**Virtue - Tranquility**

M’nuchat Nefesh / tranquility
noun / tran•quil•li•ty / tran-ˈkwı-lə-tē
*the state of being calm*

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**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 tranquility, could you commit to leaving part of your weekend unplanned or unscheduled? Practice tranquility by eliminating some of the stress that happens when packed schedules go awry.
Side-By-Side: Ben Franklin And Pirkei Avot

**BEN FRANKLIN’S DEFINITION:**
Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

**PIRKEI AVOT**

(PA 3:1)
Akavia ben Mahalalel says: Keep your eye on three things, and you will not come to sin: Know from where you came, and to where you are going, and before Whom you are destined to give an account and a reckoning. From where did you come? From a putrid drop. And to where are you going? To a place of dust, worms, and maggots. And before Whom are you destined to give an account and a reckoning? Before the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

(PA 4:16)
Rabbi Yaakov says: This world is like a hallway before the world to come. Fix yourself in the hallway so you may enter the drawing room.

**Questions To Ask The Group**

- Both Pirkei Avot passages speak to how we conduct ourselves in the world. How does this relate to Ben Franklin’s definition of tranquility?

- We might summarize Franklin here as saying: “Don’t be petty and don’t cry over spilled milk.” Why is tranquility, understood in this way, important?

- What are the consequences of failing to be tranquil?

- When was the last time a “trifle” or “accident” bothered you? Were you able to practice this virtue, and let go? If so, what helped you successfully let go? If not, what hindered you?

- How can keeping Shabbat encourage tranquility?