

Recognizing All Our Children

Supplement your seder discussion of the four children with this activity to encourage all voices to be heard.

Seders can be challenging

As LGBTQ+ people, many of us have had to sit with our families of origin and discuss redemption, while keeping our identities hidden or being made to feel we are invisible. Perhaps our partners have been ignored or treated unkindly. Perhaps our commitments to liberation for ourselves and our people have been at odds with the perspectives of others around the table.

Getting through seders this year may even be more difficult than in the past. For some, it may be because we are gathering in a fraught election year where the stakes feel so high everywhere, certainly for LGBTQ+ people, and certainly for Jews, and we're not all in agreement. For some, perhaps it may be because there is a rupture in our family over Israel and Gaza, and we're not on the same page about how to find freedom.



Hearing all of our voices through the Four Children

When we discuss the Four Children at our seders, these tensions can feel particularly alive. We discuss the questions and orientations of the wise one, the wicked one, the simple one, and the one who does not know how to ask. Perhaps, we judge one another and feel the weight of each other's judgments.

These tensions are not easy to soften. But Jews have a particularly useful tool at our disposal: our questions. And LGBTQ+ folks do as well: speaking our truth.

When it is time to read about the Four Children and their questions at your seder, rather than focus on their questions, share your own. Rather than determine who among us might fit into which category, share in your own words with whom you identify and why. As we ruminate and discuss the Passover story of liberation, share what is true for you *in this moment*, and create the space for others to do the same.

An exercise for your seder

One participant introduces the discussion: After the relevant reading, go around the table and invite each person to share responses to these questions:



Which child/children do you identify with?

(If the options available are insufficient, feel free to make up your own.)

What question are you bringing to the seder this year?

Our questions need not be answered or further discussed. All participants are invited to **NOT** discuss or respond when others speak. When it is someone else's turn, your role is to listen, take it in, and seek to understand each person's perspective.

When each person has spoken, they say:

“Dibarti” (Hebrew) or “I have spoken”

Followed by a response from others:

“Shamati” (Hebrew) or “I heard you”



At our seders this year, may we all have the space to speak our truth about what liberation means to us. And better yet, may we be heard and understood as together, we find our way toward a shared redemption.