Redesigning Forgiveness
A Introduction to Design Thinking for the High Holidays

- BrandeisHSP Design Lab –

a project of:

Based on material from the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University
How do we forgive each other?
One idea from the Jewish philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204)

Mishnah Torah, Laws of Repentance, Chapter 2, Law 9

Repentance and the Day of Atonement atone only for sins between humans and God, such as one who ate something that is forbidden, or had forbidden sexual relations, or something similar. However, sins between people, such as one who injures another, or curses another, or robs him, and similar sins — these can never be completely absolved until one returns to one’s friend what one owes, and appeases that person. Even if one returns the money that is owed, one still must appease the other person, and request forgiveness. Even if one harmed another only through words, one must still appease that person and continue to contact that person until one is forgiven.

ב: ט: אני חתושב ולא י否則 הכהוריין מBorderStyle אלה שבין אדם
לאפרים, כנין מְשאֵל דָּבָר אָסָר או בֶּעֶזֶל בָּעַל הָאָסָר או בְּיָדוֹ אֵין: אֵבָל
ספק ידבר אדם López, כנין חוטב תְבוּר או הָמְקַלֵּל או תְבוּר או גוֹז
וכָּרוּא בַּבּוּ—אֵינוּ נְמַלַּל לְעַיוֹלָם, וְשְׁהוּא לְהַבְּרָה וַהַשָּׂהוּ מִתְּבָּר אָב
וַירָאוֹת.
Redesign the act of forgiveness...for your partner. Start by gaining empathy.

1 Interview
8 min (2 sessions x 4 minutes each)

Notes from your first interview:
Describe a powerful (or awkward) time you apologized to someone, were apologized to, or where an apology would have been nice.

Switch roles & repeat Interview

2 Dig Deeper
6 min (2 sessions x 3 minutes each)

Notes from your second interview:
What questions remain about your partner’s experience?
Ask “why” often!

Switch roles & repeat Interview
Reframe the problem.

3 Capture findings
3 min

**Goals and Wishes:**
What goals or wishes emerge from your partner’s story of forgiveness?
*use verbs (connecting, relieving, moving on, etc.)*

**Insights:** New learning’s about your partner’s feelings and motivations. What’s something you see about your partner’s experience that maybe s/he doesn’t see?*
*make inferences from what you heard*

4 Take a stand with a problem statement
3 min

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**partner’s name/description**

**needs a way to**

**partner’s goal or wish**

because (or “but…” or “surprisingly…”)

[circle one]

**insight**

When you’ve finished your problem statement, show it to your partner to make sure it’s on target.
Ideate: generate alternatives to test.

5 Sketch at least 5 radical ways to meet your partner’s needs. 5 min

write your problem statement above

6 Share you solutions & capture feedback. 10 min (2 sessions x 5 minutes each)

Start your feedback with sentences such as: I liked... I wish that... How might we...

Switch roles & repeat sharing.
Iterate based on feedback.

7 Reflect & generate a new solution. 3min

Sketch your big idea, note details if necessary!
Build and Test.

8 Build your solution.
Make something your partner can interact with!

9 Share your solution and get feedback.
+ I liked...
- I wish that...
? How might we...
! Ideas...

7 min
8 min (2 sessions x 4 minutes each)