



Hachnasat Chochma (Accessing Collective Wisdom): A Guide for Inclusive Problem Solving

This guide summarizes the key concepts and activities to help you tap into collective wisdom and foster greater inclusion within your communities.

Our Goal: To equip you with skills to utilize both individual and shared knowledge to effectively address problems, with a specific focus on fostering greater inclusion.

Key Concepts & Frameworks

- **Shifting Perspectives: The Mug Exercise**
 - In this exercise, one person holds a mug in front of a group of participants. Participants are asked to describe the mug from where they are sitting. Depending on the participant's point of view, the mug will be described differently.
 - It illustrated a crucial point: our individual perspectives are limited. What we see depends on our viewpoint, and others may have equally valid, yet different, understandings.
 - **Key Takeaway:** Recognizing the validity of diverse perspectives is the first step towards accessing a more complete picture and finding more effective solutions. We don't know what we don't know.
- **The ChochMap: A Framework for Inclusive Problem Solving**
 - This tool helps us systematically explore different levels of knowledge and awareness related to a challenge.
 - You will start with a "HOW MIGHT WE" question.
 - Example: Instead of "Queer community members don't come to our Torah study," we ask, "HOW MIGHT WE" make this Torah study class more inclusive and welcoming to queer families?"

- **"HOW MIGHT WE" (HMW) Questions: Shifting to Solutions**
 - Reframing inclusion challenges as "HOW MIGHT WE" questions helps shift our focus from the problem itself to potential solutions and opportunities for innovation.
 - Example: Instead of "Queer community members don't come to our Torah study," we ask, "HOW MIGHT WE" make this Torah study class more inclusive and welcoming to queer families?"

Applying the Framework: Making Torah Study More Inclusive

(Example)

Based on the information provided, here's how the ChochMap might look for the challenge of making Torah study more inclusive:

Things we know that we know



- We have a handful of queer community members who participate in other congregational offerings and programs.
- We know the person running Torah study is a longtime community member with expertise, and the study has been conducted in traditional ways.
- We know that we struggle to diversify attendance in Torah study.

Things that we know we don't know:



- I don't know if queer community members (or others) are interested in Torah study.
- I don't know what is currently being done to promote and invite diverse participation.
- I don't know what is actually happening in the class environment that might be a barrier.
- What are the specific needs and interests of potential participants from underrepresented groups?
- Are there any perceived or real barriers to entry for different community members?

Things that we don't know we know:



- Are you aware of examples of engaging and meaningful Torah study in queer or mixed spaces?
- What is the relationship between the leader of the class and queer community members? What are their experiences and perspectives?
- How is the content of the course and study decided? How do the parties involved relate to this process?
- What are the opportunities for increased leadership engagement from diverse community members?
- What informal conversations or feedback have been shared about Torah study within different community groups?

Things that we don't know that we don't know:



- Are there unconscious biases at play that we are not aware of?
- Are there broader community dynamics influencing participation that we haven't considered?
- Are there unexpected assumptions underlying the current structure of Torah study?

Your Action Plan: WHAT? SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

WHAT? (Summary of Learning):

- We learned that accessing collective wisdom involves recognizing the limitations of individual perspectives and actively seeking diverse viewpoints.
- The ChochMap provides a structured way to explore different levels of knowledge related to a problem.
- True empowerment comes from within, enabling individuals to leverage resources.
- Reframing challenges as "HOW MIGHT WE" questions opens pathways to creative solutions.

SO WHAT? (Significance & Impact):

- Effectively utilizing collective wisdom can lead to more innovative and inclusive solutions that better serve the needs of the entire community.
- By tapping into the "Treasure Box" of hidden knowledge, we can uncover valuable insights and experiences that might otherwise be missed.
- Focusing on empowerment recognizes the inherent capacity of all individuals to contribute to positive change.

The ChochMAP

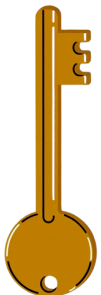
Example (Torah Study)

<p>THINGS WE KNOW WE KNOW</p>  <p>Explicitly known information & resources. We have some queer community members involved in other programs. We know the leader has expertise and the study is traditional. We know attendance is not diverse.</p>	<p>THINGS WE DON'T KNOW WE KNOW</p>  <p>Identified gaps in our knowledge. We don't know the interest level of queer members in Torah study. We don't know current promotion efforts. We don't know what happens in the class.</p>
<p>THINGS WE KNOW WE DON'T KNOW</p>  <p>Hidden knowledge, experiences & insights within the group. Questions to Unlock: What examples of engaging Torah study exist in queer or mixed spaces? What is the relationship between the leader and queer members? How is content decided? What are leadership opportunities?</p>	<p>THINGS WE DON'T KNOW WE DON'T KNOW</p>  <p>Unforeseen factors & blind spots. (These are the unknowns we aren't even aware of yet)</p>

How to Use It:

When facing an inclusion challenge, brainstorm examples for each quadrant. This is where you use the symbols as visual guides for each quadrant prompt. This structured approach helps uncover hidden knowledge and identify crucial information gaps.

- The Key & Empowerment Theory
 - THE KEY: Represents the inherent ability within each individual to access and leverage resources. Remember, this "key" always travels with you.
 - Empowerment Theory: True empowerment comes from within – it's your ability to access and utilize the resources around you in various environments. This internal "key" cannot be taken away.
 - Connection to Collective Wisdom: Recognizing the inherent "key" in everyone highlights the valuable resources and perspectives each individual brings to the collective.



NOW WHAT? (Actionable Next Steps):

Identify one concrete and actionable step you feel empowered to take immediately following this session. Consider:

Who might you need to speak with to gather different perspectives?

Where could you begin to explore the "Treasure Box" related to an inclusion challenge you identified?

How can you reframe your challenge as a "HOW MIGHT WE" question?

Thank you for your active participation and willingness to explore these important concepts. We hope this guide serves as a valuable resource as you continue to foster greater inclusion within your communities.

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