



Balfour Declaration

Self-Determination

90-120-Minute Learning Experience

Before beginning, check out our [Facilitator's Guide](#), which explains how to use this learning activity as a set induction prior to watching the video.

Self-determination can be explored through many lenses, including personal (a person is able to fulfill their own goals and dreams, and live their life as an authentic self) and national (when a country is viewed as autonomous and is able to govern itself). In either situation, the entity (individual or country) needs outside validation from allies and upstanders in order to achieve its dreams and become the best version of itself. Through interactive education experiences—such as gameplay, debate, role play and discussion—participants will explore the challenges of achieving goals when there are no allies, as well as the feeling of success when upstanders help them accomplish what they set out to do.

Activities (65–95 min)

Supplies: Laptop/projector/internet/speakers, copies of the three-song lyric sheets (one copy per person), highlighters (one per person), pens/pencils, blank paper; vision board prompts, chalk, 17"x 6" [adhesive chalk paper](#) per person; 18x24" [canvas](#) per person, magazines, hodge podge, paper cups, foam brushes, scissors, Sharpies (many colors), construction paper, wet wipes.

1. Anthem for Achieving Autonomy (20-35 min)

- a. Set up the A/V equipment so that everyone can hear the music you will play.
- b. Hand out copies of the lyrics (links below), highlighters and pens/pencils.
- c. Play all three of these music selections and ask the participants to follow along on the lyric sheets. Tell them to highlight phrases they think are most representative of self-determination and autonomy and circle phrases/words they think are most representative of someone helping someone else to be themselves, live a self-determined life, and achieve their goals.
 - i. MisterWives' "Hurricane" [audio](#) and [lyrics](#)
 - ii. Marlo Thomas & Friends' "Free to be You and Me" [audio](#) and [lyrics](#)
 - iii. Morcheeba's "Love Dub" [audio](#) and [lyrics](#)
- d. Divide the group into work groups of 3-4 people each. Give the groups blank paper.



- e. Task the work groups with comparing/contrasting what they highlighted and circled and then pulling out the most important ideas/phrases they agree on from each song. They should integrate them into a new poem called “Anthem for Achieving Autonomy.” (8-10 min)
- f. Bring everyone back together and have the groups share their poems.
- g. Discuss:
 - i. What role did independence play in your poems?
 - ii. What role did the freedom to uniquely express yourselves play in your poems?
 - iii. What role did self-determination play in your poems?
 - iv. What role did allies/supporters play in your poems?

2. Vision Boards (45-65 min)

- a. Give each person a blank 18x24 canvas, a strip of 17.5x6 chalk paper and a pair of scissors.
- b. Place in the center of each table a few copies of the Vision Board Prompts (below), miscellaneous magazines, construction paper, Sharpies, hodge podge in paper cups, foam brushes, and chalk in paper cups.
- c. Have the participants place the strip of chalk paper on one side of their board.
- d. Explain: A Vision Board is a tool used to help clarify, concentrate and maintain focus on specific life goals. Literally, a vision board is any sort of board on which you display images that represent whatever you want to be, do or have in your life. Our Vision Boards have two sections: one side that depicts our goals, and one side (the chalk side) to think about what/who we need to achieve our goals.
- e. First, have participants to take some time to think about the Vision Board Prompts and which ones are the most important for them to figure out and achieve. They do not need to answer all of them, and they may have ideas besides for these.
- f. Using the art supplies, have participants decorate the white side of their Vision Board to represent these goals (can use metaphoric images or even write them down). (20-30 min)
- g. Once their “Vision” is complete, have them take chalk and answer the Vision Board Ally prompts on the chalkboard side. (5-8 min)

Vision Board Prompts:

- i. What subjects do you want to be the most successful in?
- ii. What kind of friends do you want? (Many? A few close ones? Qualities?)
- iii. What kind of friend do you want to be?
- iv. What are your plans for after high school/college?
- v. What jobs interest you?



- vi. Do you want your job to bring you recognition? Power? Make a difference in the world?
- vii. Do you want to work with others or alone?
- viii. Do you need a job in which you can use your creativity?
- ix. What material possessions do you dream of having?
- x. What life experiences do you want to have?
- xi. Where do you see yourself 25 years from now?
- xii. When you are an independent adult, do you see yourself with a spouse? Children?
- xiii. What does spousal partnership look like to you?
- xiv. How do you define success in terms of school? Family? Work? Society? Personal happiness?
- xv. I would like to be remembered for ...
- xvi. What hobbies do you want to excel at? Or what new hobbies do you want to try?
- xvii. How do you want to spend your free time?
- xviii. Where do you want to live? (City, rural, suburb? Apartment? House? Climate?)

Vision Board Ally Prompts:

- i. What skills do you need to achieve your goals? What new knowledge do you need?
 - ii. Who will help you get those skills and knowledge?
 - iii. Who do you need to support you in order to achieve your goals? What support system do you need?
- h. As they finish, divide participants into pairs or triads and have them share their Vision Boards. Have them challenge each other to think about who else can be helpful in achieving their goals. People can add these to their chalkboard list. (10-12 min)
- i. Bring everyone together and discuss: (9-12 min)
- i. How is setting your own goals about self-determination?
 - ii. How unique were your goals as compared to others in your small groups?
 - iii. If someone else answered the prompts for you and made you achieve those goals, how would you feel?
 - iv. Do you think you would be successful? Why or why not?
 - v. Is your "Vision" achievable if you are entirely on your own? Why or why not?
 - vi. If someone else wanted to derail your achievements, what would it take? How might it happen?



- vii. Use adjectives/qualities to describe the relationship(s) between you and the people on your Ally list.

Processing: Grade 8-Adult (10-15 min)

- How can having clear goals help us achieve success?
- How can having unique goals for ourselves make it harder for us to accomplish something than if we have common goals like many others?
- In thinking about your experiences today, what do you now think about the role others play in your success?
- If you know that someone else is always there to help you, how does that help you take risks?
- What might it feel like if you don't have support to reach your goals?
- Is it possible to reach your goals without support? Why or why not?
- In Ethics of the Fathers, the great sage Hillel states, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me?" (1:14). What does he mean by this? What does it say about self-determination? He then adds: "But if I am only for myself, who am I?" How does this statement jive with the first?

Additional Processing: Grade 11-Adult

- Share a time when you were facing a challenge and having someone else's support made the difference between failure and success.
- What is the most unique form of self-expression you embody or have risked taking, and how did it feel to be different from others? Did anyone support you in your risk-taking? Who was it and what did they do?
- How does a country's allies help it be autonomous?
- Most Jewish sages maintain that human beings have free will. Rambam (Maimonides) writes, "Free will is granted to all people: If one wanted to turn oneself to a good path and to be righteous he has free will, and if one wanted to turn oneself to an evil path and be wicked he has free will" (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Repentance 5:1). How does this impact your religious life, if at all? Is practicing Judaism more or less challenging (or meaningful) when you do so of your own free will?

Video Viewing and Post-Video Reflection (15-20 min)

After doing these learning activities with your participants, watch the [video](#) together. Then use these discussion and reflection questions for a final conversation and wrap-up to the program.



- In considering the history of Israel, what ultimately put Israel on the map: Zionist visionaries and activists, or diplomatic, international support? Is it a combination, or one more than the other?
- Imagine you were a young adult in 1917. How do you think you would have felt upon hearing the Balfour Declaration? Describe the emotions you would feel when hearing that this declaration was made.
- Many would say that the establishment of the State of Israel was the fulfillment of centuries-long yearning for Jewish self-determination. In what ways does having a land of one's own shape a nation?