Expressing Identity

While the museum is closed the JMM team is coming together to bring some of our favorite activities from our recent family programs direct to your homes. Each collection of materials will be inspired by either one of our exhibits, Jewish History, or a Jewish holiday.

All of the activities we share are designed for families to complete together and use supplies you are likely to already have in your home.

This week, inspired by Pride month, we are thinking about identities. For all of us, our identity can include many elements, the things we choose to express and the things that society sees within us. Our identity can include our ethnic heritage, nationality, and religion which we often share with our family. Our identity can also include skills, interests, passions and political beliefs. It takes all of these elements to create each of our unique identities. With the activities in this packet, think about your own identity and what makes you who you are.
Pride month celebrates the members of our community who identify as LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual), an umbrella term used by some to describe their sexual orientation and gender identities. Individuals who identify as part of this group often face significant challenges across the world, including within our Baltimore community. It is for this reason that coming together every June to mark Pride month is so important, whether or not we personally identify as part of this group.

Don’t forget to share photos of you enjoying our crafts and activities on our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Tumblr pages and use #MuseumFromHome.

Wear It With Pride

Statement T-Shirts from the Fashion Statement exhibit

One great way to express your identity is through your clothing. This activity is inspired by our Fashion Statement exhibit and will help you think about the power of what we choose to wear.

Supplies needed:

- A printed copy of t-shirt blank
- A printed copy of our t-shirt icons
- Markers

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Eating Your Heritage

For many, food is a great way to celebrate their heritage. Perhaps you and your family enjoy turkey for thanksgiving or matzah for Passover. Inspired by our *Chosen Food* exhibit, in this activity, create a plate of food that represents your heritage.

**Supplies needed:**

- A printed copy of our sample place setting, paper or a paper plate.
- Markers
Pride Buttons

Buttons and pins are a great way to show your support of different causes. They can be almost any size, shape, or color. In this activity, you can design and create a button to support the LGBTQ community. Use these same instructions to create buttons that support other causes that are important to you.

Supplies needed:

- Recycled cardboard
- Scissors
- Craft Supplies
- Safety Pin
- Tape

Rally button, JMM 1987.208.3; Chizuk Amuno Tikun Olam button, JMM 2003.60.1; Barack Obama campaign button, JMM 2008.78.1; March on Washington button, JMM 1992.103.1.
Pride Flag

Flags have historically been a great way to show your support, continue your support of the LGBTQ community by creating a Pride flag.

Supplies needed:

- Paper
- Markers
- Chopstick, skewer, or paint stirrer
- Tape
Keep Discovering

If you enjoyed designing a t-shirt to express your identity, why not experiment with tie dye. Express your individuality and creativity by tie-dying t-shirts — [four ways to tie dye video here.]

Art is a great way to express your identity and individuality. Try making a collage that expresses your identity. Think about aspects of your identity you want to represent—your religion, heritage, personality, likes, dislikes, hobbies, groups and communities you belong to, and values. Then, draw your own silhouette or [use a template]. Fill it with magazine pictures, words, and drawings that express your personal identity.

Listen to readings of two books about expressing your identity. In [Chik Chak Shabbat], hear about how food can express our personal and familial identities.

In [Be Who You Are], celebrate the many ways we can express ourselves and our uniqueness.

Ready for more? Explore the resources published by [Keshet], an organization dedicated to working towards LGBTQ equality in Jewish life!
Wear it with Pride

What we choose to wear is a great way to express our identity and the things in which we believe. Everyone likely has a shirt in their closet that is an indicator of their identity, perhaps a school or sports shirt. Some clothing can go much further, shirts can be a great way of expressing support for political causes in which you believe. By wearing these clothes we are clearly communicating to everyone we meet a little about our values and in turn our identity.

We explored this idea in our exhibit Fashion Statement, here you can try one of the activities from within the exhibit, designing your own t-shirt using a selection of icons.

What you will need:

• A printed copy blank t-shirt
• Markers

What to do:

• Think about what parts of your identity you would like to represent through your t-shirt, your hobbies, religion or perhaps a cause in which you believe.

