



## ACTIVITY

# The Jewish Family

### Materials Needed

- Video clip
- Screening device and internet connection
- Paper
- Pens/ Colored Pencils
- Markers

### Time Needed

45 minutes-1 hour

### Goal

To have participants consider the metaphor of “family” as a way of understanding their connection to the Jewish people.

## Before You Get Started

Look at the list of enduring understandings. Which one would you like to emphasize through this activity?

1. Judaism is not (only) a religion. It is also a People and the national component of Jewish civilization is central to understanding Jewish texts, practices and culture.
2. Many of Judaism's norms, laws and mitzvot are articulated and relevant through the Jewish collective.
3. The Jewish People (and not its constituent individuals) is the carrier of Jewish religion and civilization. Sustaining the People and continuing its legacy is therefore a core Jewish value.
4. "The Jewish People are bound by a shared past (the covenant of fate) and a shared future (the covenant of destiny)" – Soloveitchik.

## Directions for Activity 1

1. Watch the Clip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCmHd\\_scHik](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCmHd_scHik)
2. Ask participants which "definition" of being Jewish resonated most for them – religion, culture, family?
3. Now watch the Clip by Avraham Infeld: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AVOV-MxfEA>

Does the idea of "Jewish family" resonate with you?

4. Create a Jewish Home for your Jewish Family. Make a list of all the different kinds of Jews that they know are a part of the Jewish family (secular Jews, yubus, atheists, ultra orthodox Jews, conservative Jews, eco-friendly Jews, Jews by choice, etc)
5. Now ask participants to draw a picture of a house with lots of different rooms (kitchen, livingroom, bedrooms, attic, basement, backyard etc.) Working on the assumption that Jews are a "family", depict your relationship to all of the members of your Jewish family you listed above by placing them in different rooms of your home.

As they do this they should think about:

- What do each of the rooms represent to you?
- Who is on the outside of your house and who is on the inside?

- Who are Jews you socialize with, eat with (and who might live in places like the kitchen, livingroom or den)
  - Are any members of your family relegated to the attic or basement? Why?
6. Ask participants to share their drawings with each other. In the spirit of “collective Jewish belonging” have participants share which members of their Jewish family they would want to bring a little bit closer into their home.

### Directions for Activity 2

1. Make a family tree. While the Jewish people are a large extended family, take time to learn about your immediate family first. Who are members of your family from as far back as you can remember? What characterized their Jewish lives (Philanthropic giving? They opened their house to guests? Observed the Sabbath? Valued Jewish prayer? Involved in Civil Rights?)
2. Ask parents and grandparents to fill out the picture of who your relatives were and what gave their Jewish lives meaning.

### Note to Educator

Did the enduring understanding that you set out to teach surface during this activity?

### Additional Resources:

Beit Hatefutsot Family Story Program