of instructions for educators. Feel free to tailor these steps to best fit the students and context in which you are using this guide. TZADDIK Conversations are designed to run for one hour. The role of the educator is to personally connect with these questions, and then invite students to seriously engage with them the coming hour. The following guide assumes that the educator has already studied the texts related to this session and has completed the reflection writing.

TZADDIK Conversations often utilize “virtual” opportunities for continued post-conversation reflection among students. This technique is still experimental, and we encourage educators to play with this concept, adapting and developing new formats by which students can bring “key take aways” to their (online) lives.



SHARING THE BURDEN

Timing is approximate

- 1 Open session by explaining why these questions are personally relevant to *you*. (5 min)
- 2 Invite students to form chevrotot (pairs, or groups of three) and to read/respond to the “First Questions” scenario. They should read the passage together, fill in their answers and then share with each other. (10 min)
- 3 Bring group together, inviting several students to share key reflections and comments from their chevrotot. (5 min)
- 4 Transition students toward exploring a selection of Jewish texts. We turn to our textual tradition hoping to be both inspired as well as challenged by the voices of our Jewish ancestors. We turn to these texts as much out of curiosity as reverence.
- 5 In larger group or in chevrotot, explore “Texts: Hearing the Cry.” Use “Discussion Questions” to open up conversation. (10 - 15 min)
- 6 Turn students toward quiet “Reflection Writing”. (5-10 min)
- 7 Have students return to original chevrotot to process and share their written reflections. Encourage students to take turns sharing what they wrote about and how they feel. This should not be so much as a conversation as it is an opportunity to speak and listen. (10 min)
- 8 Bring students back together, inviting one or two reflections from chevrotot to be shared. (2-3 min)
- 9 Ask students to write down a single “Key Take Away” from the conversation. Allow a handful of students to share these “Key Take Aways” as well as any closing reflections. (2-3 min)
- 10 Invite students to participate in an interactive, web-based experiment that will extend for several days. “Invite” each member of the community to join a Facebook “Group” entitled, for example, “TZADDIK: Sharing the Burden”. Every day, include a guest post on the wall of this group by a student on campus about some of the issues that are directly affecting him or her. For example, you may wish to include posts by students of color about racism, or students from other countries about some of the social justice issues that impact them. Make sure these are first-person accounts. Students should be encouraged to comment on the posts and find ways to “share the burden”. Educator should participate too, but not write the first posting.

