



# Yoni's Global Sukkah Placemat and Conversation Starter

## Learn from those around you – by Shelley Marsh

### #YonisGlobalSukkah

**Yoni Jesner**  
FOUNDATION

Inspiring young people to do more and care more

Yoni wrote '**Learn from those around you.**'

This is such a profound statement, almost an instruction in the way it is framed. Learn from those around you. The concept that we can learn something from everyone presents us with a fundamental human challenge. What might stop us from learning from those who are around us at this very moment?

We might all have nagging reasons that block us from being open to learning from those around us. Perhaps we are limited by our beliefs that we can learn from those around us because those people may be younger, or older, than us? Perhaps they are of a different race, religious denomination or from another country? Perhaps they have a learning difficulty or have no academic qualifications? Perhaps they don't wear our brands, live in our neighbourhood or fit in with our social group?

If we understand Yoni's statement as an instruction, then we are drawn into the implicit message of it, which shares his belief '**there is always something we can learn from those around us.**' *The Talmud (Avot 4:1) teaches Ben Zoma says: Who is wise? The one who learns from every person. So, how can we overcome the limitations that prevent us from learning from those around us?*

*We need to be open to learning.* Our task is to look beyond the beliefs we have which limit our abilities to learn from those around us. It is a challenge to look closely for what we can learn from each and every person around us. It is a challenge to know that each person has something unique they can teach us, simply because each person brings with them their own experiences, their own perspectives and their own purpose.



**Shelley Marsh** is the Executive Director of Reshet: the network for Jewish youth provision. Shelley previously worked as the Executive Director of Limmud and UJIA's Director of Informal Education. Shelley spent 15 years living in Israel, teaching in the state school system and the Israeli Air Force. She holds an MA in Community Leadership and has developed innovative resources on social issues through Jewish texts. Shelley's work on self-esteem in young people has been published and reported internationally.

**Connection to Yoni:**

I was privileged to teach Yoni as he, and his fellow madrichim, prepared to lead Bnei Akiva summer camps.

**Questions:**

The questions I have framed are inter-generational. That way, we can each learn from those who are around us. The key themes to pull out for discussion: What are the most meaningful things you have learned...

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| ...from someone in your family?    | ...from a total stranger?       | ...from someone under 5?              | ...from someone in your class at school? |
| ...from someone in your community? | ...from someone in their teens? | ...from someone you didn't know well? | ...from another culture?                 |
| ...from someone serving you?       | ...from someone on a bus/train? | ...from someone over 70?              | ...from yourself?                        |

What are the three most important things you believe you teach others? Remember, learning from those around you includes yourself. Part of the challenge is knowing we all have things to learn and teach.