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Innovate Incorporation of Cultural Arts in the Jewish Community: A Resource Guide

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In co-operation with

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SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

INNOVATIVE INCORPORATION OF CULTURAL ARTS IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY
A RESOURCE GUIDE

Approved By:

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DEDICATION

To my husband Matthew for his undying love, support and energy,

and

To all the Jewish communal professionals who seek a future inspired by the arts

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This thesis/project would not be possible without the vision and leadership of my loving mentor Dean Ruth Weisberg and visionary philanthropist and guide Carol Brenglass Spinner. Two years ago these amazing women enabled me to live out a dream and establish a new field of graduate study in Jewish Public Art. These women have pioneered and paved important pathways in the field of Jewish Cultural Arts. This field is now ripe for discovery and ready for a solid cadre of new professionals. I have been delighted and honored to work with both of these incredible women.

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ABSTRACT

A new field has begun to develop in the past five to ten years, the field of Jewish cultural arts, informed by the fields of Jewish Communal Service and Jewish public art. This thesis/project attempts to explore the field and establish a case study informed by the field. There are three main components of this thesis/project. Part one consists of an in-depth look at the educational theories of Jewish informal education, experiential education, and confluent education. This section aims to identify important components of these theories which can be applied to cultural arts programming in the Jewish community. Part two explores the field of Jewish public art, including definitions of public art, Jewish art, and how the two fields connect. Part three of this thesis/project attempts to provide a case study of the integration of Jewish cultural arts programming informed by the educational theories previously explored.

CHAPTER ONE:

LAYING THE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

This paper refers to experiential education as an environment in which the learners are central, their needs and state of being are taken into consideration from the earliest planning process. They are engaged in interactive endeavors while learning, and asked to reflect and apply materials and issues to themselves and their personal lives. The original case study, presented in part three of this work, takes into account the three related theories of experiential, informal and confluent education. The following is an exploration of both the practical and theoretical reasons for how and why we must continue to develop Jewish cultural arts experiential education.

Modern Jewish identity

When scholars address the issue of Jewish identity many questions arise. What is an appropriate modern working definition of Jewish identity? How would a traditional definition compare to a contemporary definition? According to sociologists, Jewish identity has most often been measured by looking at levels of ritual observance. This can be clearly seen by reviewing the National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) of 1990. According to this survey forty percent of those who identified as "Fully Jewish" did not attend synagogue on high holidays.[1] Rituals measured in this survey included the lighting of Shabbat candles, the attendance of religious services, and the celebration of bar/bat mitzvah.[2] The NJPS has since shifted its identity indicators to include broader expressions of Judaism. Because Jewish identity today can be both a religious or cultural

[1] Heilman, Samuel. *Portrait of American Jews* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995: 105.
[2] Heilman, 104.

affirmation of self, its definition becomes more textured. How do Jews today define and measure their own identity?

An often ignored segment of our community includes the growing numbers of cultural or "heritage Jews", who combine culture and ethnicity to make up their Jewish self, as opposed to an emphasis on religious tradition. Samuel C. Heilman emphasizes the increase in numbers of "Heritage Jews", in his book Portrait of American Jews. Heilman poses the question, "what does it mean to be Jewish in America in our last two decades of the century?" He asserts that according to the 1990 NJPS the number of Jews who identified themselves as a "cultural group" was 70%. The number of Jews who identified themselves as an ethnic group was 57%. The number of Jews who identified themselves solely as a religious group was 49%.[3] Thus we can conclude that the majority of American Jews view themselves primarily as a cultural or ethnic group not a religious group. They sustain a Jewish identity by participating in familial gatherings or other communal activities such as giving *tzedakah* (money for charitable causes) or pursuing *tikkun olam* (healing the world through action). They may also connect to their Jewish identity through creative modes of Jewish expression such as art, theater, dance, or music.

An ever increasing expansion of the understanding of Jewish identity leaves us with an opportunity to continually redefine a comprehensible recipe for building and growing identity. This further complicates the Jewish communal professional's ability to design and measure program effectiveness that may increase Jewish identity. Therein lies the conundrum of Jewish experiential education which aims to increase learning, and hence,

[3] Heilman, 105.

increase Jewish identity. The writer believes that increased positive Jewish learning experiences can increase Jewish identity.

As a result of the expanding modern forms of identity, a need exists to offer a variety of programs and activities which engage Jewish sources with modern day expressions of Jewish identity such as art, cultural gatherings, or peace projects. For example, a class on Judaism and fashion design may not have been considered appropriate twenty years ago as an engaging educational program for teens. Today, using fashion as a lens into Jewish values and themes of past and present is a completely acceptable and creative method of educational application. A class which emphasizes expansive expressions of Judaism may attract a new set of young people to learn more about their culture and tradition.

Integrating fresh ideas with Jewish experiential education helps to continually expand the notion of Jewish expression. Widening avenues for Jewish learning to include programs such as Jewish arts may attract additional Jews to our institutions and community. The goal of cultural art experiential education is to attract affiliated and unaffiliated Jews to Judaism through interactive methods of artistic education open to new interpretations of thought and culture.

Principles of experiential education

One way of integrating Jewish cultural art experiences into the Jewish community is through the educational systems that are already in place. Recently, the Jewish community has invested in Jewish education through the increase of available grants, professional training programs, and Jewish schools. In the past decade we have seen a rise in popularity of informal education as a means of engaging Jews. This section will

explore the various fields of experiential education, informal education, and confluent education in order to understand how these theories can be applied to the field of Jewish arts education.

It is believed that through increased connections with Jewish learning taught through methods of experiential education, the learner develops a heightened sense of Jewish identity. She becomes better connected to the material learned and it becomes more intensely linked to her identity. By gaining a basic understanding of these experiential, informal, and confluent education theories, the reader will gain knowledge of how to integrate these methods into practice. In doing so, the reader will learn how to translate such methods into the creation of a Jewish cultural arts education.

Jewish cultural education can happen in a large variety of settings, both formal and informal. The theories of informal, experiential, and confluent education can inform the work waiting to be done in the Jewish cultural arts. The emphasis on the learner's experience and interpretation and the importance of an intellectual and emotional connection to the material make a strong case for the use of the arts. The creation process requires that an artist go through different levels of connection with their subject and material. Learners in an informal setting experience the same connections with the material as artists do when creating their works of art. Hence, an innate connection exists between cultural arts instruction and informal education.

Experiential education is based upon the encounter of the learner. This theory, largely created by John Dewey, (1859-1952) the quintessential philosopher and educational theorist, asserts that learning will continue as long as the student is personally connected

to the content.[4] Creating an avenue for that connection between learner and material is one of the main roles of the experiential education leader.

John Dewey first defined experiential education in his tenets of progressive education.[5] Dewey believed that an impetus for learning begins with experiences which stimulate the learner to make a personal connection and interact with the experience; otherwise the education will be rendered null and void to the learner. Dewey asserts that the educational process has two sides, one psychological and the other sociological.[6] Both sides should be taken into consideration in order to properly instruct the learners. Experiential education, with the emphasis on the learner's direct relationship with materials, is vital in creating a positive learning environment.

For example, when employing Dewey's theory, instead of solely learning the words and meaning of a prayer, one might ask the students to share experiences from their own life, such as emotional moments that mimic the feelings expressed in the studied prayer. Consider the *V'ahavta* (and you shall love), a prayer about our relationship to God and how we seal that relationship. The facilitator may start by asking participants to share moments from their lives when they felt love from their family members, and moments that they shared love with their family members. The learner can connect the feelings in his/her personal life to the meaning of this particular prayer, creating an intimate connection with the *V'ahavta*. Dewey also emphasizes the role of thought and reflection, as well as the role of the educator, as critical elements of informal education.[7] Thought

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[4] Dewey, John. "My Pedagogic Creed." School Journal 54.3 Jan. 1897: 77-80.
[5] Dewey, 77.
[6] Dewey, 78.
[7] Dewey, John. *Experience and Education*. New York: Macmillian, 1938.

and reflection on the part of the learners allows them to absorb the information before responding to it. Dewey's basic tenets help frame a positive educational experience and provide a model for experiential education settings.

