



What is Betzavta?

Betzavta is a Hebrew word and means "together". The title of this method of learning democracy, which was developed by the Adam Institute in Israel, makes up the programme and philosophical background at the same time. Betzavta questions the traditional and unsatisfactory paths of conventional conflict resolution with surprising seminar units and presents in its place the concept of **creative conflict resolution**. With the help of a special conflict dilemma method, it achieves the essential conditions for tolerant social interaction: the willingness to mutually recognize the right to personal freedom. On this basis, the four steps of democratic decision-making provide the conflicting parties with a valuable tool for dealing with conflicts in a novel way. **Betzavta is an internationally renowned democracy education programme used in schools and non-school educational institutions.**

Three-Day Training

During the three day training, four main themes are covered through interactive activities. These are: Freedom and Equality, Principles of Democracy, Majorities/Minorities and Democratic Decision Making. These themes overlap and are inter-related, as each activity can incorporate any of these four themes into the content. The training is informed and given by the group dynamics. This means that the structure of the activities is known but the course of the discussion is not. This allows for the freedom to be present and explore topics together. Rather than the trainer giving information to the participants as theories or methods, the participants instead guide their own process, making discoveries about themselves through their relation to others.

Goal

Almost every activity in Betzavta contains a unique reflection session that divides the discussion into 'result' and 'process'. One of the goals of Betzavta is to practice self-reflection as a process. Rather than discussing and 'solving' the challenges in our societies (and in ourselves), we allow ourselves to observe these challenges. Often people favor the result-based approach in order to feel secure and comfortable. The Betzavta method allows for a certain level of discomfort in order to open up the mind to more questions. Questioning ourselves and our patterns of behavior allows us to break out of these patterns - to recognize ourselves outside of the boundaries that we imposed - the external boundaries of nationalities, religions, ethnicities, as well as the internal boundaries of judgements, opinions, personalities. In this way, the Betzavta method brings together the political and the personal and allows for an integrated approach towards problem-solving - one that is aware and inclusive towards all.

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