• Now take a copy of our t-shirt printable and the icons, start designing your shirt. Consider how each icon can have multiple interpretations, in what different ways could you understand the shirt above.

Bonus Challenge: With your grown ups permission why not try creating a real tee shirt that you can wear out in your community.
Eating Your Heritage

The food that we eat is often a sign of our heritage, frequently this isn't something that is chosen but instead is a reflection of the produce or livestock that is able to thrive within certain areas, Marylanders love of crab is a great example. Other foods popular within certain groups might be more symbolic, especially food associated with holidays. For example latkes and doughnuts are a key part of Hanukkah and represent the miracle of the limited supply of oil lasting longer than expected. Another example might be the place of turkey as a part of a traditional Thanksgiving dinner.

In the activity below think about your own heritage and the foods that represent your identity. Try creating a meal for your family that represents your family heritage.

What you will need:

- A printed copy of our sample place setting, paper or a paper plate.
- Markers

One food especially popular within our country is ice cream. Is that something you might include in your meal?
**Eating Your Heritage**

**What to do:**

- Take a moment to plan your meal, it might be helpful to create a menu first. Things you might want to consider are:
  
  What parts of your heritage do you want to represent? Can you combine different aspects into one meal?

  What type of meal are you creating, a regular dinner, a holiday or perhaps another special occasion.

  Try to keep your meal balanced, include protein, vegetables, a starch and perhaps something sweet to finish.

- Once you have your meal planned start to draw it onto either the place setting printable or directly onto a paper plate. If you are feeling really creative you could even try making it three dimensional using craft supplies.

**Bonus Challenge:** Now you have thought about what you might choose to eat for a special meal, try researching food popular in other communities or countries and design a dinner for another family. If your grown ups are able, perhaps you could even try making one of those dishes to get a real taste of another community.
Pride Buttons

People have long worn buttons as a way to show their support for different social and political causes. Buttons are a simple way to visually voice your opinion and start a conversation with others. For example, some people wear rainbow buttons to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community. In honor of the 50th anniversary of Pride month, which celebrates the LBGTQ+ community, create a rainbow button. Then, create a second button to demonstrate your support for a cause that is important to you.

What you will need:

- Recycled cardboard
- Scissors
- Craft supplies
- Safety pin
- Tape
Pride Buttons

What to do:

• Take a piece of cardboard from a container like a cereal box and trace a circle on it. Cut the circle out.

• Look at the image on the previous page for help designing your button.

• Tape a safety pin to the back of your button so you can wear it.

• Create a second button to show your support for a cause that’s important to you. For example, you might make a button in support of animal rights, clean drinking water, or anti-bullying. Make sure to think about how the design (the words, colors, and images) of your button will represent the cause. Check out these examples of historic buttons.

Bonus Challenge: Try making buttons in different shapes that might represent your cause. For example, you could make a animal rights button in the shape of a cat or dog.
Pride Flag

Flags are expressions of an individual’s, a group’s, or a country’s identity. When you wave or display a flag, it’s a way of showing pride and proclaiming this is who I am and what I believe in. Over 40 years ago, an artist in San Francisco made the first rainbow Pride flag to celebrate the LGBTQ civil rights movement. Today, people display rainbow flags to show their pride in their identity and give support to the LGBTQ+ community. In honor of Pride month, create your own rainbow flag and then create another flag that expresses pride in some part of your own identity.

What you will need:

- Paper
- Markers
- Chopstick, paint stirrer, or skewer
- Tape
**Pride Flag**

**What to do:**

- Take a piece of plain white paper and draw 5 evenly spaced out lines horizontally straight across the page. This should give you six long rectangles.

- Using markers, color in each rectangle a different color of the rainbow. Start with red, then orange, then yellow, then green, then blue, and finally purple.

- Take a chopstick, paint stirrer, or skewer and tape it to the back of your paper. This is your flag pole.

- Wave your flag and find a place to display it proudly.

**Bonus Challenge:** Create another flag that represents some part of your identity. You could make a flag for the country your family is from or for an organization or team you belong to. You could also make a flag to express a cause or issue that’s important to you, like Black Lives Matter or the Disability Rights Movement.