

In Transition: The Synagogue as a Family System

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Priority Goal

This curriculum is intended for Jewish professionals who work in congregational settings. It will help them understand their synagogue as a family system in the midst of constant changes in demographics, economics and leadership. By using the family systems framework, professionals will be able to better guide, comfort and “walk” with their congregants as together, they strive to breathe new life and energy into their synagogue family.

Age Group

Adults

Organizational Setting

A six month long group learning experience, consisting of a opening one day seminar, webinars throughout the subsequent months, monthly chevruta check-ins and a final one day seminar for synagogue professionals working in small congregations.

Rationale

The rationale for this curriculum is based on the understanding that a resilient congregation, like a resilient family, experience many challenges throughout it's life cycle and is able to come out of them as a stronger system. Congregations often go through transitions and they need leaders who are able to offer guidance, inspiration and support during these times. As synagogue professionals, we recognize that individuals and families experience many stressors during life cycle events. Many of these stressors are a result of underlying deeply rooted emotional challenges. Just as individuals and families benefit from the support of their synagogue professionals during these times in their personal lives, congregations benefit from professionals who are able to identify and understand the various life cycle stressors that the synagogue “family” experiences throughout its life.

Bowen Family Systems Theory can help us navigate the natural transitions that occur throughout the life of a congregation. In his book, Generation to Generation, Family Process in Church and Synagogue, Edwin Friedman applies concepts from family systems theory to the emotional life of congregations and their leaders. Friedman explains that clergy are often able to help their congregants more through the way they lead than through specific counseling interventions. This curriculum is based on Friedman's work.

Despite the significant use of Generation to Generation, Family Process in Church and Synagogue in graduate student training, there has been little research done on the impact of Family Systems Theories on congregational life. It may be impossible to measure how these theories impact congregations because those professionals who understand and apply Family Systems internalize the theories and integrate them into their work with congregants. In speaking with congregational professionals throughout the creation of this curriculum, it became clear that these theories are relevant in their work and useful to be taught in a professional conference setting while professionals are working in congregations experiencing transitions. This outcomes of this curriculum will provide the leader with evidence on how effective applying Family Systems Theories to congregational transitions can be.

For the purpose of this curriculum, transition will be defined as changes in demographics, times of population growth and decline, economic challenges, congregations merging together and incoming and outgoing lay leaders and synagogue professionals. Life cycle stressors that may accompany these transitions include experiences of loss and mourning and the re-negotiation of roles and relationships. Often underlying issues emerge that are rooted in individuals' private lives or past experiences, which affect their professional or communal relationships. Just as our lives take unexpected turns, congregations need support when communities change and are faced with new realities. Transitions have the potential to become toxic for everyone involved if professionals don't recognize their congregants' emotional responses and their community's needs. With the support and guidance of trained professionals, these transitions can be less painful for the synagogue family.

Enduring Understandings:

1. The synagogue community can be understood as a family system much like a nuclear family. Family systems theory identifies the emotional roots of conflicts in families in order to facilitate change and transfer responsibility from one family member to the entire family or synagogue unit.
2. The Family systems model offers clergy a way to navigate transitions. Synagogues working through transitions include but are not limited to; negotiating the roles of new members, experiencing stages of grief due to a decline in synagogue membership, re-negotiation of synagogue professional and lay roles.
3. By approaching the synagogue community as a family system, Jewish professionals will gain a deeper understanding of the range of emotional responses that their congregants experience during times of transition and will be able to identify, anticipate and respond to those responses as they emerge.

Essential Questions:

1. In what ways does a congregation exist like a family?
2. How does family systems theory help us understand the depth and history of challenges in congregational life, individual congregant's experiences, and leadership?
3. What does family systems theory teach about managing transitions in synagogue life and how does the theory come alive in real life situations?

Assessment:

1. Participants will bring in one challenge they are experiencing in their congregation and the class will work in teams using family systems theory to propose a step by step guide with various suggestions to help alleviate the challenge.
2. After working in teams, participants will come up with a change plan for one transitional challenge they are experiencing in their congregations. Each participant will present their plan to the group and they will work together to refine their plan and apply that plan to their congregation's transition.
3. Participants will reflect on the changes they are experiencing in their congregations and report on the changes they experienced throughout the seminar.

Participants will present a final report at the end with their personal reflections that will be shared with the group for their feedback.

4. Participants will articulate how their community is changing over the months of the class through webinars, phone calls with one or two *chevrutas*, and three face-to-face meetings throughout the seminar. They will reflect on their practice at the end of the experience by coming together for the final seminar.
5. Participants will comfortably apply the six basic family concepts from Bowen Family Systems Theory to identify the roots of conflict, and the challenges that come with transitions. These concepts include homeostasis, process and content, the non-anxious presence, over-functioning, triangles and symptom bearer.

Know: Jewish professionals will understand Family Systems theory and how it can be applied to synagogue communities/families.

Do: Jewish Professionals will be able to apply family systems theory to their congregation and gain a deeper appreciation for the dynamics that have arisen and will arise throughout their time working in the congregation. Jewish Professionals will be able to apply what they have learned to their current communities and future jobs and express their willingness to partner with congregations during times of transition.

Believe: Jewish Professionals will explore the resilience and strength of congregational families, according to the family systems theory and they will be able to help communities see the aspects of strength and resilience within their own congregational families.

Belong: Jewish Professionals will feel a greater sense of connection with their congregations through their deeper understanding of the community as a family system.

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www.thebowencenter.org

<http://smartgoalsguide.com/>

<http://www.genopro.com/genogram/>

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Meeting our Learner's Needs:

This curriculum will address the needs of special needs participants by requiring the leader to speak with every participant before the seminar begins. The leader will ask each participant questions including, but not limited to the list below.

What were some of your expectations/fears in signing up for this seminar?

Do you have any learning needs that I should know about?

What do you hope to learn from this seminar?

Do you have any experience with, or have you taken any classes about the topics that we are discussing? Would you like to help teach the topics?

In speaking about family systems the leader should be sensitive to not always using a heterosexual family model. In describing family components, include single parent homes (which may be more synonymous with synagogue families), homosexual relationships, adoption, etc. The more variety of family types used, the easier the participants will be able to apply the theories to their congregations.

