

Virtue – Justice

צְדָקָה

Tze-dek / justice

noun / jus•tice / 'jəs-təs

the quality of being just, impartial, or fair

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 justice, could you commit to helping an individual or advancing a cause in some small way every day for a month?

Side-By-Side: Ben Franklin And Pirkei Avot

BEN FRANKLIN'S DEFINITION:

Wrong none, by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

PIRKEI AVOT

(PA 2:12)

Rabbi Yose said, Let the property of your fellow be as precious to you as your own; and make yourself fit for the study of Torah, for it is not yours by inheritance; and let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven.

(PA 1:18)

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said, By virtue of three things does the world endure: truth, justice and peace, as it is said, You shall administer truth and the justice of peace in your gates.

Questions To Ask The Group

- Both Franklin's definition and the Pirkei Avot passage define justice. How do you define justice? What do you think society's definition is?
- Pirkei Avot says that *truth*, *justice*, and *peace* are fundamental to the world. Why do you think this is? How are these concepts related? Are there ways they potentially conflict?
- Can you think of any paragons of justice?
- What's the best way to respond after you've been unjust to someone? What's the best way to respond after someone has been unjust to you?
- What is one area where you hope to see more justice? How does Judaism encourage you to create a more just world? How can you do that in your own life? How can we encourage the community to do that?