

# Freedom to be our true selves.

At Passover, we celebrate freedom. We rejoice that our ancestors escaped the slavery of Egypt. We also reflect on other types of slavery that continue in our modern world and the freedom we seek for all. Being able to enter community as our authentic selves is one of the greatest types of freedom that exists. Yet, our culture has pressured many people with disabilities and caregivers to conceal the truths of their experiences. Instead of openly embracing disability as part of the human condition, our society imposes stigma and shame, forcing some to hide a limp, forgo the pleasure of rocking or spinning, downplay chronic pain, or veil the realities of depression.

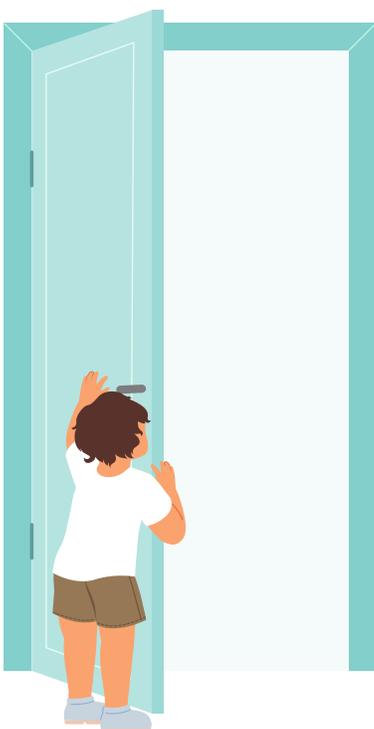
If we are to be free to be ourselves, we must create caring and supportive spaces where individuals with disabilities can share the truths of their experiences without judgment, pity, or fear of rejection. To do so, we must open our minds to learning and personal growth, just as we open the door for Elijah, the prophet who will usher in a more just world.

## ELIJAH'S CUP

A filled cup of wine remains on the table for Elijah. Some seders follow the custom of passing around Elijah's cup and letting each person pour some wine into it. This practice demonstrates the need to act together to create a world in which all are free.

## MIRIAM'S CUP

Miriam provided water for our ancestors as they journeyed through the desert. While Elijah's cup remains full, we drink from Miriam's cup – understanding that each of us needs nurturing waters to sustain and support us.



## WELCOMING ELIJAH

*Place a full cup of wine in the center of the table and open the front door. Recite the following reading and/or sing the adapted Elijah song below. We open our front door to greet our honored guest, Eliyahu Hanavi. On this night, we pray that we can join community as our true selves, that Elijah will arrive and a more just world will ensue. On this night, as we welcome the prophet Elijah, we open wide the door of hope, compassion, and freedom.*

### **Song - sung to the traditional Eliyahu HaNavi melody:**

*Eliyahu, who are we?*

*Eliyahu, let us see.*

*Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu, we must be free.*

*To ourselves we must be true,*

*God made you to be you,*

*To ourselves we must be true,*

*God made me to be me.*

# Suggestions for Hosting an Accessible Passover Seder



- Evaluate your physical space. Is the entry to your space accessible to those who use mobility devices? Is the room where you will be holding Seder accessible? Is there an accessible bathroom nearby?
  - Consider the foods you will be serving. Do you need to account for any food allergies and/or dietary restrictions?
  - Think about seating arrangements that would best support those with hearing or vision loss. Evaluate your lighting. Bright lights may be difficult for those with light sensitivity, while a booklight may be helpful to others.
  - Let guests know your Seder is mask friendly and/or arrange seating that accommodates social distancing for those who may be immunocompromised.
  - Find different options for engaging everyone who wants to participate in the Seder. Make sure reading, singing, or discussion does not feel obligatory. Consider other ways to involve your guests (e.g., holding up the symbols of Passover, opening the door for Elijah, hiding the Afikomen, recounting the story of Passover in their own words, etc.), though also make it clear that they may pass.
  - Utilize visual supports for guests who are not able to read and/or for those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (e.g. [Gateway Haggadah and Resources](#)).
  - For large seders especially, offer a quiet space where participants can take a break from the noise and commotion.
  - Offer to assist in arranging rides for those who need help with transportation.
  - Invite those who cannot be in person to join you virtually. Send them a link or a physical copy of your Haggadah. You may also consider sending them/dropping off prepared foods or items needed for the Seder.
  - Remember those with chronic health conditions or mental illness may need to change plans at the last minute due to exacerbated symptoms, flare ups, or limited energy. Consider ways you might adjust the plans and pivot with compassion.
- Additionally, just as organizations announce available accommodations and ask individual participants about additional accommodations they may need when they register for an event, you might do the same when inviting your guests.