

Yo, It's a Bro Thing! – Bro Session 2

Goals:

- To continue to bond as a group
- To learn about overcoming life struggles

Timeline: 12:30-2:30pm

0:00-0:30:	Eat lunch and chill
0:30-0:40:	Bro Shake / Check in
0:40-0:50	Male Stereotypes in todays world
0:50-0:70:	Circle of Questions
0:70-1:15:	Jacob Physical Narrative
1:15-1:20:	Conclusion / Bro Shake

Bro Shake / Check in (10 minutes)

Facilitator states, *What up fellow bro's! It's so good to be back together once again for another bro sesh. Last session, we started talking about some of the stereotypes that revolve around being a man. This bro sesh, we are going to focus on competition and the struggles of being a man. I want to remind everyone that this is a safe space, and we have all agreed to try new things and to practice kavod. With that being said, let's commence in our Bro Shake!*

Male Stereotypes in today's world (10 minutes)

Watch – *What if Guys and Girls Changed Roles?*

<http://vidcy.com/what-if-guys-and-girls-changed-roles-social-media/>

Discuss:

1. ***What are some of the stereotypes being portrayed in this video?***
2. ***What does this video say about men in our society?***
3. ***What about women?***

Circle of Questions (20 minutes):

Leaders explain the guidelines of the program: You will be asked a series of questions; go around the circle and everyone answers the questions one by one; you cannot elaborate but just give one or two word answers; please be totally silent if it is not your turn. For each question, a new person will be the first person to begin answering the questions. The leader begins asking the questions. Encourage them to really think about their answers. If someone absolutely cannot think of an answer, they can pass. When all of the questions are finished, allow the group to ask questions of each other, things that are brought up by the original questions.

1. What is your favorite color?
2. What is the first thing you do when you wake up in the mornings?
3. What is your favorite ice cream flavor?
4. Which seat would you prefer on an airplane? (window, aisle, or middle)
5. How do you eat your eggs?
6. What is your favorite movie of all time?

7. If money were no concern, what car would you buy?
8. What is your favorite meal of the day?
9. Have you ever cheated on a test at school?
10. Would you rather live by the ocean or the mountains?
11. Where would you go on your dream vacation?
12. Do you eat your mac and cheese with a fork or a spoon?
13. What is your favorite TV show of all time?
14. Is it important to you to marry someone Jewish?
15. Are you a dog or a cat person?
16. What condiment do you like to eat with your French fries?
17. Would you consider yourself a realist or a dreamer?
18. What was the last piece of music you purchased?
19. True or false: I have no concerns about being up at Noar Night this year
20. Would you rather have unlimited wealth or extremely good looks?
21. What two things would you want with you if you were stranded on an island?
22. True or false: I always stand up for what I believe in
23. Finish this sentence: When I enter a room full of people, I feel...
24. Who in your life has most influenced your values?
25. Would you rather give advice or get advice?
26. What is the quality that you look most for in a girlfriend/boyfriend?
27. What is the quality that you look most for in a friend?
28. Would you rather have the ability to fly or to be invisible?
29. Have you ever shoplifted?
30. True or false: I sometimes pick my nose
31. Which international figure, living or dead, would you most like to meet?
32. Would you rather be a famous actor/actress or a famous director?
33. Which is more important to you in life – career, family, or money?
34. True or false: I often need alone time
35. What physical quality would you most like to change about yourself?
36. Would you rather be able to tell the future or change the past?
37. What is your biggest fear?
38. What one word would you pick to describe yourself?
39. Whose answers did you feel were most like your own?
40. Who do you feel was the most honest?
41. Whose answers most surprised you?
42. Whose answers make you want to get to know them better?

Jacob Physical Narrative (45 minutes)

Participants should be sitting in a circle, in groups of about 8. The program is much more effective in smaller groups. I would not run it if it is larger than 12 participants or smaller than 6 participants.

The facilitator will read through the Jacob narrative and facilitate the various activities throughout the narrative:

I am going to ask everyone to spread out and to lie down on your back. Make sure that your hands are by your sides and that you do not have any tension in your body. (wait a couple of minutes for everyone to get comfortable and quite) The program that you are about to participate in is an extremely physical

experience. It will involve vigorous physical activity and should be taken seriously. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or do not want to participate, please feel free to sit out.

With this being said, I am going to ask everyone to close their eyes. Focus on your breathing; breath in... and breath out... continue to do this throughout this experience. You are no longer a bro lying down at temple Isaiah. Think back to 5,000 years ago... long before your time here living in California, long before the creation of the Jewish state Israel and the Holocaust, long before the Jewish pogroms in Russia and the massive persecution of the Jewish people across Europe, long before the Diaspora of the Jewish people and the destruction of our Temple in Jerusalem, and long before the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt. This story starts with our Patriarchs. Once God made his covenant with Abraham, that a great nation will be made from your kin, the tradition of passing on this birthright has gone from father to son for centuries. Abraham passed his birthright down to Isaac, which brings us to the story of Jacob...

Rebekah went to inquire of the lord, and the lord answered:

“Two nations are in your womb, two separate peoples shall issue from your body; one people shall be mightier than the other, and the old shall serve the young.”

You are Jacob. You are the son of Isaac and Rebekah. You are the grandson of Abraham and Sarah. You are the forefather of a great nation. And it is here, Jacob, that you are born. Stand up Jacob, wake up!

At this time, the facilitator(s) will go around and tap each participant on the shoulder, telling them to wake up. They will then start running to get things going. Run about 5 laps around the room. After running, bring it back in and form a circle, shoulder to shoulder, with your group.