Outline of Curriculum:

Conference #1: 2 Days

Day #1: 4 Sessions

9:00am-9:30 am: Breakfast and Welcome

9:30am-11:00am: Session #1: 90 Minutes

Introductions to each other and a Taste of Family Systems

15 minute coffee break

11:15-12:35: Session #2: 80 minutes

Family Systems Concepts for Congregational Life and Ten Commandments

Lunch

1:30pm-2:40 pm: Session #3: 70 minutes

Identifying our Family's Challenges

15 minute break

2:55-4:00pm: Session #4: 65 minutes

Individual Exploration and Family Systems Meets Bolman and Deal

Concluding Comments, Group Activity, Dinner

Day #2: 3 Sessions

9:00am-9:30am: Breakfast

9:30am-11:05am: Session #1: 95 minutes

Exploring the Issues

15 minute coffee break

11:20am-12:00pm: Session #2: 40 minutes

Creating our first IMAP and SMART Goals

12:00noon-12:30pm: 30 minutes

Closing Session, T'fillah Haderech

L'hitraot!!!

Conference #2

One day to Regroup.

Lesson #1: Mapping the Successes

Lesson #2: Learning from Eachother's Challenges

Lesson #3: Where do we go from here?

Lesson #1: Getting to Know Each Other

and

Case Studies of Congregations in Transition: A Taste of the Family Systems Model

Note to the teacher:

This first lesson is primarily a time to welcome the participants and allow them to get to know one another. It is also a time to create a safe space for the group so that they will feel more comfortable throughout the day talking about the struggles they are experiencing at their congregations. Congregational challenges can feel very personal and many leaders feel as though they are to blame or they are all alone in their struggle. While the content of this seminar will show the participants that challenges are a result of a system rather than one person, a safe and comfortable environment needs to be created from the beginning to facilitate helpful discussions throughout the seminar.

The second part of this lesson, the congregational case studies, are in this introductory lesson in order to give the participants a taste of Family systems work- and to show them how we often leap to solve problems before we truly understand the roots of those problems. The case studies have been adapted from Edwin Friedman's book entitled, Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue.

Introduction: 5 minutes

Begin this session by introducing yourself; tell the participants about your background and why you are facilitating this seminar. Explain to the participants that everyone in attendance signed up for this seminar because of their commitment to their congregation. While we are going to spend a lot of time talking about the challenges that we all experience, the participants would not be here today if they didn't recognize that congregational families are places of meaning-making and support where lives can be changed. The work that they are doing, and will continue to do after this seminar is holy work, and you (the leader) will make sure that throughout the seminar we will have a chance to share some examples of the inspiring work that they are doing every day.

Remind the participants that everything they discuss during this seminar will stay within the "walls" of the seminar. If participants have any concerns about confidentiality, they should either bring them up in the group or talk to the facilitator at the end of the first session. Tell the participants that we are going to begin with a familiar text that will help us prepare to study systems theory.

Activity #1: 35 minutes

A Time for Everything and Everyone

Pass out copies of text #1, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Ask the participant to find a Chevruta to study the text with. Pass out the questions below for chevruta to study together and have a few Tanakh's around for those who would like to place these verses within the context of Ecclesiastes:

1. Ecclesiastes is part of a group of writings in the *Tanakh* entitled "Wisdom Literature." Qohelet, the main speaker in Ecclesiastes introduces himself as the son of King David, which would make him Solomon. Modern scholars debate the authorship. Qohelet writes about the meaning of life and the importance of wisdom, while also stating that one should enjoy the simple pleasures of life. What wisdom does Ecclesiastes offer us in these verses?
2. What do each of these pairs separately and collectively tell us about what is meaningful in life for Ecclesiastes?
3. How does it help or hinder us to think about time in this dualistic way?

After 10 minutes spent in a chevruta:

Ask the participants to underline a verse, or line in the text that describes two "seasons" they have experienced/or are currently experiencing with their congregants. One of those "seasons" should be a challenging one. Have them write a few lines about each season on the bottom of the text sheet. Give the participants 5-8 minutes to write their reflections on the seasons.

After the participants are done writing, ask them to share their "seasons" with one another. As they share their reflections, also ask them to introduce themselves, and explain why they decided to take this seminar. If anyone has any training in family systems work or counseling skills based on other theories that may be helpful for the group to know, ask them to share. (Maybe you have someone who is also a social worker or family therapist.) If the group is large, but you want everyone to hear from each other, have them introduce themselves first and then break into smaller groups to share their reflections.

Conclude this activity by thanking everyone for participating, and explaining that these conversations will continue throughout the seminar as we get to know one another, and our congregations throughout the seminar. You may want to end this portion of the

lesson by reading verse #1, “A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven.”

Give the participants a 5 minute break in between these two activities.

Activity #2: Congregational Case Studies 45 minutes

Post four case studies on poster boards in the corners of the room. On the back of the posters, post the family systems theory and process that will help the Jewish professional and congregation address their challenges. Ask the participants to walk around and identify one possible underlying issue in each case that is adding to the challenges in each congregation, and write that one problem on the poster board with the case study. For example: in case #1, an example of an underlying issue is that the Director of Education has chosen to not communicate with the soloist.

After about 5-8 minutes, divide the participants into four groups and assign each group to a case study. (If you know that a particular case study will be relevant for a participant, assign their group to that case.) Ask each group to come up with a plan to help the community in their case study that they will present to the larger group. After 10 minutes, tell the groups to turn over their poster boards and read the Family systems informed solution. They should then answer the questions below. (These questions can be on the back of the poster boards, or on the classroom board.)

Questions:

In what ways was your group's plan for the community similar or different than the "Family systems" plan? How has your perspective expanded by these differences?

Did the underlying issues (written on the poster board by the entire class) encompass the full extent of the problems at hand? If not, what other issues did you notice?

List three to five components from your plan and the "Family systems" plan that you believe changed the course of the community's transition in a positive way.

Conclusion:

Have each group present their solution and the Family systems solution. Finally, have each group share the three to five components that they believe changed the course of the community in transition. If they want to share any similarities or differences between the two plans to highlight these components encourage them to do so. End this lesson by explaining that creating an action plans is not an easy task-but as we can see by the results of these case studies the communities involved can be drastically changed if their professionals have a deep understanding of the problems at hand. Over the next few sessions we will learn how to identify underlying emotional issues in congregations and individual congregants lives in order to better assess how they are experiencing

transitions, and ultimately to help them work through the transitions.

