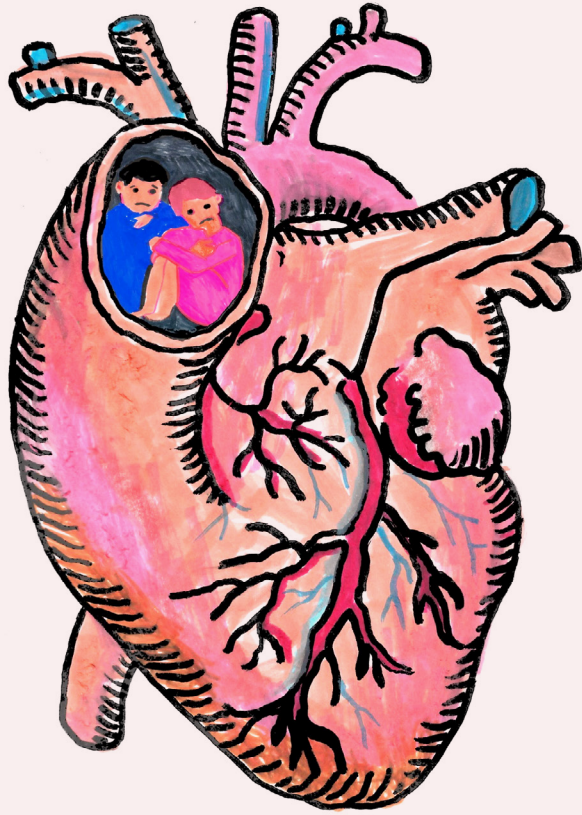


# The Interconnectedness of Human Beings

## Facilitator Guide

### Why should I care about someone I don't know?



הלב שלנו בעזה. הצילו את החטופים!

Our Heart is in Gaza. Save the Captives! © Shoshke Engelmayer 2023

### Info For Facilitator



#### Target Audience:

Teens, young adults, adults



#### Length Of Program:

60 minutes for discussion & study session, followed by action session



#### Materials & Prep:

- Room Setup: Two concentric circles of chairs, according to the number of participants, with the chairs of both circles facing each other. Each participant in the inner circle should have a pair in the outer circle.
- Copies of the source sheet for each participant.



For a Jewish perspective on interconnectedness, [see the unit on Mutual Responsibility and Redeeming the Captives](#), in the Peoplehood & Community collection. Feel free to incorporate that source sheet into your learning as well.

## FRAMING THE ISSUE

The topic of the interconnectedness between human beings was apparently on the mind of 23 year old Hersh Goldberg Polin before he was taken captive by Hamas on October 7th. Hersh was in the middle of reading "[The Art of Happiness](#)" by Howard C. Cutler and the Dalai Lama. His bookmark is at Chapter Six, awaiting his return.

Rather than emphasizing the differences between people, the interconnectedness approach allows us to see the similarity within humanity. Knowing we are all connected can spark a new level of empathy and commitment to the well-being of the other.

How might this approach be helpful to us in advocating for the release of the hostages?

## LET'S EXPLORE

- *Facilitator introduces the session with the framing above.*
- *Participants sit in two concentric circles, with the chairs of both circles facing each other. Each participant in the inner circle should have a partner in the outer circle.*
- *Facilitator asks the following question and invites the people in the inner circle to answer with their partner in the outer circle:*
  - *Try and remember a situation in which you felt empathy for someone you didn't know. Please think of one example and share it in story form with your partner. Describe it in detail, including where and when it happened.*
- *After 3-4 minutes, the facilitator repeats the question above and invites them to switch roles. This time the partner in the outer circle is the story teller.*
- *After 3-4 minutes, the facilitator asks the participants in the outer circle to get up and move one chair to their left. Participants in the inner circle stay in their seats, so now they each have a new partner.*
- *Facilitator asks the question below and invites the new pairs to discuss, at their own pace, while making sure there is time for each partner to share.*
  - *Have you ever felt that you are a small yet important part of the world or humanity? Please share it with your partner and describe it in detail.*
- *After 5-7 minutes, the facilitator asks the participants in the outer circle to get up and move one chair to their left. Participants in the inner circle stay in their seats, so now they each have a new partner.*
- *With their new partner, each pair reads the source sheet and discusses the questions at the bottom of the text.*

## TAKE ACTION!

**Below are a few examples of different type of actions you could take on as a group:**

### ■ **Wear the Hostages on Your Heart**

Encourage your group to join in this campaign of marking and sharing the number of days the hostages have been held in captivity. With a black marker, write the current number of days on a piece of white masking tape, and attach it to your chest, near your heart. Use this as a conversation starter to raise awareness of the plight of the hostages. [click here for link to badge](#)

### ■ **Weekly Meditation**

Start a weekly public meditation session, to increase the awareness and sense of interconnectedness of humanity with the hostages' pictures in the background and cards with initiatives people can act on, such as: [oneminaday.com](http://oneminaday.com)

### ■ **Interconnectedness Reading Group**

Start a group that meets weekly to read and discuss the book Hersh Goldberg Polin was reading: The Art of Happiness. Use it as an opportunity to engage participants with the actions above.

## CLOSING INTENTION

- After examining the value of empathy that derives from the idea that we are all connected and dependent on each other, what do you plan on doing differently in your daily life?
- Take one small action immediately on behalf of the hostages, in captivity, suffering far away and dependent on your deeds. Call your representatives right now, via [oneminaday.com](http://oneminaday.com).
- Now, commit to one small ongoing daily action that you will take on: wearing the number of days every day until they return, or calling representatives every day until their return. Or even better, do both.