

# Virtue – Silence

שְׁתִּיקָה

**Shtee-kah / silence**  
noun / si·lence / 'sī-lən(t)s  
*a lack of sound or noise*

## Guide For Your Circle

1

### ICE - BREAKER

Ask each person to introduce themselves, and to share with the group:

(a) their name; and

(b) a part of their day they would like to bring with them as they begin this conversation, and/or a part of their day they would like to leave behind

2

### RECAP LAST MONTH'S VIRTUE

Ask the group to reflect on how they fared with their commitment from the last month

- Did you achieve your commitments around this virtue?
- What challenges did you face?
- What surprised you about the experience?
- Did your understanding of the virtue change over the month?

3

### DISCUSS NEXT MONTH'S VIRTUE

Compare Ben Franklin's definition of the virtue with the passage from Pirkei Avot. Use the questions below to help guide the conversation.

4

### MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT:

Before your meeting ends, set a goal for yourself for how you can better live that month's virtue. Share it with the group and plan to follow up on how you did at your next meeting.

**Example:** For silence, could you commit to spending 15 minutes in silent reflection every evening for one month?

## Side-By-Side: Ben Franklin And Pirkei Avot

### **BEN FRANKLIN'S DEFINITION:**

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself. Avoid trifling conversation.

### **PIRKEI AVOT**

(PA 1:17)

Shimon his son said, "All my life I have grown up among the Sages, and I have found nothing better for a person but silence. And the expounding of the Law is not the most important thing but the practice of it; and whoever speaks excessively causes sin."

## Questions To Ask The Group

- What are both Ben Franklin and Pirkei Avot suggesting about the value of silence?
- Does our culture value silence?
- Do you think silence is a Jewish virtue? Why?
- Do you make time for silence each day? How?
- Describe a moment when you wish you had been silent but weren't. What were the results?