In 1984, David Kolb, Ph.D, a Harvard educated professor, defined experiential learning as "learning undertaken by students who are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting."[8] His widely known theory consists of four main elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, formation of abstract concepts, and testing in new situations.[9] Kolb defined these four processes which illustrate the movement of an educational cycle, creating an "experiential education" environment. Kolb understands learning as a cyclical continuum.

Like Dewey, Kolb believes that "... the learning that is achieved through reflection upon an everyday experience..." creates a lasting and meaningful educational environment that will affect the student's identity.[10] In consonance with Dewey, Kolb believes in both the learner's active relationship with and reflection about the material. It is this connection that is vital to an experiential education setting. If, as Dewey and Kolb suggest, educators create pathways of connection between instructive material and the learners, their identities can be affected. Personal experiences define individual identity. In constructing and implementing Jewish experiential education, using Dewey and Kolb's theories can influence the learner's relationship to his/her own Jewish identity.

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[8] Kolb, David. "Experiential Learning." Infed. <www.infed.org/biblio/b-explrn.htm#kolb>.

[9] Kolb 2.

[10] Smith, Mark. "What Constitutes Reflection." Infed. 16 Sept. 1999. <www.infed.org/biblio /b-reflect.htm>.

The theory of confluent education is related to both experiential education theories as defined by Dewey and Kolb. Confluent education combines both cognitive methods (thinking/intellectual) with the affective methods (emotional). According to www.infed.org, confluent education is defined as "the integration of cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of learning across intra-personal and inter-personal and social context.[11] Hence, both knowledge of Judaism and the ability to foster positive feelings in relation to Judaism are vital and must both be present to leave lasting marks on the participants. Traditional *chevruta* study, a form of Jewish learning that occurs between two study partners as an active exploration of text, creates a dynamic relationship between learning material and student.

Informal versus formal education: Theories of Barry Chazan

The term formal education drums up images of a stern teacher standing at the front of a classroom with a ruler in hand, as the students brace themselves silently at their wooden desks. In a standard formal education setting, this is what one would find: a frontal and didactic lesson being delivered from teacher to students. The teacher's main concern is the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student. The clearest example of a formal education setting is a classroom teacher who conducts a lesson using the board, while students sit and take notes, reciting and memorizing information.

In order to properly define informal education we must first dissect the components of formal education. Barry Chazan is one of the pioneers of a developing theory of informal Jewish education. In his work Philosophy of Informal Education, Chazan states that formal education places the focus on "1) intellectual learning; 2) progression on a

[11] Zee, Cline. "Confluent Education Today." <www.projecttnt.com/tf7ce/celinks.htm>.

hierarchical education ladder; 3) transmission of cognitive knowledge from adult to child; and 4) addressing socio-economic needs of societies." [12] Traditional schools focus on teachers, students, and grades. According to Chazan, anything that falls outside this realm is considered informal education.

Informal education

The term informal education refers to any educational setting that is unique from the previously outlined traditional (formal education) model. As well, the focus shifts from transmission of knowledge to learner centered experiences. The term "setting" refers to the location of the educational experience. For example, camps or Jewish community centers are both informal education settings. In the Jewish world it is easy to name a number of examples of informal contexts; the challenge rather, lies in defining the components of informal education. Chazan has developed 8 main tenets which help define informal Jewish education. They are as follows:

1) The education must be person centered.[13] As the focus of informal education is concerned with the growth of the individual, the focus shifts from transmission of knowledge (in a formal setting), to creating meaningful connections with the material for the students in an informal setting. This tenet emphasizes the central role of the participants in their educational experience. The lessons should be immediately meaningful for the learner and applicable to their own lives.

2) The centrality of experience. This aspect emphasizes the importance of a learner's full participation in the program. Learning through "doing" allows for the understanding of a

[12] Chazan, Barry. *The Philosophy of Informal Jewish Education.* Israel: Jewish Agency for Israel, 2002:2.
[13] Chazan, 5.

concept which is more abstract. As a result, the learning can become central to his/her Jewish development and Jewish identity. *Havdallah*, the Jewish ceremony that separates Shabbat from the rest of the week is a perfect example of the centrality of experience. When students participate in a *havdallah* ceremony, they smell the sweetness of Shabbat by sniffing spices; they taste the sweetness of Shabbat by sipping wine; they see the shift in time through the candle's flame as it is extinguished. Participating in such a ceremony creates tangible connections for the student to the abstract notion of Shabbat. By participating in such a ceremony the learner's identity can be affected based on their positive interaction with the material.

3) A curriculum of Jewish experiences and values.[14] Curriculum, as defined by Chazan, is a well thought out educational plan rooted in Jewish values and tradition. He emphasizes this aspect because to some, informal education has become an acronym for intuitive teaching without a formal plan or outline. Chazan asserts that by creating solid curriculum plans, educators will help to legitimize the field of informal education and create a proof text of successful endeavors in the field.

4) Interactive process. Interaction can be broken down in a number of different ways: between student and material, from student to student, and between student and educator. An interactive learning environment implies the student directly engages with the material as opposed to learning it through recitation and memorization. This is in direct opposition to the static process of a traditional formal education, where students are expected to memorize facts, but not personally connect to the material through the learning process.

[14] Chazan, 6.

5) Group experience.[15] Chazan believes that the group experience is a central part of the learning process. This ingredient requires that learners have an educational interaction that is significant for them personally as well as for all participants. This tenet makes the argument that informal education encourages methods of community building within its emphasis on both the individual and group experience. Chazan's emphasis on community building through group experience in an informal education setting offers insight into creating effective Jewish cultural art experiences, which are explored in the second section of this paper.

6) The culture of Jewish education.[16] He sees the central role of informal education as the creation of culture, as opposed to transmission of knowledge. This tenet focuses on environment, setting, teaching methods, and relationship between student and teacher, all of which combined create a "culture" of the learning environment. These elements are the surrounding influences that construct and produce the learning atmosphere. This creation of educational culture can occur in a formal or informal setting. An example of this creation of culture, occurs when a teacher believes that students learn best when they are physically comfortable, and therefore allows students to sit in chairs, on pillows, or on the floor as long as they continue to engage with the material. The formation of classroom or educational "culture" molds the learning experience in a teacher's classroom, or in an informal setting.

7) Engagement of students. Chazan believes that by directly involving participants, they are encouraged to feel positive about their active role in the learning environment. This

[15] Chazan, 7.
[16] Chazan, 8.

element emphasizes the generation of positive feelings both towards and in the learning environment. By being asked to actively participate in their learning, the students integrate and react to the material in a different way. This tenet encourages community building by raising awareness of the educational environment and creating positive connections between both students and material and between student and student.

8) Informal Jewish educators are holistic.[17] In this kind of educational setting, the educator teaches by using words, deeds, and shaping a culture of Jewish values and experiences. They truly lead by example. Both Kolb and Chazan emphasize the educator's role in shaping the experience. Leaders are looked upon as role models. This is reflected in their actions, teaching methods, and connections to the material. The holistic integration between material, personal values, and execution is vital in the field of Jewish informal education.

Finally, if all eight tenets are present, an ideal setting for Jewish informal education is possible. Chazan's thinking has inspired many Jewish communal professionals and continues to refresh the outlook on Jewish informal education.

What is the connection between Jewish experiential education and Jewish identity?

If appropriate methods of Jewish informal education are applied to educational programs, they can increase the individual's sense of Jewish identity. Chazan supports this notion by stating "All forms of informal Jewish education are ultimately education for Jewish character or lifestyle. Overall the goal is Jewish character or identity education."[18] According to this work, Jewish identity is defined as an individual's personal

[17] Chazan, 9.
[18] Chazan, 10.

relationship and direct connection with Judaism. If Jewish cultural art experiences can encourage the community to actively seek out learning and integrate Judaism into their own life, this will increase the applicability of our tradition, values, and culture in the broader community. This type of informal education aims to help individuals connect to Judaism through multiple modes of contact, and expression. Jewish experiential education encourages an active relationship with Judaism expressed through an increasing a sense of Jewish pride, and original forms of Jewish expression.

