

THE UNFAIR GAME

Time needed	30 minutes
Age range	Any teen
Background of teen	Any background can participate in this club, no previous knowledge needed
Set up	Groups of 10 or so

Goals:

JSUers will consider their reactions when situations are clearly unfair and frustrating.

Relevance:

Sometimes life can really seem unfair! For some unfortunate people, life may seem more unfair for some than for others. When the game is unfair, people may not get angry, but in real life many people who feel their life is unfair who have trouble following the rules tend to have a lot to talk about at the end of the game.

Active Learning:

Prior to the activity, take out all but a couple of the spades out of the decks of cards and mix the few spades left towards to the top of the deck. Have one spare deck to replace the spades with different suits from the spare deck.

Make groups of 10 or so teens, give each group a deck, the rules and each person should receive 5 pieces of candy. Inform the group that they will be able to keep whatever candy they have at the end of the game but not to eat it before the end of the game. It is important that you (the leader) participate in the game.

Either set a time limit or end the game when a few people are eliminated or when the pot is filled with candy. At the end of the game select the person with the best sportsmanship to take all the candy from the pot (since this is the unfair game- give it to yourself).

The idea is to make the game truly unfair just as life can be. Resist the temptation to evenly share the leftover candy in the middle. Reveal that the deck was stacked against them if they don't figure it out. Call it the candy game, not the unfair game until the game is over.

Supplies needed:

1. A few decks of cards
2. Dice
3. Bag of candy (wrapped)
4. Copies of the rules

Step by step planning:

Time	Facilitator Activity	Teen activity
5 mins	Split the group into manageable sizes, introduce the candy game, give out candy and cards.	
10 mins	Play the candy game	Play the candy game
10 mins	Facilitate questions	Group discussion
5 mins	Wrap up message	

Facilitation Questions:

1. Was the game unfair? Why? Why not?
2. How do you feel right now?
3. Do you ever feel life your life is unfair? If so, when and how do you handle it when things seem unfair?
4. Do you think it would help you in your own life to change how you act when life seems unfair? If so, how?

Wrap up message and Torah thought: Adapted from Rabbi Peysach Krohn

Tehilim Chapter 20	תהלים פרק כ
These trust in chariots and these in horses, but we- we mention the name of the Lord our God.	ח) אֱלֹהֵי בְרָכָה וְאֱלֹהֵי בְּסוּסִים וְאֶנְחֵנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִזְכִּיר

Chesky Shoenig of Oak Park Michigan a sweet beloved boy was diagnosed with leukemia. His family was devastated. One morning in shul someone approached Chesky's father and said "don't worry your son will be OK." Chesky father asked him "and what makes you so sure?" He replied "It's a pasuk "אלה ברכב ואלה בסוסים ואנחנו בשם ה' נזכיר" we Jews live by a different set of rules." Chesky's father would constantly repeat these words to himself throughout the course of the illness. However Chesky, though putting up a miraculous fight eventually departed from this world due to the illness. During shiva, Elya Shoenig (Chesky's father) remembered the verse in Tehilim.

Hadn't the passuk assure that his son would be OK? What happened to the encouragement it had given him? One day, however it struck him. Dovid HaMelech was not describing battles during the war but rather an appraisal after the war. When a nation loses an armed conflict it second guesses itself "If we only had done this I we only employed a different tactic that is the meaning of אלה ברכב . But Jews don't look back. They understand that if a battle was lost it was because Hashem intended it to be so ואנחנו בשם ה' נזכיר. "Now," thought Mr. Sheonig, "the next verse in the chapter fits perfectly because of their frustration and false perception that things could have been different ואנחנו קמנו ונתעודד because we Jews understand that this is the way it was meant to be and with faith in Hashem's mercy we have the strength to continue to live".

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO EXPLAIN WHY BAD THINGS HAPPEN OR WHY LIFE CAN SEEM SO UNFAIR. THE MAIN MESSAGE OF THIS SESSION IS TO CONSIDER HOW WE RESPOND TO LIFE'S UNFAIR TURNS AND DIFFICULT TIMES.

CANDY GAME RULES

When it is your turn you may roll the dice or select a card

If you roll the dice and get:

- ❖ ODD- you must put a piece of candy in the pot
- ❖ EVEN- you may take a piece of candy from someone else's pile
- ❖ DOUBLE- you must give a piece of candy to someone else in the group (this is not counted as an even number)

If you draw a card:

- ❖ HEART- you must give a piece of candy to the person on your right
- ❖ CLUB- you must give a piece of candy to the person on your left
- ❖ DIMOND- you may take one piece of candy from the pot
- ❖ SPADE- you may take one piece of candy from each person

❖ **If you lose all your candy you are eliminated from the game.**

❖ **If you are eliminated you can continue to sit in the circle but may only resume playing if someone gives you a piece candy (as determined by cards or dice).**

❖ **The leader decides who displayed the best sportsmanship and will award the candy left in the pot to this person.**

❖ **After an allotted time the person who had the most candy wins, and everyone may keep the candy they have acquired.**