The facilitator continues... Jacob as you are born you will go through a great struggle. In your mother’s womb, you and your twin brother Esau are constantly fighting with each other. You must break out away from Esau, Jacob!

The students will get into a tightly formed circle. One student is in the middle and needs to try and push through. This will continue until each student has gone.

The next activity involves a looser circle. Two students will stand in the middle and try to push each other out of the circle. This symbolizes the struggle between Jacob and Esau. Have the students lie back down and continue to breathe.

The facilitator continues... During the birth of the two boys, Esau came out first, and was covered with a red, hairy beard. Grasped to Esau’s heel as Jacob’s hand, as he would not give up the fight which started in the womb. The two boys continued to struggle throughout their childhood. Esau was drawn to his father, as they would often go on great hunts and provide food for their family. Jacob was drawn to his mother, and would help her out with cooking and all household chores. As the boys grew up, they grew further and further apart. One day, when the boys were much older, Esau returns to camp extremely famished from a long journey hunting. Immediately smelling the stew that you are cooking, Esau begs for you to give him some. However, as the smart, mischievous man that you are, you decide this is a perfect opportunity for you to trade a warm meal for the birthright which was to be given to Esau as the oldest son. Because Esau is so famished, he has no choice but to accept.

You both continue to grow and your father Isaac becomes very old and ill. When it is time for him to pass on his birthright, your mother Rebekah decides to hold to her promise to trick your father into blessing you. Rebekah dresses you up in animal furs and you ensue to trick your father into thinking that you are Esau. The birthright has now been passed down to you, as the youngest son! When Esau finds out about this trickery, he immediately runs after you and tries to track you down. Your mother tells you to run away, and that is exactly what you do... RUN JACOB!!!

The students will stand up and should start running laps. Run for about 3 minutes, keep pushing the kids screaming that Esau is right behind and you must run fast. Throughout this time, have them gather together and hide and then continue running screaming that Esau is right behind them.

While the students are running the narrator continues... Jacob you are very tired and need to rest. Lie down Jacob and rest for the night. Breathe in... and breathe out... continue to breathe like this for a couple of minutes. As you are resting, you fall asleep and begin to dream. In this dream you awake next to a ladder that is infinitely going up towards the sky. An angel calls down and offers you a blessing. "I am the lord, the lord of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac: The ground on which you are lying I will assign to you and to your offspring" Now get up Jacob and continue on your journey. Go find your uncle Laban, for he will be able to help you! Jacob, you finally arrive at a well where you have seen the most beautiful girl in the entire world. You immediately know that you want to marry this girl and begin to plead with Laban. Laban tells you that you must work 7 years before you can marry Rachel. Now get up and work!

Jacob will run laps constituting 7 years. In past, I have done 3 laps for a year, but you really want the participants to tire and get a workout. Throughout the laps, I make the participants "jump over rocks" and "duck and roll under logs" as an extra way for them to work out. After running 7 laps, have the students lie back down and breathe.

Jacob, it is your wedding day. After 7 long, hard, hot years of shepherding, you are FINALLY ready to marry the woman of your dreams. The 7 years flew by because of the end goal of marrying your beautiful bride, Rachel. You finally arrive at the Chuppah, watching your bride walk down and come to you, and you lift her veil to finally see her beautiful face, and O NO! It's not Rachel, but in turn it's her older sister, Leah!! YOU HAVE BEEN TRICKED! Angrily, you approach Laban and he says that you must work another 7 years before you are able to call Rachel your bride. So that's what you do!

Jacob continues to work for 7 more years then lies back down.

Jacob, after 7 additional years of hard work, you have now reached your second wedding day with Rachel. But you have certainly changed since the last time you were here. Over these past 7 years you started a family with Leah. You now have children of your own. You have also reflected greatly on your life. Remembering all of the times you have fought with your brother, Esau, stealing his birthright, betraying your father. You realize that you will have to confront your demons sooner than later. You remember your dream with the angel and how she proclaimed that a great nation will be made from your people. But just as your mind drifts, your beautiful bride walks into your arms and you finally get to marry Rachel! After your wedding, a messenger appears to you and tells you that your brother Esau wants to see you. You gather all of your belongings and bring with you a whole camp of people and things. Afraid for your encounter with Esau, you tell your family that you must go without them and send them off to your home. It is here where you lie down to rest. In a daze of sleep, you begin to wrestle with a man...

Students will be lined up on one end of the room and will be told to crawl to the other end. However, in doing this, they must try and prevent everyone else by grabbing their ankles. Remind the students to be careful of kicking each other in the face. As they are doing this activity and each participant has someone's ankle in hand, state...

Jacob, you wrestled with an Angel and won! While you grab the angel and have it in your hands, you demand that you are blessed. The angel states, "Jacob, your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with being divine and human and have prevailed." And it is here Jacob where you are blessed. Of course, you are left with a limp from your struggle with the Angel, one that will always be with you. After your encounter with the Angel, you have a very peaceful visit with your brother Esau. You reminisce on the old times and can finally live in peace.

Have the students return to their circle and discuss:

- How are you all feeling right now? Physically? Emotionally? How were you feeling throughout this journey?
- Summarize the Jacob story and explain what kind of struggles he went through. Name the struggles of Jacob
- How did Jacob overcome his struggles? What were some characteristics of the Jacob narrative that made Jacob stronger, what made Jacob weak? What kept him going during all of his rough patches?
- What are some of your struggles or fears?
- What are some things that you do to help overcome these struggles?
- How did you overcome your struggles today during this activity? What are some things that you guys did to help each other out
- How can you do a better job of overcoming your struggles in the future?
- In a 6 word memoir, how would you sum up the moral of Jacob's journey?