Case studies:**Case #1:**

A congregation hired a soloist who knew little about Jewish music but who was a whiz at inspiring a choir. The rabbi, who loved music, began to spend a great deal of time with the new soloist to help her use her skills to enrich Shabbat services. In the middle of the year, the director of education launched an attack on the soloist's knowledge of liturgy, saying that the choir was constantly too slow or too fast, and the religious participants were getting confused. No amount of pointing out that those factors were less important than the soloist's ability to involve people had any success. What should the rabbi do?

Plan:

The rabbi learned about emotional triangles. "An emotional triangle is formed by any three persons or issues. The basic law of emotional triangles is that when any two parts of a system become uncomfortable with one another, they will 'triangle in' or focus upon a third person, or issue, as a way of stabilizing their own relationship with one another. A person may be said to be 'triangled' if he or she gets caught in the middle as the focus of such an unresolved issue." (Friedman, pg. 35) The Rabbi also recognized that the Educator had not communicated her challenges with the soloist. The rabbi began spending more time with the director of education and the religious school students, and at the same time talked with the Educator about communicating with the soloist so that they could work out their differences. The Rabbi thought about the four frames of leadership, including Political, Structural, Human Resource and Symbolic. He decided to think about his Human Resource frame as a way of reframing the roles of every staff member at the synagogue. He began having weekly staff meetings and involving as many staff members as possible in decisions made about the synagogue. The Educator's complaints disappeared. We will explore emotional triangles and explore the four frames of leadership in more detail later today.

Systems concepts that help resolve this case: Triangulation, four frames

Case #2:

A young rabbi worked in a congregation that he loved for three years after rabbinical school. During these years he dealt with challenges, he hired a new director of education and many of the lay leaders stepping up to leadership positions were inspired by him. His wife unexpectedly received a job offer that she could not refuse and the couple decided to move. The rabbi had great difficulty with the separation as did the congregation. Many of the congregants stopped attending weekly learning sessions. The rabbi began to put all his energy into one terminal sermon that he would give the Shabbat before he left. How should the Rabbi work with the congregation during his remaining time with them?

Plan:

A mentor suggested to the rabbi that he give his final sermon immediately so that people would have ample opportunity to respond. He took the suggestion, and the depression hovering over both "partners" lifted immediately. The congregation was invited to share their feelings with the rabbi about his departure, and everyone involved felt a huge sense of relief despite the loss they were experiencing. The congregants and rabbi were also able to begin a new rabbinic search together and the Rabbi began teaching text in his learning sessions about leadership.

Systems concepts that help resolve this case: non-anxious presence, permitting reactivity in the other.

Case #3:

A new rabbi was hired for a part time position at a small synagogue with 75 families. The Rabbi was excited about this opportunity to pursue her other interests while still working as a Rabbi. A few new board members were very excited for the Rabbi's arrival as they believed she would help them breathe new energy into the synagogue community. After the first service that the Rabbi led she walked into the Oneg and was greeted by two older couples. They barely even introduced themselves before they started giving the Rabbi a list of people who were not in attendance at services. They had counted the amount of people there, and they only counted forty. The Rabbi did not know how to respond since she was new in the community. The couples continued to talk to her about "what the synagogue used to be like" but she knew she needed to walk around and meet new people. How should the Rabbi respond to these couples in the future?

Plan:

The Rabbi began thinking about her arrival as a life-cycle stage for the congregation. She realized that her arrival represented both an exciting time for the congregation and a time for confronting the reality that they could no longer afford a full-time Rabbi. Many of the congregants who remembered the congregation years ago were in mourning for their lost community. The older congregants may have not been part of the process to hire the new Rabbi, and they were beginning to face their own diminishing roles in the congregation. They missed many of their friends and family who either died or relocated, and they didn't see any possibility for change or rejuvenation for the future of the congregation. The Rabbi spent much of her first few months meeting with various congregants. She created a group for the older congregants to come together to share stories and create a memory/congregational history book about the community over the past fifty years. She also worked with the younger board members to encourage them to ask a few of the older members to join the Board so that their voices were heard in board decisions. Rather than trying to change the minds of the congregants who felt as though the congregation was dying, the Rabbi worked on being a non-anxious presence and listening to the congregants share their concerns.

Systems concepts that help resolve this case: homeostasis, non-anxious presence, triangulation, family secrets

Case #4:

Thirty years ago two small synagogues in the Midwest shared a Rabbi. Beth Shalom was always very happy with the Rabbi but Beit El often felt like they did not get their portion of the Rabbi's time. After one and a half years both synagogues decided that sharing a Rabbi was too taxing on the Rabbi and the synagogues. Thirty years later, after both synagogues decreased in size because of demographics and financial problems, new synagogue leadership decided it was time to merge. A committee was formed to hire a part-time Rabbi and organize the finances of the synagogue. Things seemed to be going smoothly for about a year into the merger. Then things changed. The new Rabbi began working many more hours than he was contracted for; when he spoke to the synagogue president he received little empathy. The board continued to demand that the Rabbi make changes in the community, increase the membership and offer more learning opportunities for the members. The Rabbi loved working for his new community, but did not feel as though he could continue over-working in this way.

Plan:

The Rabbi began to shift the focus of the board's demands away from himself and onto the board and the community. At the next board meeting he made a list of all of the demands that the community had made on him and he entitled the list, "Our congregation's five year vision." By placing the congregants needs back onto them-he was able to have a conversation with the congregants and board members about where these demands were coming from, and what they symbolized for the community. He also allowed the board members to discuss how their old congregations worked independently in order to open up the lines of communication between the two congregations. Their excitement in merging had diminished and both independent congregations were expecting their Rabbi to serve their needs, rather than the needs of the new combined community. The Rabbi helped the congregation talk about what they lost and gained from the merger to help the entire congregation move forward.

Systems concepts that helped resolve this case: overfunctioning, chronic-conditions, de-focusing content

Text#1: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven:

A time for being born and a time for dying,

A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;

A time for slaying and a time for healing,

A time for tearing down and a time for building up;

A time for weeping and a time for laughing,

A time for wailing and a time for dancing;

A time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones,

A time for embracing and a time for shunning embraces;

A time for seeking and a time for losing,

A time for keeping and a time for discarding;

A time for ripping and a time for sewing,

A time for silence and a time for speaking;

A time for loving and a time for hating;

A time for war and a time for peace.

Lesson #2:

Family Systems Concepts for Religious Institutions

Introduction:

Begin by directing the participants to the introduction of Family systems theory found on pages 11-18 of Generation to Generation, Family Process in Church and Synagogue by Edwin Friedman. Walk them through a brief history of systems thinking and its application to religious institutions.