What is Jewish "art" experiential education, and why art?

For the purpose of this work, Jewish experiential art education programming follows the basic construct of Jewish informal education and confluent education. The focus is placed on the needs of the learner, and the goal is to create personal connections between the learner and the material. While the programs are learner centered, they also both include cognitive and emotional dimensions aimed at connecting individuals and groups to each other and to the material. Both setting and educational culture are informed by a desire to create community. The methods used focus on engagement with and exploration of different artistic mediums.

What about the arts makes this form of education unique?

As the process of art making is intrinsically interactive and due to the emphasis placed on the relationship between the creator and his/her creation, the learner establishes a relationship with the material during the creation process. Throughout the process the participant reflects on his or her personal connection with the material, and establishes a meaningful relationship with the material because the items are constructed by the

learner. Think back to something you made in religious school as a child. What were your connections to the creation of your first Passover Seder Plate or Challah cover? The meaning behind the ritual and connection to the item are deepened through the physicality of the creation process. The guided process of these educational experiences is where transformational learning can take place. If the artistic processes are thoughtfully constructed and the learner is led through this experience employing both the intellectual and emotional relationship to the item being constructed, a positive bond is established.

During the artistic process, learning connections are made, a relationship to educational material is formed, and community is created. Both the educational and creative process and the connection to a larger group experience build meaningful educational interactions via arts and culture. The use of the arts in adult education is often seen as threatening or overlooked as a viable avenue. The time is ripe to revive this creative process and encourage target groups other than children to partake in creative endeavors of Jewish tradition and ritual. Families, college students, young professionals and adults, can all benefit from engaging with Judaism through the arts. Multiple mediums exist that can create connections between the arts and Judaism. These include music, dance, theater, visual arts, film and more.

CHAPTER TWO:

JEWISH PUBLIC ART: WHAT IS IT AND WHO IS THE JEWISH PUBLIC?

Who is the Jewish public, and where do we find them?

For the sake of this paper, anyone who defines themselves as Jewish is a part of the Jewish public, and is therefore considered part of the "Jewish Community". Jews have always used their organized community as a tool to preserve their heritage, help connect each other, take care of one another, and practice their religion.[19] In September of 1654, the first Jewish immigrants arrived from Brazil to the United States, landing on the shores of what was then New Amsterdam, and today is New York. Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor at the time, was less than welcoming to the first 23 Sephardic Jews.[20] Governor Stuyvesant wrote an appeal to have the immigrants deported, but his request was denied by the Dutch West India Company. The ruling stated that the Jews could stay, but that would be expected to take care of their own needs, such as governance, burial, and legal responsibilities.

In Europe, anti-Semitism imposed by political leaders had forced Jewish communities to create self-sufficient communal structures, called *Kehillot*, enabling them to take care of their own. These groups were in charge of the welfare of the Jewish community. The immigrants in America adapted this structural model. The *Kehillot* established the first

[19] Elazar, Daniel J. *Community & Polity.* Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1995:35.
[20] Dimont, Max I. *The Jews in America.* Chicago: Olmstead Press, 2001:1-3.

Jewish synagogues, burial societies, and Jewish court systems in America, and thus, the roots of the organized American Jewish community were born.[21]

The "public" in the Jewish community is directly linked to what most would refer to as private community. Jews were forced to create their own "public", isolating themselves from outside "publics", and becoming a self selecting enclosed community. Although it could be argued that the Jewish "public" is actually private, for the sake of this paper I have expanded the traditional notions of the word "public". For the purposes of this work, the Jewish "public" could be considered in a private realm of community. A fear of anti-Semitic backlash or mistreatment further increased the insulation of the Jewish "public". The Jewish "public" at many different times in history withdrew from the general public as a survival tactic, which has left a certain indelible mark on the Jewish public.

The American Jewish community is made up of a multiplicity of differing Jewish practices and beliefs. Halachic Jews (those who live observant lifestyles according to Jewish law) are required to live in a community that is able to meet all their religious needs. These include the availability of kosher foods, living within walking distance to a synagogue, and in proximity to a mikveh (ritual bath house). Reform, Conservative, and secular Jews are spread out throughout the country, and many have left the confines of the organized community. Due to the lack of barriers and availability of choices in modern society, non-halachic Jews are able to define how and where to express their Judaism. Many "traditional" Jews feel that the future of the community is at risk, as non-observant Jews continue to be lost to outside interests, massive assimilation, and multi-

[21] Elazar, 190-191.

culturalism.[22] If such is the case, and the Jewish public is not entirely connected to the synagogue, where do we find the Jewish Public?

The Jewish community of the 21st century is enriched with a wide variety of Jewish "publics". A Jewish "public" can be located in a broad range of community organizations or social networks. In other words, the Jewish community consists of one all-encompassing Jewish public, inside which exists various smaller Jewish "publics" under that larger Jewish communal umbrella. Organizations that support and broaden Jewish "publics" are thriving. These include: Jewish primary and secondary schools, Jewish community centers, Jewish museums, Jewish synagogues, adult education institutions, and Jewish camps.

In what ways are these Jewish publics, public?

A diverse number of Jewish organizations exist which support the vast array of Jewish "publics". In order to understand the institutions that cater to these differing Jewish publics, what follows is a brief explanation of a few of the settings where different Jewish "publics" can be found.

Jewish community centers (JCCs) embrace a Jewish "public" that spans the spectrum in its ties to Judaism. JCCs are geared toward a broad range of the Jewish "public". As defined by Sanford Solender, a longtime associate of the JCCs, they had a dual purpose: "1) To affect in a positive manner the development of the personality of the Jew through Jewish group experience with skilled leadership; and 2) To meet the group needs of the

[22] Elazar, 431-432.

Jewish people, in particular the need for positive and active Jewish identification."[23] Most Jewish community centers are able to reach out to children, young families, young adults, couples, singles, and senior citizens.

JCCs are places where a community member can take exercise classes, art classes, participate in Jewish learning, shop for Jewish books or liturgical objects, drink coffee, watch a play, or just hang-out. In order to belong to a JCC one must join by paying an annual JCC membership fee. Does this mean they are no longer public? No, in fact, anyone, including non-Jews, can become members or purchase a day pass without being a member. The Jewish community centers act as incubators for the larger Jewish "public". JCCs are an ideal setting for both informal education and cultural arts experiences.

Jewish schools appeal to a public devoted to Jewish education. If the school is connected to a synagogue, synagogue membership is typically required as an additional fee for school admittance. Anyone interested in educating their child through the Jewish private school system may apply. While the process is private, scholarship funds exist to help those who might not otherwise be able to afford it. Many of these Jewish publics exist within a private realm, yet they establish a public for the school community. Families and children connected to a Jewish primary or secondary school education make-up another forceful segment of the Jewish "public".

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[23] Wertheimer, Jack. *The American Jewish Year Book 1995.* New York: American Jewish Committee, 1995: 19.

Jewish camps create their own unique sector of the Jewish "public". The effects of Jewish camping in increasing Jewish identity amongst participants have been studied, with promising results over the past twenty years.[24] Jewish camps depend on the continual return of the Jewish "public" to fill their institutions. Many camps have steady constituents who attend year after year, later sending their siblings or children to the same camp. Jewish education in a camp setting is by its essence, informal, interactive, and experiential. This has proven to be a strong method of Jewish identity building. As a result of the achievements of Jewish camping, this segment continues to grow in size, paralleling its success rate. Many of generation X's leaders have grown out of the Jewish camping movement, taking on leadership roles in Jewish institutions and non-profit organizations.[25] Jewish camping constitutes a powerful and influential segment of the Jewish "public".

