**Suggested Guidelines**
1. Please limit yourself to one initiative you have created/undertaken in the realm of tfilah and describe what is it that you actually do and have your congregants do.
2. What are 1-2 major rationales which guide you in this initiative: in relation to what you understand praying to consist in and/or in relation to what you understand teaching people to enrich their ability to pray consists in. (This question is meant to make your backstage thinking visible.).
3. What is an example of "success" which you've witnessed (pardon me for the term; I mean more something like "a meaningful moment and experience")?
4. Any question or issue you wonder about and/or you'd like to learn more about following this initiative?

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**Rabbi Jordan Bendat-Appell**
**Pray Different, June 14, 2012**

A) What I have been working on is an approach to relating to prayer that I have found successful in getting people to really feel and experience the qualities of the prayer. It can be used during tefilla time in some communities-- and in others it works better as an "iyun tefilla" kind of exercise, outside of the time of regular prayer.

**Note**- I do not currently work at a synagogue, but work for the Institute for Jewish Spirituality (based out of NY) and a local organization called the Center for Jewish Mindfulness. Through both of these organizations, I have been experimenting with this modality, both in synagogues and in retreat/workshop settings.

I call the approach "preparing the ground, planting the seeds" and it brings together mindfulness meditation as a preparation for and a context for tefillah. *B'kitzor*, what we do is have the participants sit and practice an accessible mindfulness technique of bringing awareness to an object of awareness (breath, body, sound, etc.) for about 5-10 minutes. This "prepares the ground" and helps the practitioner relate to what comes next with a quality of receptivity, openness, and clarity. Then-- without interrupting the silence or quality of attention, we open siddurim and look at a particular prayer, and go through it slowly, allowing the practitioner to really feel the prayer, and allow the words to speak to them. I find that the combination of silence and words really helps people find their own connections to the prayer-- they tend to experience the truth of the tefillah in their own minds, hearts, and bodies. The meditation prepares the ground, and the prayers plant the seeds.