- Today there are more than 200 therapeutic models, Family therapy is one approach to the ways human beings think about their nature and seek salvation from their emotional difficulties.

- The Family approach to therapy is a by-product of a revolution in thinking in the 1950's called systems thinking.

- Systems thinking implies that each component of any system (computers, organizations, families, etc.) can have its own effect upon every other part. Each component, therefore, rather than having its own discrete identity or input, operates as part of a larger whole.

Using the diagram on page 16, briefly describe the difference between causation and systems thinking. Read the examples on page 17 and then read the text below (found on page 18):

The contribution of the systems revolution to family therapy is a way of thinking characterized by:

1. Focus on emotional process rather than symptomatic content.
 - a. Example: During life cycle events emotions run high for families because their family is going to be on display. Often the synagogue staff notices how a family changes as their event comes closer and all of a sudden a usually calm family is calling the office every day with demands. If a staff member responded to the symptoms of the families anxiety-the demands, with anger, the family may not change their behavior and their symptoms will likely become worse.
2. Seeing effects as integral parts of structures rather than as an end point in linear chains of cause.

- a. Example: As synagogue professionals we function as part of the professional structure. If a Rabbi is being overworked, the staff that he/she supervises will feel the effects and will respond to the community with frustration. The board will then tell the Rabbi it is his/her responsibility to take care of the staff. Everyone is connected and will respond to each other as a result of their position in the congregational family.
- 3. Eliminating symptoms by modifying structure rather than by trying to change the dysfunctional part directly.
 - a. When synagogues merge, a new board is created. If a contingent of the community is not represented on the board, congregants will share their disappointment about their voices not being heard, and classes and celebrations not being offered for their group. One way to fix this problem is by creating classes for this group, another way is to figure out how the board was put together, and decide how to best represent the community in the future.
- 4. Predicting how a given part is likely to function not by analyzing its nature but by observing its position in the system.
 - a. During premarital counseling the Rabbi can help the couple examine their relationship, or focus the counseling on the position of the bride and groom in their respective families of origin. Rabbis can encourage discussion about the types of families they've grown up in, and what type of family they hope to create together.

Any questions? Comments? Concerns?

Lesson 2: Part 1: 50 minutes

Five Basic Concepts of Family Systems Theory: 30 minutes

Split the group up into five smaller groups. Pass out the pages describing one concept to each group. The concepts are: **the identified patient, homeostasis, differentiation of self, the extended family field and emotional triangles.** In Friedman, the descriptions of these concepts are on pages 19-39. Friedman applies these concepts to organizational life beginning on page 202-both the descriptions and applications should be passed out to participants. Instruct each group to review their concept, create a poster summarizing their concept to present to the group, and come up with a real life scenario of when they've seen or could imagine seeing their concept take place within a congregational setting. Have the groups present their concepts, posters and brief real life scenarios. Hang up the posters around the room for the remainder of the

day.

Our Ten Commandments Presentation and Activity: 50 minutes

After each group presents their real life scenarios, present the **“Our Ten Commandments: Ten Laws of Family life derived from Family Theory”(pg. 40-64)** by passing out the handout attached and briefly introducing the concepts by reading aloud and asking for any questions from the participants. These laws are: **emotional distance, loss and replacement, chronic conditions, pain and responsibility, the paradox of seriousness and the playfulness of paradox, secrets and systems, sibling position, diagnosis, symmetry, survival in families.**

Activity: Give each group 15 minutes to create a case study with their concept from the poster activity, incorporating at least two of the laws and creating a plan for change. Have each group present their scenario and plan for change by creating a skit, or a story to teach the group.

5 Basic Concepts of Family Systems Theory

These five concepts distinguish the family systems model of therapy from the individual model.

1. The concept of the **Identified Patient** is that the family member with the obvious symptom is to be seen not as the “sick one” but as the one in whom the family’s stress or pathology has surfaced. In a child it could take the form of hyperactivity, school failures, drugs or obesity. In a congregation it could take the form of a staff member not performing to their potential, or a active congregant struggling with depression. The purpose of using the phrase *identified patient* is to avoid isolating the “problemated” family member from the overall relationship system of the family. By focussing on one member of a system the family or congregation can deny the issues that contributed to making one of it’s members symptomatic.
 - a. In medicine it has long been realized that focusing on symptoms alone, or on a dysfunctional part in isolation from the rest of the body, will only bring short-term relief. Fundamental change is not likely when one part of an organism is treated in isolation from it’s life system.

2. **Homeostasis** (Balance) is the tendency of any set of relationships to strive perpetually, in self-corrective ways, to preserve the organizing principles of its existence. The family model conceptualizes a system’s problems in terms of an imbalance that must have occurred in the network of its various relationships, no matter what the nature of the individual personalities. If a system exists and has a name (Beit Shalom©) it had to have achieved some kind of balance in order to permit the continuity necessary for maintaining its identity. The basic question family theory always asks, therefore, is not do these types of personalities fit, but, rather, what has happened to the fit that was there? Why has the symptom surfaced now? Homeostasis elucidates the resistance congregations have to change and it guides in the creation of strategies for change.

3. **Differentiation of Self.** Human components of a family system have the capacity for self-differentiation, the capacity for some awareness of their own position in the relationship system, how it is affected by balancing forces, and how changes in each individual’s functioning can in turn influence that homeostasis. Differentiation means the capacity of a family member to define his or her own life goals and values apart from surrounding togetherness pressures, to be

an “I” while remaining connected. Murray Bowen, one of the founding fathers of family therapy suggests that a key variable in the degree to which any family can change fundamentally is the amount of self-differentiation that existed in previous generations in the extended family of both partners. It includes the capacity to maintain a (relatively) non anxious presence in the midst of anxious systems, to take maximum responsibility for one’s own destiny and emotional being. It can be measured somewhat by the breadth of one’s repertoire of responses when confronted with crisis. The measurements might be used to describe homeostatic forces in any partnership including clergy person and congregation. It can also illuminate the problems of achieving change perceived by the homeostatic resistance to change. Congregants don’t change when they are clinging to their past.