Although the above programs and organizations are generally successful in synagogues and the general Jewish community, men and women in their 20s and 30s are an often neglected part of the Jewish public. These young Jews are frequently overlooked and harder to find because they are transitory members of the Jewish "public". Many have not yet joined a synagogue, are highly mobile due to job availability, and are generally not interested in "affiliating" by purchasing membership in a synagogue or JCC in their area. These 20 and 30-somethings are typically referred to as young professionals.[26] The majority of men and women in this group are single or newly married, are working, and

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[24] Sales, Amy L. *How Goodly Are Thy Tents.* London: University Press of New England, 2004: 10.
[25] Sales 25.
[26] Commision on Synagogue Affiliation. *Engaging Generation Aleph.* Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1997: 19.

have not yet started families. Traditionally this age group has not been heavily targeted in the Jewish community, which tends to gear programs toward children, families, teenagers and adults.

Recently young professionals have received recognition as a vital part of the Jewish "public". A number of new organizations have formed to meet the needs of these young Jews. Two examples of such organizations include the Young Professionals program of the University of Judaism, and ATID of Sinai Temple, both located in Los Angeles. Many Jewish Federations have also begun to focus on involving this age group in Jewish communal life. This component of the Jewish public is on the brink of making life-affecting decisions including marriage, careers, and permanent living locations. By gearing programming towards young professionals, the hope is that they will be connected to and a vital part of the Jewish public and the Jewish community at large, thus increasing Jewish continuity.[27] If the community continues to insufficiently address this constituency, they may be lost to other pressing social or political causes. Jewish young adults are a diverse yet imperative voice of the Jewish "public".

Secular or cultural Jews constitute another less visible segment of the Jewish public. These Jews are normally the least likely to identify themselves with an organization or movement. Often secular Jews have shied away from the organized Jewish community due to a disheartening experience they had. Secular Jews are a challenge to locate and an often unheard voice in the Jewish public. These Jews are usually uninterested in participating in organized Jewish institutions. They may occasionally attend cultural

[27] Commision on Synagogue Affilliation, 32.

events or classes, but are typically not joiners and tend to not affiliate with the organized Jewish community.

Cultural Jews are interested in movies, music, art, and other alternative modes of representation. You may find these Jews reading newspapers, attending plays, or taking a language course in order to connect with their Jewish identity. Cultural Jews offer a distinctive zest to the Jewish community, and are vital in the creation of a strong and vibrant Jewish public. It is often the secular Jewish community that is willing to expand Jewish culture and explore creative ways to enhance Judaism. A strong sense of flexibility toward Jewish expression and open-mindedness toward Jewish tradition and culture are what makes cultural Jews a unique voice of the Jewish public.

Synagogue Jews are a very noticeable part of the Jewish "public". These Jews are identified as those who attend synagogue, or belong to the organized Jewish community. Once they have formally entered into our organized public, synagogue members may quickly become ignored, as the focus shifts to reaching out to another segment. These Jews with synagogue membership still require valuable creative programming. It is often the Jews who are already involved that need innovative events in order to keep Judaism as a thriving religion and culture in their lives. Synagogue Jews want their voice to be heard in the community. This can be easily accomplished with creative arts programming in which the congregant is encouraged to interpret and comment on Jewish tradition.

The integration of the arts in a synagogue setting can continue the exploration of Jewish concepts in kinesthetic, emotional, and visual modes, thus offering multiple arenas for connection to Jewish tradition. The arts can be used to explore Jewish texts and increase intellectual understandings of Judaism. The arts can also be used to help congregants explore a deeper meaning from text. Arts experiences provide opportunities for the creation of new "midrashim", storytelling additions to Jewish text that offer commentary on traditional Jewish sources. Infusing new meaning into an ancient culture and tradition allows for religious inspiration and meaningful connections to people's daily lives.

The aforementioned settings in which one can hear the voices of multiple Jewish "publics" illustrate the diversity of needs in the Jewish community. Every one of the diverse Jewish "publics" can benefit from cultural arts programming. The previous institutions and organizations serve as a sampling of some of the distinctive segments in our community. To create a complete list would be next to impossible. Instead the message is clear, the Jewish community has multiple "publics" with numerous needs, all of which can benefit from cultural arts programming.

What is Jewish Public Art?

Many scholars over the past few centuries have spent entire books attempting to define "Jewish Art", among them Matthew Biagell, Cecil Roth, and Margaret Olin. Each art historian creates his/her own definition for Jewish Art. How then, do we define Jewish Art? Are there specific themes that must be included in the work of an artist in order to call it Jewish art? Does the artist in fact need to be Jewish in order to create Jewish art?

Jewish art may include work that dialogues with sacred text, the Torah, or Jewish laws and customs. This art may also include references to Jewish culture or stories. It can be abstract, dealing with a "Jewish" topic in a discreet or very indirect manner. Jewish art can also be figurative, dealing with Jewish themes or values directly, including Jewish characters ranging from biblical figures to pop culture icons. For example, an artist can create an image of the biblical matriarch Sarah, or Barbara Streisand, both of which work within the Jewish art genre.

Jewish art can also be found in Jewish sacred spaces: the temples and synagogues in which the Jewish community observes their traditions and honors God. Inside these sacred spaces it is common to find Jewish art that illuminates the Torah or other important religious themes. Some examples include stained glass windows with biblical scenes, murals that surround synagogues, sculptures featuring Jewish historical heroes, or original Jewish ritual objects commissioned by a specific patron.

For the purposes of this resource guide, Jewish art is defined as: typically created by Jewish artists, and most often dialogues with Jewish tradition, focusing on themes from the Torah and/or other Jewish texts, influenced by Jewish history or culture. Jewish art often adorns Jewish sacred spaces, and may also be abstract or figurative. Added meaning can be drawn from testimonials and narrative written by the artist intending to unpack further religious or cultural meaning. Unfortunately, many Jewish artists do not take the time to create written documents for fear of being misinterpreted or labeled as "Jewish". This fear of being pigeonholed into one specific genre is viewed as limiting by

artists. They claim the label "Jewish artist" could invite anti-Semitic comments or keep them out of desirable gallery spaces. It is possible that they may also be uncomfortable with the associations drummed up from the word Jewish. If they view this label as a singular definition of identity and belief, it can feel like a constraining title to embrace. This paper defines Jewish art as art which includes Jewish themes, reflected through Jewish values, tradition, or culture, and/or is created by a Jewish artist.

What is public art?

In an effort to draw connections between Jewish art and public art, it is first imperative to define public art. Public art occurs in public spaces, dialogues with the community, is accessible to the public, and is created by, with, or for the public. Public art often takes the form of visual art, as it is easy to see how a physical piece of art in the community can become a source of inspiration and pride. In the book Going Public, authors Jeffrey L. Cruikshank and Pam Korza discuss the difficulty of defining the term public art, as this genre has evolved over time, and with it, so has its definition. The definition of public art changes depending on which critic or artist chooses to define the term. This is similar to shifting definitions of Jewish art.

Viewing examples of public art in the community will further help classify public art. Cruikshank and Korza state: "Public art may manifest itself in three basic components: on-site art in public places, on-site cultural programming, and on-site art spaces or cultural facilities." [28] While visual public art is most common, there is an inherent power in the performing arts as a form of public art. Performance art has a power which can

[28] Cruikshnak, Jeffrey L. *Going Public.* Amherst: Arts Extension Service, 1988: 9.

transform communities in a meaningful way while encouraging interactive experiences with the public.

Public art created through a communal process can help mold and form community. The Jewish community could benefit from a public art or Jewish cultural arts program that is well integrated within the community. An example of this is the use of the *hannukiah*, the eight branched candelabra that is filled with one candle for each night of Hannukah. Often called "the festival of lights", the major ritual associated with the holiday of Hannukah is the lighting of the *hannukiah*. Originally, the tradition was to light the *hannukiah* and place it outside near the doorstep or in a window visible from the outside so that all can see.[29] As time progressed, different interpretations of the *hannukiah* were imagined by artists. This public display of Jewish tradition and culture represents a Jewish expression of public art.

The holiday of Passover is also filled with opportunities for public art exploration, as the holiday is focused on communal re-enactment of the exodus from slavery in Egypt. An example of this application is an interactive artists seder held in 2004, designed by the paper's author and executed with other artists. This seder used methods of public art, visual and dramatic to express the themes of freedom, exodus, and deliverance. There are now a number of organizations that are developing similar Jewish public art experiences. As a community it is important to nurture and recreate these opportunities in Jewish public art.

