

WHY WE SHOULD ENGAGE IN LIFELONG JEWISH LEARNING

Board Retreat Brainstorm, August 30th, 1998

It's What Jews Do	It's the responsibility of every Jew	Builds community insures continuity connects us to God	Quest for knowledge that leads to wisdom & righteous action	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in Jewish life cycle • It is a Jewish thing to do, see how past texts are related to present time • Model to children and community the value /importance of Jewish knowledge. Education • To wrestle with my personal relationship to Judaism/torah/the divine • Eases my conversations with Jews of all stripes • Makes me feel good • To expand my own thinking provides comfort through repetition of familiar themes. Prayers and rituals • Guide behavior and work Jewish learning tells me who I am and where I came from • The elements of Jewish learning compose the confluence of who I am what I think how I feel, how I behave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to teach my children myself • To create a background • Understanding how much of our cultural foundations, even in our christened dominated society, originate with us • It helps me to stop and think about things that I tend to "ignore" due to other priorities • To help me do a better job instilling values in my children • How can you be a Jew and not study/learn? • Protects the future • Connecting to our ancestry as represented in study • Guide social action-<i>tikkun olam</i> • To bring the learning most of us left at 16 to our lives as adults • To teach our children behave in Jewish ways • To help me refine/improve my own values • To help me decide what I am as a reform Jew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel a connection to God • To help us define our role as reform Jews • feel connected to larger whole • connect to past - Jewish people • spiritual connection • strengthen connections among people • connects me to a community in a very fast moving and transient world • continue family tradition • connection to roots/history • provides connection to past and future something I share with multiple generations • engage with community • To maintain/foster our community without learning we will continue to "lose" Jews • Have Jewish values in communal relations • Connects us to each other • Building relationship among us • Survival depends on it • "Wrestle" with diversity of views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity • Enriches my life • Continue personal growth • Recognizing that the study of torah has modern meaning chosen - must know for what • Find meaning help guide decisions • Enable participants to love more Jewishly • Talmud torah <i>keneged kulam</i> – Torah study leads to living a Jewish life • Opportunity to observe/experience when "the light goes on" • Provides a reason to be a Jew and to be involved, i.e.. Validates one's experience • To learn who I have become • Lifelong learning - helps answer personal questions, with some factual data, more than just emotional response • Challenge mind, engage in learning • Help communicate make informed Jewish decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidarity or group activity with purpose beyond basic life necessities • It's like exercise, if you don't do it, you live a less healthy life • It is fun! • Because ---- • It's interesting • Learning is fun • Fun • To understand better how Judaism evolved and how it differs from other religions/cultures • Enjoyment • It challenges and some times helps to alter my actions and priorities regarding family, work, community service, etc. • Being a role model

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a committed Jew I should know as much as possible about my Jewish world ➤ Discovering the text that confirms my instincts triggers a lightbulb of connection to generations past and future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn and teach their children -- preparing their children to remain Jewish • For me to decide where I am and where I want to go • Inform (Jewish ethical) behavior • To fulfill our obligations as Jews and to understand our obligations • Teaches each other • Model to children and other adults the importance of Jewish education • To help us as leaders, guide the community ➤ As a parent and grandparent I must learn to teach my children & help them remain Jewish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass on our traditions, morals, values to the next generation • Common understanding leads to covenantal community • Preserve culture • Institutional standards need to be higher than individual ones • Builds connections among individual into community • Teaches us how to respond to the patterns of our lives (life cycle events) • Preserve Jewish people • Connects us to Jews in other communities • Create larger cadre of informed reform/liberal Jews • Provide focus for community • Binds our commonality with the entire community framework, opens new avenues of thought. Time commitment short as compared to class commitment. Builds community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive experience - Asilomar 1998 - acquired info on mitzvot and minhag background in short time periods, as opposed to lengthy class time commitment. Other Asilomars also do this, in a comfortable, social setting • Helps me make decision about my life • Search for meaning • Enriches my Jewish life • Direction for thought and development of new thoughts = code building • Helps me understand who I am and where I come from • Provide me a place to be grounded - a value system which I can adopt/challenge 	

It's what Jews do

It's the responsibility of every Jew

Builds community insures continuity connects us to God

- Provide common language/culture to share - community
- To protect our long & beautiful heritage
- Strengthening what Beth am does as a community
- To make our community a better place for all (Jews & non-Jews)
- To bring those who have little or no childhood memory of being Jewish into the community
- To help set directions in our community and the broader world in general
- Positive experience
- Asilomar - communal learning in participatory framework, opens new avenues of thought. Time commitment short as compared to class commitment. Builds community
- Insure Jewish continuity
- Build for future
- Connection to history

Quest for knowledge that leads to wisdom & righteous action

- Intellectual stimulation
- Provides foundation for our actions helps me to rationalize my actions
- Enjoy the challenge stimulation of the material
- To give me more background/guidance in all of my thinking/actions
- Influences my behavior for the good
- Deal with death - to fully live
- Who am I?
- Find meaning
- Provides an understanding of the nation of humankind to better enable us to deal with and to understand ourselves and the world
- Gives meaning to our existence
- Make Jewish ethical decisions in life

Other