4. The **Extended Family Field** refers to our family of origin, that is, our original nuclear family plus any other relatives. Family theory sees the entire network of the extended family system as important, and the influence of that network is considered to be significant in the here and now as well. The concept suggests that parents themselves are someone’s children, even when they are adults, and that they are still part of their own sibling system, even after partnering or marriage. Gaining a better understanding of the emotional processes still at work with regard to our family of origin, and modifying our response to them, can aid significantly in the resolution of emotional problems in our immediate family or of leadership problems in a synagogue. When family members are able to see beyond the horizons of their own nuclear family area of trouble and observe the transmission of such issues from generation to generation, they often can obtain more distance from their immediate problems and, as a result, become freer to make changes. Family trees are a treasure of knowledge and of life. Synagogue families often have similar purposes in our congregants’ lives.
5. An **Emotional Triangle** is formed by any three persons or issues. The basic law of emotional triangles is that when any two parts of a system become uncomfortable with one another, they will “triangle in” or focus upon a third person, or issue, as a way of stabilizing their own relationship with one another. A triangle basic to all work systems is any position of responsibility, someone you oversee, and the person who oversees you. Triangles typical of congregational systems are the religious leader, the ruling body of lay people, and the rest of the congregation. Or a member of the clergy, the congregation, the budget deficit or a theological issue. Often synagogue professionals are triangulated between their own personal family, the congregational family and any family within the congregation.

Adapted from pages 11-30 in *Generation to Generation, Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, By Edwin Friedman.

Family Systems: 10 Commandments(Laws) of Family Life

Emotional Distance: When family members use physical distance to solve problems of emotional interdependency, the result is always temporary, or includes a transference of the problem to another relationship system. Emotional distance is perplexing. If there is too much, it is not possible to have a relationship; if there is not enough separation, it is also not possible to have a relationship.

Loss and Replacement: To the extent a family rushes to replace loss, its pain will be lessened, but so will the potential for change that the loss made possible. When individuals leave a family or congregation, whether through death, marriage, or relocation, the system will generally be quick to replace the person who was lost. Whoever the replacement is, new child or spouse, clergyman/woman, he or she will replace in all the family triangles the person who has left. Un-worked-out problems are likely to resurface in the new relationships. Replacement is a function of grief, and grief is proportional to the un-worked-out residue of the relationship that was lost.

Chronic Conditions: If a family problem is chronic (perpetual or recurrent), there must be reactive or adaptive feedback from somewhere in the system to sustain it. The notion that chronic conditions require feedback also suggests strategies for change. If we work on the areas of our own emotional inflexibility, those important to us will begin to function better, specifically in those same areas, generally in relationships, and eventually throughout their lives.

Pain and Responsibility: If one family member can successfully increase his or her threshold for another's pain, the other's own threshold will also increase, thus expanding his or her range of functioning. Those who focus only on comforting others, on relieving pain, tend to forget that another's need may be not to have their needs fulfilled. In congregational life, a leader may have high hopes for "fixing" a congregation, when in reality the congregants are content in their present state.

The Paradox of Seriousness and the Playfulness of Paradox: The seriousness with which families approach their problems can be more the cause of their difficulties than the effect of the problems. Efforts directed at the seriousness itself often will eliminate the problem. The antidote to seriousness is the capacity to be playful. What gives to any playful response its remedial power is its relationship affect and not its cleverness.

Secrets and Systems: Family secrets act as the plaque in the arteries of communication; they cause stoppage in the general flow and not just at the point of their existence. Secrets may include any minor matter where one family member says to another, "But don't tell Dad (mom, the Rabbi, the president, etc.)" Secrets function to divide a family because those "in" on the secret will become far better able to communicate with one another than those in the outsider group about any issue, not just about the secret. Secrets create unnecessary estrangements as well as false companionship. Secrets distort perceptions and they exacerbate other pathological processes unrelated to the content of the particular secret, because secrets generally function to keep anxiety at higher energy levels.

Sibling position: The position we occupy within the sibling constellation of our nuclear family of origin foreshadows our expectations of the opposite as well as the same sex, our degree of comfort with our own various offspring, and our style of leadership in succeeding nuclear groupings. Sibling constellation theory can help explain work relationships, as well as be used to tone down conflicts between, for example, Rabbis and Cantors or educational directors, clergy and lay leaders, any two members of a religious hierarchy.

Diagnosis: The diagnosis of individual family members stabilizes family homeostasis and makes it more difficult for the diagnosed member to change. Anxious family and congregational systems diagnose people instead of their relationships.

Symmetry: In emotional life, every cause can produce exactly opposite effects and every effect could have come from exactly opposite causes, with the result that the more polarized things seem to be in a family, the more likely they are somehow connected. All of the emotional pushes and pulls in a family add up to zero. They cancel one another out in a way that enables the overall family system to retain its homeostasis.

Survival in Families: The major human factor that promotes survival in any environment is the same that has led to the evolution of our species since creation: an organism's response to challenge.

Adapted from pages 40-64 in *Generation to Generation, Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, By Edwin Friedman.

Lesson 3

Using the Genogram and IMAP in Congregational Life

Genogram and Place/People Mapping: 40 Minutes

Begin by explaining that today we will be creating visual pictures of our congregations. We will be working with two models to create these images. The first model, a genogram is a visual outline of how a family is structured and functions that displays detailed information on relationships among individuals. A genogram allows us to analyze hereditary patterns and psychological factors that impact family relationships. In counseling, therapists and their clients use genograms to identify patterns in an individual's family history which may have had an influence on their current condition. A genogram helps us understand the capacities of families to regulate their anxiety in the face of tension between separateness and closeness. Show the group the biblical family genogram on page 38 in How your Church Family Works. Read through the explanation on page 39 of our biblical matriarchs and patriarchs.

Our second model is a place map, a tool created by Carl S. Dudley and Nancy T. Ammerman in Congregations in Transition. You will decide the boundaries of your map and what places you put on it. You will then locate your members and create a people map with a list of the population groups that live within your map. Some characteristics of groups of people that live within your map may be; economic status, lifestyle groups including artists or business men or women, age groups, students, singles, long-term residents, a certain cultural group, etc. Show the group two examples of a place and people map on pages 25 and 31 in Congregations in Transition.

Each person should decide which model they would like to try. The group should break up and sit with others who are creating the same type of map or genogram. While both models are helpful tools for synagogues in transition, the genogram may be more helpful for congregations experiencing leadership changes, demographics and congregations merging together. The place and people map will be also helpful for those congregations experiencing changes in demographics, and especially for congregations experiencing times of population growth and decline and economic challenges. More detailed instructions for each model are attached..

Concluding Conversation: 30 minutes

Have participants switch their genograms and/or maps with another member in the group. Pass out the questions below for each participant to answer about another participant's genogram and/or map.

