

Hosting Hope - Global “Ushpizin” Project

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On the first anniversary of Simchat Torah 5784, a holiday that became a day of mourning, we searched for ways to find hope. We found it through a combination of the Jewish tradition of hosting “Ushpizin”, together with seven figures from modern society. These are individuals who made exceptional contributions over the past year to the State of Israel and the Jewish people, and these programs were written to support their actions. The project’s aim is to inspire hope and resilience in different communities around the world during the upcoming Sukkot holiday, in light of the events since October 7th until today. The project includes the unique story of the figures, alongside the value they represent, as well as a suggested activities supporting the value, and a call to action.

A sukkah is a place that is neither inside nor outside - a complex space that allows us to examine what comes into the home and what doesn’t, and also allows us to get to know the other. Part of the joy of the holiday is also to host, including - Ushpizin (guests in Aramaic). The custom of Ushpizin is a tradition associated with the Sukkot holiday, in which it is customary to invite spiritual guests to the sukkah each day of the holiday. The tradition symbolizes hospitality and the value of unity and community.

A sukkah is a place that raises questions - how do we rebuild and bridge? This is a place that allows us to observe, examine and understand how we re-enter the home. In the past year, so many Israelis and Jews around the world have lost their safe home (some literally), and still - they sought connection.

There are many stories of meaningful action and massive mobilization from all corners of the land and the world around the Iron Swords war. Out of the many initiatives, we chose to focus on seven diverse guests, each of whom represents a value: **Efrat and Hanoch Daum** - Solidarity, **Iris Haim** - Generosity of Spirit, **Rabbi Bezalel Cohen** - Bridging, **Yussef Alziadna** - Partnership, **the Robinzons** - Family, **Reef Peretz** - Community, **Kosha Dillz** - Identity. One can also add an empty chair or place for Ushpizin chosen by the family / facilitator / activity leader.

Each of the Ushpizin selected gave their consent to participate in this project and to continue to spread hope. Every day of the Sukkot holiday, every guest we meet, is another tool that can help us build our shared home together - while fully reflecting the challenges facing us in Israel and in the Diaspora. Each day will be dedicated to a different Ushpizin, and will include: an explanation of the Ushpizin and their actions, a learning card including an invitation to a discussion, and a card with a call to action. In addition, a poster of all the figures is attached and a prayer for leaving the sukkah that was written by Rabbi Tamar Duvdevani, which can be hung in the sukkah.

We hope that the project will inspire thousands of Israelis and Jews around the world during the upcoming Sukkot holiday, and beyond.

**With hope for better days,
The Project Team**
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Facilitator Instructions and Recommendations

Conducting the Activity:

- It's recommended to coordinate with the organization's or community's leadership to schedule a suitable date and time for the activity or activities.
- If there is a community Sukkah, it is a good idea to print the attached posters - Ushpizin figures and a prayer for leaving the sukkah, for display in this sukkah. The activity can be done in this Sukkah as well.
- Since this is a digital file, it can be forwarded to appropriate mailing lists for the community and encourage people to conduct a more intimate activity in their own sukkah.

Suggested activity structure:

- Opening (10 minutes): Introduce yourselves and the purpose of the activity. Briefly explain the tradition of Ushpizin and the project. Use the posters, and possibly print them in advance and hang them in the sukkah.
- Activity choosing one of the figures (30 minutes): Present the figure using Card 1, and carry out one of the activities that appear in Card 2 of that figure.
- Discussion and summary (10 minutes): Encourage discussion on the value and the activity performed, and using Card 3 of the figure ("Take Action"). One can conclude with a call to action that will realize the activity into daily life.

General tips:

- Go through the activity beforehand and print what is needed.
- Be flexible with the content of the activity according to the type and size of the group and the age range. The activities allow a lot of room for modification at the discretion of the facilitator.
- We would be happy if you take photos of the activity and share them with us! ushpizinproject@gmail.com

Technical - Printing:

- Cards - A5 (half Letter), thick paper - 170 grams or more (optional), double-sided
- Poster + Prayer - A3 (Ledger)
- Instructions (these pages) - A4 (letter)
- Box covers - front and back - A5 (half letter)
- Box sticker - A4 (letter)

Good Luck!

The Project Team