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[29] Strassfeld, Michael. *The Jewish Holidays.* New York: HarperCollins, 1985: 166.

When successfully designed, public art can be integrated seamlessly with certain Jewish communal agendas by encouraging community building, creating awareness around a particular Jewish issue or theme, educating participants, inspiring visitors to a particular site, and increasing the aesthetic and creative output of the Jewish community. For these reasons this project's intent is to encourage Jewish communal professionals, lay leaders, rabbis, cantors, and educators to consider Jewish public art as a new avenue for the further transformation of Jewish culture and tradition.

A recent Jewish public art project will be unveiled in the spring of 2005 in Israel. This project is entitled the *10,000 Kite Project*, and will bring together Israeli and Palestinian children and artists to help design kites for peace. The kites will then be flown on both sides of the Israeli security fence, on April 27th 2005.[30] This project has gained positive exposure in the Los Angeles Jewish community with the help of the Liberty Hill Foundation in Santa Monica. The organization has produced kite pins, and the funds raised from the pin sales are being used to help purchase materials for more kites. The *10,000 Kite Project* is a powerful example of Jewish public art. Two artists, one Israeli and one Palestinian, created this project together after seeing a small boy fly a kite over the Israeli Security Fence in 2004.

In the mission statement for the *10,000 Kite Project*, the Israeli artist Adi Yekutieli writes: "Not even the physical barrier that separates Israelis and Palestinians is high enough or long enough to prevent good people of good will who want to reach out to

[30] *10,000 Kite Project.* <http://10000Kites.org>.

each other and communicate their collective desire to live in peace." [31] This statement explains how public art works can help transform communities through the creative process. The opportunity for Israelis and Palestinians to discuss, create together, and connect to each other opens the door and builds bridges between these communities in perpetual conflict. There is no doubt that the visual statement made through such a project will be felt in Israeli, Palestinian, and the worldwide Jewish community. This project will encourage other Israeli and Palestinian artists to view public art as a venue for collaboration and support of the peace process, and as a venue for further expression of shared values and beliefs. Imagine what the North American Jewish community could look like if each city or organization adopted their own Jewish public art project.

[31] *10,000 Kite Project.* <http://10000Kites.org/newsletter.htm>.

CHAPTER THREE:

CASE STUDY: A JEWISH PUBLIC ART CURRICULUM

This section explores one original model for designing, and implementing a Jewish cultural art curriculum. Some of today's Jewish communal institutions offer cultural arts activities, but unfortunately they are often implemented as one time events, and experienced by a small segment of the community. I believe that by creating curriculum and designing programs which include multiple opportunities in the Jewish public art arena, the Jewish community can begin to understand how to properly include artists, artwork and art experiences into the community in a meaningful way.

Consider the impact Jewish public art could have on the community if synagogues, seminaries, Jewish community centers and Hillels understood how to properly utilize the arts and artists in their programming. Seminaries could include artists in residence to work with their students. Synagogues could invite artists-in-residence, from all mediums to spend a year with their congregations creating interactive and innovative programming with their community.

Hillels could encourage students to work with professional artists in the field to explore new avenues of arts through workshops, lectures, and Jewish arts ritual experiences. Once the community learns how to holistically include the arts into the existing communities, we can help Jewish culture and tradition expand creatively.

Case Study Introduction

This portion of the paper provides a case study, which can later be applied to multiple Jewish communal settings. This sample of ideas and programming should be viewed as a model that illustrates the integration of the arts in a meaningful way within the Jewish community. The goal is for the community to understand the importance of thinking holistically about educational programming. In order to help properly integrate and achieve creative expression in the Jewish community, we must plan, design, and integrate multiple Jewish cultural arts experiences with continual exposure that can highly impact the Jewish "public". The following information gathered stems from a variety of sources including personal experience, intense study of Jewish art history, educational texts, and research and graduate studies in the new field of Jewish public arts.

Do your homework; know your audience and environment

In order to properly design engaging experiential programming it is pertinent to understand both your audience and the environment in which the activities take place. In-depth knowledge around the subjects, target group, and setting will enable the leader to more successfully create the appropriate programming for the participants. A wise leader is able to use the environment for the participants benefit by understanding the specifics of what works best in any particular location, or with a particular age group or population.

An experiential education leader may work in a variety of different settings including: camps, day schools, synagogues, Hillels on college campus, Jewish community centers,

or Israel experiences. Each setting has its own culture and way of implementing and organizing events. For the sake of this paper, it is assumed that some general rules exist which can be adapted to each of these distinct places. While each setting is unique, other factors to consider when planning a program include organizational culture, target group, environment, physical space, and history of successful and failed programs. One of the most important tools to utilize is the knowledge of professionals who work regularly in the setting. A professional who is highly familiar with his/her audience can be an immense asset to the programmer, offering insight and wisdom gained from years of experience working in the particular setting. These individuals understand their audience's needs, challenges, and abilities, and have ample experience serving them.

Knowledge of the "culture" of a specific place will provide helpful clues to what programming will be successful and what methods should be used. For example a Jewish arts experience which requires a highly controlled and all encompassing environment is ideal for a camp setting. Camp culture is considered relaxed, yet it can become a lab for continual Jewish education. Family education programs work very well in a synagogue setting and the educational reverberations of one program can affect an entire family unit. Every synagogue has its own unique culture. Synagogues are wonderful settings to work in due to the wealth of resources, people, and space. Hillels on college campuses are often open to more innovative and creative programming. Hillel professionals are willing to embrace programs that look through a unique lens, and therefore offer great environments in which to try creative experimental programs.

Israel experience programs often give rise to an intense ongoing educational journey. They have proven to be very powerful tools of identity formation especially for young adults. Israel experiences have been noted as important Jewish identity building experiences for teens. Barry Chazan has conducted research on Israel experience programs and discovered that "more intense levels of Jewish identity and involvement are connected with having been to Israel as a teen, and the impact of such an experience sustains itself into adulthood."[32] Israel experiences are potent, ideal settings for experiential education. The hands-on intellectual and emotional experiences which occur on Israel trips can easily be interpreted through the arts. If the goal of Jewish cultural arts programming is to increase Jewish identity among participants, Israel experiences should be an essential component.

Family Education: Jewish Cultural Arts Program

It is important to remember that when designing a program for a specific community one must take into consideration the goals of the program, the audience within the community, and the culture and environment of that particular communal institution. Family education is powerful because of the impact that it can have on an each member in a family unit. Family education can affect both parents and children, as well as produce a change in the role of Judaism in home life. As opposed to working with most other target groups that may affect only one set of individuals, family education increases the possibility of multiple touches of inspiration, education, and transformation within a family unit, and ultimately has the ability to produce a long-term sustained effect.

[32] Chazan, Barry. "*Does the Teen Age Israel Experience Make A Difference?*" 1998:15.

What is family education?

How do we define family education? The resource guide Growing Together: Resources, Programs, and Experiences for Jewish Family Education, by Jeffrey Schein and Judith Schiller states that "Jewish family education occurs when parents and children together, or in a parallel setting are involved in Jewish experiences that enable both adult and child to construct meaning and therefore have Jewish learning as a primary objective."[33] The goal behind this form of education is to help both children and adult participants grow Jewishly through learning.

Family educational experiences allow the leader to connect with participants in a familial context. Leading a Jewish family program is a way to connect to both the adults and children, and ideally affect how Judaism enters their home. Family is defined as the individuals that the participant is related to and lives with. Any self declared family unit is a family. Issues of blood relation, same sex homes, and adoption are of no consequence to this definition.[34]

Creating family education experiences allows the leader to encourage family modeling. Educators, other parents, and other families can serve as models for parent-child relationships, and peer relationships in a family. If another parent observes how a different family chooses what ritual object to create, they may learn through observing the interaction. Family educational experiences provide opportunities for developing strong communication skills and modeling through continued interaction and exposure to new methods.