1. What patterns do you notice about how the people in this genogram or map relate to one another? If you're looking at a map, what does the distance that people live away/close to one another teach you about their relationships?

2. What can you learn from the patterns or differences between the generations placed on this map/genogram?
3. What questions do you have for the creator of this genogram/map about this synagogue family? (come up with at least 3)

Every participant should write out their answers to these questions and write 2-3 observations about the congregation based on the genograms. After they have written their observations, have the participants share their observations with their partners, and conclude the activity by highlighting some of the observations that you heard in the group discussions.

At the end of this activity give each participant ten minutes to begin thinking about what challenge they want to work on during this conference that either they came to the conference already having in mind or they recognized on their genogram or map. Write the following questions on the board to help the participants identify this challenge.

What background or past experiences can I draw on to help me with this challenge?

Who will be my allies in this process?

What kind of emotional commitment can I anticipate from myself for this challenge?

What results do I hope for by taking on this challenge?

(questions adapted from page 115, Imagining the Options, Dudley and Ammerman.)

Encourage the participants to answer these questions for multiple challenges and choose the one he/she feels as though they have created the strongest answers for.

Conclude by explaining that genograms/maps are a first step in understanding family systems and how patterns are created in families over time. By identifying family patterns we are able to identify specific issues and work on them. In the next lesson we will begin applying family systems concepts to the challenges we have identified in our genograms/maps.

Example of Genogram and Identification of Challenge:

Background:

This example is based on an actual small congregation in rural Pennsylvania that is experiencing the transition of selling their building. The congregational leadership is very concerned with how the community will continue to feel like a congregation without a building. They also want to give away many of their sacred and very old books and two of their Torahs. The leadership is currently exploring options of where they will rent out space to meet on their monthly Shabbat observances and the High Holidays. The Rabbi has brought in Union for Reform Judaism professionals to help the congregation with the logistics of this transition, but she would like to be able to be a compassionate and helpful leader throughout this transition.

Below is the congregational genogram that the Rabbi created:

1950's founding Families (Membership was around 70 families at Founding)

Snowisses□	Hobermans▽	Cohens▽	Coploffs▽	Zimmermans□
			—	

FF's Descendants alive today:

Jean, Alvin▽□	JoAnne▽□	Phyllis▽	Stanley, Ellie□
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Today's members (Around 20 families) in two rows by generation:

Dana, Paul□	Lee R▽	Steve G□	Naomi, Steven□
Jenny□	Tracy▽(and family)	Linda, Sandy□	

Observations:

It is clear from this genogram which families have remained active in this congregation. The people with a square next to them are all active today. Those who have squares next to them relate well with each other since they are all still active in the congregation, or have relatives who are. Some of them are less so, for example the Snowisses who leave for Arizonia every winter. While everyone on this genogram will be affected by the change of selling their building, the Snowisses, Hobermans and Zimmermans may feel the changes more acutely.

What is interesting about this genogram is that while the congregation has seen a drastic reduction in membership over the past sixty years, new members are still joining who have no connection with the founding members. The new members are all active and will want to know that the community is still going to continue despite the need to sell their building.

Questions for the creator of this genogram:

1. Why are some of the founding families such as the Coploff's no longer active?
2. Why are some of today's members currently inactive? (This is important information, for example, Tracy recently gave birth to her second son, but in a year after the building is sold she will want to know she has a community to

return to.)

3. Why do some members have a square and triangle next to their names? How will this transition impact their level of involvement in the future?

Questions to consider at the end of this lesson:

What background or past experiences can I draw on to help me with this challenge?

I have experience in community organizing and know that congregants who have a square and triangle next to their name will need me to come to them and ask them what they want/need from the community before they become active again. They may be unsure if their needs will be met by this congregation and I will need to address that.

Who will be my allies in this process?

The new members who are active are all very committed to this congregation. Their support will be paramount as they are the future of this community. I will also be able to speak to professionals at the URJ about issues that have come up for congregations selling their buildings in the future.

What kind of emotional commitment can I anticipate from myself for this challenge?

I will need to commit to the challenge of hearing the sadness from those members who no longer want to remain apart of this community for reasons out of my control and after we sell the building. I will also have to remain optimistic as I work with the current members in reassuring them that they will still have a community to rely on throughout their lives, despite this significant change.

What results do I hope for by taking on this challenge?

I hope that those who are currently active will remain active, and through this process take on more leadership roles and a deeper commitment to this community. As a multi generational community I hope we will be able to ritually honor this transition and the loss that will be experienced, while also celebrating the community that still exists and will continue to grow into the future.

Handout #1:

Instructions for making a Genogram:

We are going to create genograms for our congregations. Groups of people can be classified including the board, professional leadership, age groups, etc-when this is helpful. In family genograms there are many different symbols that represent gender, if children are adopted, if a couple has lost a pregnancy, etc. Our symbols will be a bit simpler. A common list of symbols is below with a mock genogram, but participants should feel free to create their own.

Our genograms should include at least two generations of leadership with information on the margins including the size of the congregation over the years, how long the leadership remained in place, and any significant events in the history of the synagogue or in the life of the members/leaders very involved in the community.

Give participants 20-25 minutes to create their genograms with colored pencils/markers.

Map making instructions: pages 23-35 in Congregations in Transition.

Common Genogram symbols reinterpreted for Congregations: (Genograms should be created like family trees with generations grouped together.)

Square: around active members

Traingle: around inactive members

Circle: next to or around families

Rectangle: around single members

Lines connecting generations can be single line, broken line, two lines, etc representing broken relationships, death, etc.

Crosses and other religious symbols can be placed over family names for intermarriage

Lesson #4:

Understanding our challenges within the 6 Concepts and 10 Commandments and Bolman and Deal: Leadership and Change

Introduction:

Now that the participants have mapped out and identified challenges in their congregations, it is time to apply the theories we have been studying to their congregations. Most likely, many participants came to this conference because they already had a specific challenge in mind that they are looking for guidance and support to work through. During this session the participants will be able to learn from one another, begin applying the Family systems theories and learn about Bolman and Deal's four frames of leadership.

Individual exploration: 25 minutes

At this point in the day, the 5 concepts and 10 commandments should be posted around the room. Instruct the participants to answer the questions below in order, in notebooks/on their computers. It is ok at this point if they have not chosen one main challenge to tackle-they can do this exercise for two challenges(but no more than two in order to give them enough time to fully think through their challenge). Tell the participants that as much as this conference is about creating a plan for change-they can only change their own actions. After this individual exploration together we will explore whom else in their communities they will need to work with to facilitate change.

