

Divrei Hokhmah for 5774

CONVERSATION STARTER 10

Introduction: The **Mishpachah: Modern Jewish Family Project** focuses our attention on the diversity of the families that make up our communities. Who are they? What do they look like? How welcoming and inclusive are we no matter the family structure?

The first step in promoting pluralism is to understand the importance of our communication, whether in direct conversation, when speaking about each other, or when we write or email, etc.

Many of these Conversation Starters are from the personal experiences of diverse families in our communities and are found in the August material, “Beginning the Conversation.”

Others were taken from everyday sources such as synagogue bulletins and conversations.

Over the next year, as we become more attuned to the effects of language, we will reinforce the wisdom of Proverbs: *mavet ve-chayyim beyad lashon* (death and life are in the power of the tongue). In other words, language counts!

Thanks to the members of the PAC for creating these discussion questions.



Read the Conversation Starter before a meeting or event and then open it up for discussion. You will be amazed at the response.

Dessert Night Out: Bring your spouse, significant other or come alone and share your evening with other people in their 30's, 40's and early 50's. Bring your favorite dessert to share or a bottle of wine...

Discussion questions

- What strikes you about this announcement?
- What do you think about “*or come alone ...*”? Can you think of a different way to say this?
- In Genesis 18:1-5, our patriarch, Abraham, the ultimate host, runs to greet his three visitors, inviting them to rest under the tree, bathe their feet, drink, eat, to refresh themselves. How can we as individuals and as communities exemplify Abraham’s hospitality in our programming and publicity?