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[33] Schein, Jeffrey. *Growing Together.* Denver: A.R.E. Publishing Inc., 2001:169.
[34] Moskowitz, Nachama. *The Ultimate Jewish Teachers Handbook.* Denver: A.R.E. Publishing Inc., 2003:164.

Purpose of family educational experiences

The leader in family educational experiences helps parents identify Jewish "teachable moments". Teachable moments are times when parents can take advantage of a particular real life situation, and offer their children Jewish content that relates to the event. A few examples of recurring teachable moments include bedtime, morning time, mealtime, shopping, bath time, or family downtime.[35] For example, while in the store a parent could teach the child about *kashrut* (dietary laws), by showing them different symbols that verify a product is kosher. The holiday of Passover creates many such "teachable moments" through the enactment of the seder, or ritual meal. Through a proper identification of these moments, parents may begin to approach integrating Jewish values into these precious times, and become active participants in their families' learning and growth. Empowering parents to take ownership of their family's Jewish education can create many wonderful opportunities for growth and an embrace of Jewish values and ideals.

What activities best suit a family educational experiential setting?

Family education activities might include *chevruta* (Jewish study between parent and child), ritual object creation to be used in the home, Jewish cooking classes, Jewish story time, or art activities. These are a few brief examples of ways to integrate Jewish experiential learning in a family environment. This model is holistic and therefore the following outline is based on a yearlong family education curriculum that parallels adult education classes, religious school education for the students, and monthly education

[35] Moskowitz, 169.

programs for the entire household. The possibilities are endless when a creative educator and parent team up to integrate inspiration in a family setting.

Important things to remember when working with family education programs

1. Let parents know ahead of time what the plan is for the afternoon, including what the lesson is, where it is going, and what will be expected of the parents in the class. By keeping the parents aware of the process of the entire program it will ease their nerves, and allow them to focus in on the work.
2. Write the schedule for the day in a visible place at the beginning of the program. Review the timeline with the parents. You can later refer to this agenda in order to curtail parents who may wish to steer the program in their own direction.
3. Starting and ending with a story can create a focus point and provide a through-line to family education programs, while captivating both audiences. Stories can help seamlessly integrate your ideas and create a solid beginning and positive closure for the ending. Stories help make the experience personal, focus the group, and make the material relevant to both parents and children.

When working in a family education environment, the leader is challenged by the need to work within a multi-generational group, which necessitates a range of knowledge and skills. Here are three different suggestions for dealing with multi-generational challenges.

1. Separate the children from the adults for significant periods of time.
2. Find ways to communicate that are appropriate for children and parents when learning together.

3. Utilize transparent methodologies, such as storytelling, music, and art. These methods are less intimidating and less dense, and they allow different learners to offer their own readings and interpretations of the materials.[36]

Family education program model

Family education can occur in many different settings within the Jewish community. The ideal way to use family education programming is by integrating it with existing educational structures in order to achieve the highest impact. The ideal construction for this program is drawn from a model structure created by Dr. Jeffrey Schein and Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz of congregation Bnai Keshet in Montclair New Jersey.[37] Their model integrates educational programming based on Jewish values into religious school, parent education, and family education programs.

Overall description of holistic family education program

In this model, in order to integrate the family education programs with the rest of the synagogue's educational environment, incorporation with religious school studies and adult education is emphasized. The model requires that the students learn about one Jewish value for an hour in religious school. The parents concurrently have an hour of adult education based on the same Jewish value. Later that month, a family education program based around the same theme occurs. The family education program begins with adults only, in order to accommodate their needs and concerns. During this half-hour of parent orientation, the children participate in a fun activity. In order to encourage the

[36] Moskowitz, 25.
[37] Moskowitz, 27.

continuation of learning and observance in the home, families are given follow up projects to empower parents and encourage further connections made in their residence.[38] This family education program is holistic and can occur over a period of time. The children's education piece, the adult education piece, and the family education piece all occur over a month long period, not on the same day. Ideally the family education program is designed to focus on nine Jewish values, one per month. A steady infusion of lessons, sermons, and creative projects in the synagogue based on each of the nine Jewish values will increase awareness of the theme in Jewish life.

Goals for Jewish family education

The process of both separate and joint educational programming allows for an ongoing absorption of Jewish values into a family's life cycle. This family education art program, outlined below, gives parents and younger children (seven to nine year olds) an opportunity to learn, create, and celebrate Jewish life together. Parents can become invested in their family's Jewish learning and celebration of Jewish life. The home projects allow families to integrate themes into their observance of Jewish life at home. The adult education piece empowers parents to view themselves as teachers and models in their children's Jewish education and celebration of life. The family education component occurs on Sunday afternoons, or during religious school hours.

[38] Moskowitz, 30-33.

Educational goals for a cultural arts family experiential education program

- To provide an educationally creative and continuing Jewish family experience which will attract parents and children to take advantage of further family educational experiences.
- To offer educational opportunities which meet the needs of both children and adults in their family unit, and are developmentally appropriate and enduring.
- To encourage the creation of meaningful and unique family ritual objects through the co-creation of artworks by parents and children.
- To help parents and children create educational bonds through a joint Jewish learning experience.
- To familiarize families with the theme of rest and renewal (or other Jewish value), and its textual connections in the Jewish tradition.
- To provide families with materials and motivation so that family members can apply what was learned in their home.

Format

This cultural arts program is based on an intergenerational family education project geared towards parents and children ages seven to nine years old. The themes are based upon Jewish values which will be emphasized in the religious school classroom, in the synagogue, in adult education classes, and in family programs. Each theme or Jewish value will be explored in all settings and integrated into synagogue life for a month-long period. Every year the educational staff will choose 12 values to coincide with the Jewish calendar year. These will be explored creatively and integrated into the synagogue's

programming. For each Jewish value there will be a separate children, adult, and family arts education program. Each adult, child, or family education program will take place over one month-long period.

Set-Up and Overview of Family Education Program

Each family education program is developed around the following basic framework:

12:45-1:15 pm	Welcome, greeting and refreshments
1:15-1:30	Parent/Child Opening
1:30-2:15	Creation Stations
2:15-2:35	Story time Parent/Child
2:35-2:45	Closing

The room set-up and materials include the following:

- Greeting station: a rectangular table with 2 chairs, registration list, name tags and pens.
- Creation stations: long rectangular tables set in a u-shape on one side of the room.
    - Tables are covered in white butcher paper with multiple materials at each station including: markers, colored pencils, magazines, newspaper, modge-podge (a laquer for decopage projects), brushes, paints, etc.
    - Rest deck: a blank box with a set of seven cards that fit inside the box. This is the creation portion of the adult education component. It will be explained in further detail.
- Art start: an area designated for opening artwork to engage participants as they arrive. This can be different each time based on the theme. For rest and renewal,

an area with pillows is set up for parents and children to read stories, draw a picture, or play a quiet game. Stories, games, and drawing materials are spread out throughout the pillow area.

- Opening and closing circle: Chairs set up in a semi-circle in the center of the room for opening, introduction of activities and storytelling.

Limitations:

This program is geared toward families with children age seven - nine. The cultural arts curriculum with Jewish values will be divided according to appropriate developmental activities and concepts. If designing a similar program with older children or teens, the activities can be more complicated, and the artistic mediums should be varied. This program is ideally integrated within a synagogue's educational curriculum allowing long term learning goals to be achieved, with the entirety of the unit to be experienced over a period of four weeks.

Synagogue resources:

It is ideal to include Jewish artists and professional artwork which highlights the monthly Jewish value into the educational program. Artists' work can be integrated in the program through slide shows, discussions, mini gallery shows, workshops and demonstrations. Artists can also lead creation workshops for families, children and adults. The educational staff and clergy can also help integrate the program's theme throughout the month by using sermons and storytelling, and by taking advantage of teachable moments where the value fits into real life situations.

Challenges:

Cultural arts programs require intense set up and clean up. It may take up to two hours to organize the physical set-up. Visual aids can be helpful or intimidating depending on the audience and aids used. Some people can be motivated by samples, others are further distanced. When parents and children are in the midst of creating it is vital to have a few people circulating to offer support and ideas. Some participants will need extra encouragement in order to delve into creative activities.