1. After creating a Genogram and/or Map, identify one challenge you are facing in your congregation that you would like to begin working on after this conference-write it out in one or two sentences. Be direct and succinct.
2. What Family System concepts and/or commandments are most applicable to your challenge and why?

Family Systems meets Bolman and Deal: 40 minutes

After everyone has completed their individual explorations, pass out "Re-Framing Organizations-Bolman and Deal". Explain to the participants that in order to begin moving forward, it is important to reframe the challenges that we have identified. It is now time to take a step back and understand our challenges within a new set of tools. Take 5 minutes to read about the four frames as a group and ask for any questions.

Put a poster board with the definitions of the four frames in four corners around the room with a question on each poster. Instruct the participants to walk around and answer the question in each frame in their notebook. The questions are below:

Structural Frame: What structure will you be working within when you return to your synagogue and begin working on the challenge you identified today?

Examples: Organization of leadership, synagogue staff, physical space, part time or full time roles.

Human Resource Frame: Who will work with you, and who may create barriers for you as you begin to make change? Begin thinking about strategies for working with multiple groups of people.

Examples: Old and new members, families, singles, professional staff.

Political Frame: Who are the stakeholders in your synagogue? How will they respond to your call for change?

Examples: Founders of the synagogue, current and previous board members.

Symbolic Frame: Is the change you want to make in line with the values of the community? How has the status quo shaped your community in the past, and how might you begin to re-orient your community's culture with new rituals, symbols, and stories?

Examples: Two synagogues merging may need to create one new vision, old and new rituals can be incorporated into congregational life.

Concluding conversation:

After the participants have answered the questions in their notebooks have each participant share (in groups of 6-8 if the entire group is larger than 15) the challenge that they are focusing on, and the answers that they wrote for the two frames that find most challenging as a leader.

Instructions for the evening:

Instruct every participant to continue thinking about the Family Systems Theories and the Four Frames after dinner this evening. If they have not already read chapters 1,2,8 and 9 in Edwin Friedman's book, Generation to Generation they should read them.

In preparation for tomorrow they should also skim (if they have not already read) The Self Renewing Congregation by Isa Aron, paying special attention to the exercises in each section. Tomorrow we will do some of these exercises together in order to practice using them in congregations.

Day 2: 3 Sessions

Lesson #1: Exploring the Issues

Goals for the day:

1. For the participants to deeply explore the challenge that they have chosen to begin working on after they leave today with exercises from Isa Aron's, The Self Renewing Congregation.
2. Create their first month's IMAP and SMART Goals for their challenge.

Introduction:

This morning will provide the participant with a chance to experience a couple of the exercises in Isa Aron's book The Self Renewing Congregation, Organizational Strategies for Revitalizing Congregational Life. In the forward to Aron's book, Dr. Ron Wolfson explains Aron's vision. "Dr. Aron calls for "renewal"-renewal of a specific kind. It is a call for renewal from within, not from without- a renewal that begins with institutional self-reflection, proceeds through a process of self-engagement, and ends with self-generated innovations that can deepen the synagogue congregation as sacred community." (Aron, pg. Vii) Since change in family systems and congregations does not begin and end with one person, Aron's book provides us with another set of tools to use when working with our congregants. Her exercises are based on four capacities that she believes are the cornerstones to congregational self-renewal: 1) thinking back and thinking ahead; 2) both being reflective and proactive, enabling leaders to follow, and followers to lead; 3) practicing collaborative leadership, seeing both the forest and the trees: creating community among diverse individuals, honoring the past while anticipating the future; and 4) balancing tradition and change.

Explain to the participants that these exercises will work hand in hand with our family systems concepts and will be useful as we begin to address the challenges within our congregations. Today we will practice using two of the exercises to acutely understand the issues we have identified within our congregations and begin formulating our responses. We will also be practicing these exercises in order to use them in our congregations.

Exploring each Challenge: 40-50 minutes depending on the size of the group.

Break the group up into groups of 4-6 participants. Have each learner present their issue using Handout #3, on page 55 to "Understand the Issue" and "Formulate a Response" to the challenges. Tell each group they have 8-10 minutes for each participant (depending on the size of the group) to complete this exercise. Make an announcement at 8 minute intervals so the groups know it is time to switch to a different participant's challenge.

15 minute coffee break

Matrix of Change and Family Systems Concepts: 30 minutes

Instruct participants to return to the group they were working with earlier today. Give

them each a piece of butcher block paper and put a Matrix of Change on the board. Pass out (or instruct participantsthem to open up to) pages 95-97 in The Self Renewing Congregation. Read together the differences between changes in procedures and goals. Instruct each participant to create a Matrix for their congregation-concentrating on the challenge they explored in the earlier session. Give each participant 15 minutes to create these matrixes.

After the matrixes are complete, instruct the participants to share their matrixes with the group, and together, apply family systems concepts (in a different colored pencil/marker) that are pertinent to each change. By taking this exercise step by step, the participants will be able to visualize how every change they make in congregational life affects the congregation at an emotional level. Here they will see how one of the main concepts of family systems, “Seeing effects as integral parts of structures rather than as an end point in linear chains of cause” comes alive within the process of change.

Example: On Rabbi Cohen’s Matrix, in the Systemic change and Change in goals block she put, “new ritual for honoring members who are retiring in their professional lives.” Underneath this goal, the group may write, “Identified patient, homeostasis” as two potential family systems concepts that may emerge from this new ritual. When a person is retiring from their job, they may resist change in the synagogue system because they are striving for homeostasis *somewhere* in their life. If they have an active role in the synagogue leadership, others may expect them to take on larger roles in order to fix the synagogue since they now have “so much time on their hands.”

Final Questions:

Ask the participants how they responded to the tools.

How challenging or difficult were the tools to use?

What are the limitations of these tools within their synagogue setting?

What are their strengths?

What other exercises or tools that you read about in Isa Aron’s book, or ones you know about from previous experiences would be helpful for this group after we leave today?

Concluding comments:

The many “tools” that we have learned about in this lesson highlight the fact that family systems concepts alone are not the key to solving every congregational challenge that exists. Family systems concepts allow us to address the emotionally charged issues that arise in congregational life, and with the help of these tools and many others, we are able to use challenging times to move forward on multiple levels. When congregational families understand that they are emotional systems reacting to one another, they are able to become resilient systems. Resilient congregations, like resilient families, are better able to do the work necessary for renewal that Isa Aron writes about.