Raising the bar:

Encouraging parents to expand upon their own learning by bringing similar creative activities into the home helps further the integration of Jewish expression through art. Allowing parents access to materials and resources which they can use on their own helps empower the parent in this endeavor. Including a minimum of one guest artist per month will raise the level of creative output during programs, and thereby increase the synagogue public's awareness of Jewish expression through art. A professional artist can also help increase the creativity within the synagogue as a whole.

Evaluation:

This program was designed as an original case study, for this paper. It has not yet been tested in the field. It is vital that both parents and children have an opportunity to evaluate their experience and give feedback to the program leaders. Examples include allowing ten minutes at the end of the program to fill out an evaluation questionnaire and by asking parents and children to share their thoughts on the impact of this program. Another option

is to re-connect with the participants at regular intervals over the course of the next year to measure levels of participation and families' sense of connection to their Judaism. Once the program leaders have tested this experience it is also vital to reflect on experiences that were successful and not successful, and record the analysis, making any necessary changes.

Conclusion:

By following this guide for a Jewish cultural arts experience in a synagogue setting, the program leaders will be affecting the creative output of the Jewish community. Hopefully it will affect the families involved by encouraging the creation of family heirloom items, as well as the further engagement for all family members in Jewish learning. This program is merely a model, completely adaptable for different communal settings. Jewish cultural arts can be integrated in a meaningful manner into our organizations and institutions through a solid curriculum. Experiential education establishes both intellectual and emotional ties to Jewish material. Use this program model, to help create your own set of meaningful cultural arts experiences for your constituency. This experiential education program is created to encourage the further integration and to help professionalize the field of Jewish cultural arts.

Exploring the case study theme: rest and renewal

Rest and renewal are important aspects of Jewish time that are emphasized in the observance of Shabbat. The stillness of Shabbat and abstention from our work week and busy lives allows Jews to create sacred space in time by stopping the production of

normal work week activities, and allowing a rejuvenation of their souls. This rest and renewal imitates God's rest after the creation of the world. The Hebrew word for the unique rest of Shabbat is *menuchah*.[39] The phrase Shabbat *menuchah* conjures up images of an artist's satisfaction after striking the final stroke of a masterpiece, or a student typing the last letter of a paper. A sense of pride and completion is achieved during Shabbat *menuchah*. We find this value emphasized in our tradition through the celebration of Shabbat, the story of creation, and through insight into biblical characters.

Where do rest and renewal fit into the Jewish value system? Rest and renewal means giving yourself time to re-energize by stopping your daily activities that require energy. Rest means to withdraw, to experience *tzim-tzum*, an internal withdrawal, which comes from the term for God's contraction in order to make room for others in the universe. *Tzim-tzum* is a Jewish notion of taking a step inward in order to reflect and allow space which in turn can lead to creation. *Tzim-tzum* is a moment of inspiration or reflection. God completes the act of *tzim-tzum*, in a well known midrash that explains the mystical theories of Isaac Luria. God completes the act of *tzim-tzum* in order to rest and renew God's self as well as to allow for more space in the universe. Human beings can also experience *tzim-tzum* by taking time out to rest, withdraw and re-energize. To create rest means to slow down, to balance the energy of creation with the stasis of stopping. Rest is modeled in Shabbat through not working and creating space for family and personal time. Rest can also mean connecting to God or drawing upon a higher source in order to help us renew ourselves.

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[39] Cardin, Nina. *The Tapestry of Jewish Time.* Springfield: Berhman House, 2000: 37.

Renewal occurs after a period of rest. Renewal starts the beginning of the creation process flowing once more. Renewal occurs when ideas begin to form and plans take shape after our experience of pulling back, connecting spiritually, or simply withdrawing from our busy lives. Renewal allows us to gain a fresh new perspective, and to create once again. Renewal can occur after moments of *tzim-tzum* or after taking time to rest on Shabbat.

Textual resources

Rest and renewal are modeled through Shabbat. Abraham Joshua Heschel, a highly esteemed contemporary Jewish philosopher (1907-1972), devoted an entire book to explaining the importance and beauty of Shabbat. In The Sabbath, Heschel describes Shabbat as a "palace in time."[40] This pregnant idea stirs the imagination; it alone can be explored with adults as an introduction to the notion of rest and renewal. Many beautiful gems can be found within this text. It is a recommended resource for use during the adult education program.

Multiple biblical resources exist that focus on Shabbat and highlight the importance of rest and renewal. Below is a list of a few such passages:

Exodus 16:4-5, 29 This text illustrates God's gift of mannah from heaven, including a double portion for the sixth day. The double portion of mannah acknowledges the importance of ceasing work on the Sabbath.

Exodus 20:8-11 This passage speaks of remembering the Sabbath day and keeping it holy by abstaining from work.

[40] Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *The Sabbath.* Canada: HarperCollinsCanadaLtd, 1995:15.

Exodus 31:13-18 This text refers to Shabbat as a covenant between God and the Israelites. In this passage the emphasis is placed on God resting on the seventh day, reflecting the notions of rest and renewal.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 This text explains in detail what constitutes as work, and it emphasizes the importance of allowing others to take the Sabbath day as a day of rest.[41]

Integrating the theme: how does it relate to your participants?

It is helpful to explore how this value (rest and renewal) applies to the participants' lives, or where they see examples of rest and renewal in their own lives. The leader can begin by talking about this value through a story; it can be personal, fictional, historical or biblical. Open the discussion by asking the group what these terms mean to them. Have them define the values in their own words. The leader can ask trigger questions such as: how does rest and renewal apply to you and your life? Do you allow yourself time to experience this? When have you experienced this before? How do you feel when you experience this? How can you bring this into your life in a more active way? What types of music or surroundings help you to feel rested or renewed? Small discussion groups are most conducive in encouraging conversation around the theme. This happens best in dyads, followed by sharing in the larger group.

Dance Midrash: exploring rest and renewal through movement (children ages 7-9)

This portion is developed for the children's educational piece of a family education program, focused on rest and renewal. Split the children into groups of ten or smaller, depending on the total number of children.

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[41] Goodman, Robert. *Teaching Jewish Holidays.* Denver: A.R.E. Publishing Inc., 1997:5-6.

When the children enter the room ask them to begin in silence, remove their shoes, and start to move quickly around the circumference of the room, continually, until the music completely stops. When the music stops, the group must freeze and hold their last position. It will be helpful to use fast, active, lively music for this first warm-up session. Allow the students to move around the room in this fashion for five minutes, which will feel quite a bit longer for them. At the end of the self-led warm-up, the leader can guide a traditional ten minute warm-up session that includes stretching and isolations, focusing on individual parts of the body.

Following this warm-up the children will be encouraged to move to slow, ethereal, serene music. The leader may wish to participate, in order to help motivate the students and keep the movements flowing. Keep the students moving for the entire period while the music is playing. Finally, ask them to move only one body part at a time, isolating their movement. For example, if you want to transition to sitting down (from standing), first have them move their foot, then slowly bend their knee, then place a hand on the ground, then move their head, then bend until they are seated. This exercise will require the students to experience the difference in quick and slow movement. The teacher can lead a few examples for all students to imitate, and then allow the students freedom to explore their own movement within the exercise. The children will begin to feel the difference between quick and slow motion, frantic movement, and rest.

At the conclusion of the movement period, stop the students and ask them to sit on the floor in a circle. Have them describe the different feelings they experienced when moving quickly or slowly. Ask the children which movement style they think they could maintain for long periods of time. Every person has their own affinities to certain styles of movement. For example, some of us are slow movers by nature, while others prefer quick sharp movement. Ask the children to share how it felt to move each of these extremes. Have a number of children share their feelings with the group. The leader can tease out feelings that reflect rest and renewal versus work and output of energy.

Ask the children to think about and share moments in their lives when they experience rest or renewal. When in their weekly schedule are they encouraged and allowed to rest? What times of day or what times of the week are they given opportunities for rest and renewal? Remind the group that there are no wrong answers. If they need help sharing and relating, ask the children to think about coming home from school, evenings, sleep time, and first thing in the morning. How do these times of day allow for or not allow for rest and renewal? Ask the children to share about their family Shabbat experiences, and to associate how rest and renewal might fit into their Shabbat routine.

Choreography workshop: rest and renewal

The next step is to ask the students to pair up; with their partner they must create a thirty second movement piece about rest and renewal. They can focus on the cycle of the week, sixth vs. seventh day, or focus on daily activities and evening. The children should be reminded that each piece must have a beginning, middle and end. It must include both

movements that reflect and represent rest and renewal. Both dancers must be involved in the piece. Give them time to create, scatter around the studio and offer support where needed. After half an hour, allow for beginning work-shopping of ideas; ask each group to present their work in progress for the class. Close with a brief tie-in discussion about where these ideas fit into Judaism, and into their own lives. If the leader sees this group of students on a regular basis, the workshop and movement pieces can be expanded and developed further. The pieces could be combined for a show about Shabbat and Jewish values shared through movement.

Adult education component: visual arts exploration of rest and renewal

This section is designed for the adult education piece of the family education program on rest and renewal. Visual art is the chosen medium for this adult education project. Sometimes the creation of visual arts is less intimidating than a drama or dance workshop for adults. Gather the parents in a large room with plenty of space to spread out for art and painting supplies spread throughout the room. Begin by explaining to the parents that today we will explore the notions of rest and renewal.

Start the educational portion by telling an engaging story that focuses on rest and renewal. Next, ask the parents what additional rest and renewal in their personal lives might look like. What might they do to encourage this more often? Ask them to imagine how they experience rest and renewal as a family, during family vacations or as family time on Shabbat, Shabbat services, etc. It is important to have a variety of the parents

share their ideas and thoughts with the group. This will stimulate thought, and give ideas and suggestions to the rest of the parents.

Choose one particular text about Shabbat, or another example of rest and renewal to explore as a group. Texts can be chosen from the Shabbat passages previously listed in the textual resources section, or from other pertinent modern texts that highlight the themes of rest and renewal. Open with a brief introduction to the text. If the passage is in Hebrew, make sure to include an English translation, in order to provide full access to the materials. Have the parents break into small groups and read the text together. After the initial discussion, hand out questions for each group to discuss in reference to the text. Finally, ask the parents to share important insights or impressions with the larger group.

Guided imagery

Before the creative project it is helpful to have a warm-up activity to get the parents involved in creative imagining and flexing their artistic muscles in preparation for the art activity. Ask all the parents to close their eyes and picture their regular work week. Have them clearly envision themselves preparing for work, driving to, and arriving at their workplace. If a parent works from home, or is a stay at home parent, ask them to view themselves preparing for all they have to do that day. Have them imagine what their body feels like as they go through a typical work day.

Next, tell them that they receive news at work that they have just won a contest, in which the prize is a complete day of rest and relaxation. They have won a day filled with their

ideal activities that foster rest and renewal. It might be a day at an amazing spa, a ski vacation in the mountains, a day with full childcare, or a stay at a luxury hotel in Maui. Tell them to imagine themselves experiencing this amazing prize of rest and relaxation. Ask them to feel in their body the release of tension, the ease of the muscles, the refreshing air, and the complete release of pressure. Have them imagine a full day of renewing activities. Ask them to take notice of what happens in the morning of this day of renewal and rest. Are naps included? What kinds of activities do they prefer to do? Who is with them, and who isn't? What foods do they eat? What sounds are heard? What smells surround them?

Tell the parents that their day of renewal is coming to a close. As the sun sets, they prepare for a new regular week day. What do they do to prepare? How do they feel? How is their energy level after a complete dream vacation filled with rest? What are they looking forward to in the next week? The sun is setting, they watch the sunset, and they toast to a new week ahead.

Sharing your guided imagery experience

Divide the parents into pairs, preferably not married couples but combinations of new people. Ask the parents to take five minutes to share their imagery and personal impressions from the experience. Have them share their ideal day of rest and renewal with their partner. Remind them to make sure to include details such as how it felt, activities they participated in, where they were, and what they experienced. Finally, ask them to brainstorm ways to bring this rest and renewal into their own real lives.

Adult creation stations: rest and renewal decks

Creation stations are set up on tables around the room. Each station has a set of seven cards enclosed inside a blank box. Ask the parents to brainstorm seven simple ways to bring rest and renewal into their daily lives, for example celebrating Shabbat with their family. Have them think of seven things they can do for themselves that are easy and realistic. They should write down these seven simple things on a prepared sheet with leading questions, such as: how can you do this? What does this mean to you? What would this look like?

Next instruct the parents to choose seven activities, one per blank card in the deck, to create their rest and renewal deck of cards. The parents should work on one card at a time and prepare an illustration for it. Each card will be designed on two sides. On one side they write the activity, and on the other they illustrate this action through collage, or by abstractly expressing it in colors, shapes, and lines.

Ask the parents to brainstorm ideas together as a group, generating suggestions which can be used for their illustrations in the rest and renewal deck. Next, write suggestions on a board that is visible from all spaces in the room. Suggestions might include taking naps, turning off the cell phone for an hour, reading in a quiet space, playing restful music, meditating, taking a yoga class, learning a fun new hobby, soaking in a tub, communing with nature, or going for a walk on the beach. These ideas will stay as an anchor for those who need help, or will provide more suggestions to use in their deck.

Art supplies for this activity can include colored pencils, markers, magazines for collage, water colors, paints, colored papers, modge-podge (a laquer for decopage), and other fun accessible supplies. A few different helpers should circulate to guide the participants if they are stuck and to offer suggestions. If time permits, ask the parents to share their cards with the group.

Family education program: rest and renewal, a learning experience between parents and children

Gather the parents and children into the main meeting room, sanctuary or large hall. Ask the parents and children to share the previous rest and renewal activities that they explored in their separate sessions. Split the group into family units. They will visit three story stations together as a family.

Each station will be led by a different Jewish family representative, clergy, educator, or biblical character who shares a story about one way that they experience rest and renewal in their family. Suggestions include: Hassidic stories, Moses, Sarah, or personal stories from the station presenters. The point of this brief exercise is to show through stories how both biblical and modern figures have integrated rest and renewal into their lives. The stories at each station can include themes such as, how Shabbat is celebrated, how they achieve *tzim-tzum* in their daily life, or how they create family time during the week.

After the families have visited each story station they are asked to brainstorm different ways to encourage rest and renewal within their family. They are asked to choose one

activity that they will attempt to do every week. These can include activities that occur together as a family. They are asked to share with one of the leaders one activity that they wish to include in their lives as a family. Afterwards each family is encouraged to think of a physical item, or ritual object that can help them to complete or remember that activity.

Each family unit then works together to create one new family ritual object, which when used will encourage them to take time for rest and renewal during Shabbat, or throughout their busy weeks. The creative options are endless; these are merely a few suggestions to get the families started. Ideas may include a special box for stories and reading time, a time-out container filled with ideas for relaxing activities, a bottle for massage oil with directions for different kinds of massage to encourage physical relaxation, or a calendar with planned family outings scheduled for Shabbats throughout the year. Following the creation process each family shares their new ritual object with the larger group, and explains the activity and the meaning behind it.

Family Follow-up Homework

Following this project, each family will be encouraged to complete a take home activity. This project focuses on writing an explanation of each family's new ritual object, detailing how it is used in their household and how it reminds them of rest and renewal. The synagogue will highlight one new ritual object for 10 weeks following this project. Each family's ritual object will be prominently displayed for a week, with its explanation

and photo of the family in a display case at the foyer of the synagogue for an entire week. If possible, the object will also be integrated into a ritual service during the week.

Conclusion

As we look towards the future, the field of Jewish cultural arts will continue to have a tremendous impact on Jewish identity formation for generations to come. In order to properly support this new field we must train, develop and design a series of successful Jewish cultural arts programs and practitioners. Through the development of further studies, organizations and agencies that devote themselves to the Jewish cultural arts, the field will continue to advance, expand and impact the face of the North American Jewish community.

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