Our work over the next six months will focus on specific changes that will enable our congregations to become resilient systems. Resilient congregational systems trust their leadership to be both scholars, leaders and team players and they rely on one another for guidance and support during joyful and challenging times.

Lesson #2:

**Creating our First IMAP (Individual Monthly Application Praxis)
and SMART Goals
And
Instructions on Webinars/bi-weekly Chevruta Discussions**

Lesson #2: 40 minutes

10 minutes: Introduce the participants to IMAP as a tool for our individual work. Have participants fill out the preparation sections on the IMAP.

5 minutes: After the participants have completed their IMAPs, present them with this guide for the next six months.

Instructions for the next 6 months:

- A. Individuals will be responsible for discussing their IMAP progress with a *chevruta* bi-weekly.
- B. Once a month every participant will speak with the facilitator. The facilitator will be available to speak with the participants throughout the six months whenever the participants or the facilitator wants to check in.
- C. At the end of every month each individual will create a new IMAP that either builds on previous plans for change, or together the *chevrutas* with the help of the facilitator will come up with a new IMAP.
- D. The Facilitator will be in contact with each participant monthly (at the end of each month.)
- E. Three webinars will be set up throughout the 6 months to share successes, discuss challenges and present new tools. The webinars will be set up using webinex.

10 minutes: SMART Goals

Introduce the participants to SMART goals as another tool for their work. SMART goals are a way to avoid the common mistakes made when creating goals. “They harness motivation and remove self sabotage enabling the participant to set goals that really work for you.” After introducing the goals, have the participants create their own SMART goals for the month.

SMART Goals work by defining the acronym:

S: Specifically define what will be done by the change. Avoid generalities and use action words as much as possible.

M: Measureable-identity how you will measure success usually in terms of quantity/quality.

A: Actionable/Achievable. Make sure that accomplishing the goal is within the congregation’s realm of possibilities. Can these goals be accomplished with the skills, resources and time available? Are there factors beyond the synagogue’s control that need to be considered? Is the amount of goals reasonable? Make sure those involved in this change agree on all of the elements of it.

R: Realistic, ensure the change is practical, result-oriented and within the congregations realm of capabilities. Relevant, make sure the change is linked to a higher goal/value within the congregation.

T: Time bound, specify when the change will occur.

Conclusion: 10 minutes

Encourage the participants to work with SMART goals and the IMAP this month, and in the future, use whichever method works for them. Every month they need to use one of the methods.

Before this session ends have the group fill out an evaluation of the day.

Mock IMAP for Congregation Shalom:

Planned Change: Meet with every founding member, active and inactive, in order to access their reaction to selling the building, and document their memories of the building in order to create a building memory book.

Preparation:

What do I hope will happen as a result of this IMAP:

I will gain valuable information about what this building and the community has meant to founding members who are still alive today.

What am I going to do? What steps will I take and when will I take them?

I am going to meet with every founding member on multiple Shabbat afternoons. I will coordinate these meetings over the phone throughout the next two weeks and will complete the interviews over the following two weeks.

Who can help me and what do I need from them?

Active founding members will be easy to connect with, but I will need their help encouraging inactive members to meet with me to talk about their experiences.

What evidence will I review? How will I document my growth?

Once I have met with half of the founding members on my list, I will review the information they shared with me. I will see how the interviews progress and if my skills in working with the interviewees and being a compassionate listener result in more stories and memories shared. I will review my interview questions and the ways in which I have or have not been able to connect with the members before I complete the interviews.

Lesson #3: Reflection and Looking Ahead, Closing Conversation

20 minutes

Goal:

Provide the participants with time to reflect and feel inspired to apply their learning to their home congregations.

Concluding Activity:

Have the group sit together and ask them each to share one wish for the group as we leave this space. Often individuals project their hopes and dreams for themselves onto other people-so this one question will illuminate for the facilitator what each participant is hoping for individually and for the group.

End with an inspirational prayer/song and *Tefillah Haderech*, the travellers prayer.

Conference #2: Day 1

Assessment and Sharing

Enduring Understandings for Conference Day #2:

1. Changes in congregational systems take time and commitment to work through but it is imperative to reflect by celebrating successes and recognizing failures in order to move ahead with more tools for success.
2. Reflection in community is a way to put into action family systems concepts recognizing the emotional needs of leaders to find support and inspiration from Jewish professionals experiencing similar challenges.

Lesson #1: Mapping our Successes

Have the participants create a timeline of their journey over the past six months using their reflection sections of their IMAPS (Or by referencing their SMART goals). On their timelines they should plot their desired results, and successes from each IMAP. They should also finish this sentence for each month:

This month my congregation became a more resilient system by:

Example: This month my congregation became a more resilient system by creating a synagogue bulletin that included families' *simchas*. Previously my congregation had a tough time celebrating as they were always focused on their declining membership.

Underneath their time lines they should list all of their successes in order to see how far they have come. This could be an assignment that is given at the final webinar in preparation for day three of the conference. Have the participants share their time lines in order to bring everyone up to date on the changes that have occurred. Participants will have shared much over the past six months through the conversations and webinars-but this will give everyone a chance to see each other's successes through each participant's perspective.

Lesson #2: Learning from One Another's Challenges

Have the participants work in groups and share one of the challenges they experienced along the way. Have them again reference their IMAPs (or SMART Goals). Revisit the exercises used in Lesson #1 on Day 2 of the previous conference (Exploring the Issues and Matrix) in order to delve deeper into one of the changes and identify the goals and Family systems concepts involved. Encourage the participants to come up with at least three reasons why the challenge was not possible to complete at that time. Maybe it was a matter of not setting realistic SMART goals? Maybe the family systems concept involved was simply too challenging to overcome at this stage in the congregation's life. Maybe the leadership disagreed with the professional staff? There are many reasons why congregations don't change-is it important to identify those reasons in order to set realistic goals in the future.

Lunch**Lesson #3: Where do we go from here?**

Give individuals a chance to write about their successes. Ask them questions that will explore why the changes they've made have been successful? Which tools did they find to be most helpful along their journeys? How did Family Systems Theory, the Four Frames of Leadership, the exercises in change and the concept of creating a resilient congregation help them be successful? How else could they envision using these theories to create change in the future?