

# The S3K Synagogue Studies Institute / Mechon Hadar

## 2007 Spiritual Communities Study

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11/19/2007 3:09:	survey		http://w w w .smcr
	<p><b>This is a study of Jews who are somehow connected to a very diverse array of Jewish spiritual communities. These groups' activities may well take place outside established congregations, but some do meet in, or are part of, "regular" congregations. They go by various names: "minyan," "spiritual community," "alternative worship service," "chavurah," "congregation," and others. You may be a regular or infrequent participant, or just on the e-mail list of one such group – that's why you're receiving this survey.</b></p> <p><b>We recognize that contemporary Jewish spiritual communities vary widely in their diversity and practice; not everyone filling out this survey was born Jewish, is Jewish now, or has had a Jewish education. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability and comfort, and please do not hesitate to leave blank any questions you feel do not apply to you.</b></p> <p><b>By taking this survey you confirm that you are aged 18 years or older, or that you are 13-17 and have your parent's permission to complete this survey.</b></p> <p>If you have any questions or comments about this survey, please <a href="#">click here</a> to email Steven M. Cohen directly.</p>		

### Your Involvement in the Jewish Community

- 1. Do you see yourself as a part of or a member of a Jewish congregation, minyan, spiritual community or chavurah?**  
No, none Yes, one Yes, two or more Not sure
- 2. We recognize that some people have multiple simultaneous community connections. Regardless of how you received this survey, please enter the name(s) of at least one (1) and up to four (4) congregations, minyanim, spiritual communities, and/or chavurot which you attend regularly (however you define "regularly") and with which you identify most. Please enter each in a separate text box below.**

	Community One	Community Two	Community Three	Community Four
Name of Community				

**We recognize that some people have multiple simultaneous community connections. Of the communities you entered above, please enter the names of ONE or TWO communities which you consider to be your primary community or communities. They need not be the place(s) you attend most often, but rather where you feel most connected, where you are most “at home.” Regardless of whether you enter one or two communities, you will be asked to fill out the next section with a specific community – and only that community – in mind. If you enter TWO communities, you will have the opportunity to answer questions about the second community after you’ve completed the survey.**

**3. ★Your primary community:**

**4. Your additional community (optional)**

**This next set of questions pertains to <@Name@>. Please answer them with only <@Name@> in mind.**

**5. How did you FIRST hear about <@Name@>? Please choose one answer that most closely reflects your experience.**

- Friend(s)
- Family member(s)
- Newspaper article other than in the Jewish press
- Article or advertisement in a Jewish newspaper
- A website
- E-mail from someone I know
- E-mail from an organization
- Other
- Not sure

**6. In the past 12 months, how many times have you attended religious services at <@Name@>?**

- Not at all or only on special occasions (a Bar/Bat Mitzvah a wedding)
- Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur)
- A few times a year
- About once a month
- Several times a month
- Weekly or more

**7. In the past 12 months, how many times have you attended other programs at <@Name@>?**

- Not at all
- Once or twice a year at most
- A few times a year
- About once a month

Several times a month

**8. To what extent do you feel attached to <@Name@>?**

Extremely attached   Somewhat attached   Not very attached   Not attached   Not sure

**9. Do any of the following roles at <@Name@> apply to you, whether currently or in the past? (please mark all that apply)**

	Now	In the past
Member of the governing board or leadership group		
Member of a committee, task force or team		
Leading or helping to lead religious services		
Teacher (school, bar/bat mitzvah, adults, etc.)		
Leader of a group, club, or ongoing program		
Leading or helping to lead a specific program or event		
Providing other informal leadership		

**10. In which of the following of <@Name@>'s activities are you involved?**

	Never	Infrequently	Regularly
Text study groups			
Visiting or providing food for those with illness or life-cycle needs (births, deaths, etc.)			
Participating in prayer services for mourners (shiva minyanim)			
Social service (soup kitchen, etc.)			
Social action/social justice advocacy			
Greeting/ushering or supporting set-up/clean-up at services and events			

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**11. Which best describes your involvement in the making of important decisions at <@Name@>?**

I have been given the opportunity and often participate in decision-making  
 I have been given the opportunity and occasionally participate in decision-making

I have been given the opportunity but don't usually get involved in decision-making

I have not been given an opportunity to be very involved and this is fine with me

I have not been given an opportunity to be very involved and I am not happy about this

**12. To what extent are the following reasons why you attend <@Name@>?**

	Not at all	A little	To some extent	To a great extent
My spouse / partner / significant other attends				
My parent / child / other close relative attends				
I can see my friends there				
I want to engage in social justice through this community				
I want to meet a romantic partner				
I want to be involved with a community				
I want to study Jewish texts with this community				
I want to make new friends (non-romantic)				
I want to participate in meaningful prayer				
I like to be in community with people my own age				
I want the community to provide a Jewish experience for my children				

**13. For each of the following statements, do you agree or do you disagree?**

	<b>Agree strongly</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree strongly</b>
I have a sense of excitement about <@Name@>'s future					
<@Name@> is always ready to try something new					
In general, the leadership of <@Name@> takes into account the ideas of those who come here					

**14. How often do you experience the following during services at <@Name@>?**

	<b>Always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
A sense of God's presence				
Inspiration				
Boredom				
Awe or mystery				
Joy				
Frustration				
Spontaneity				
A sense of fulfilling my obligation				
A sense of community				

**15. Which TWO of the following aspects of <@Name@> do you personally most value?**

	Option 1	Option 2
Mark one option in each list		
	Please Select	Please Select

**16. And which ONE of the following features of <@Name@> do you personally most value?**

- Commitment to empowering community members
- Social activities or meeting new people
- Reaching those who do not attend synagogue
- Openness to social diversity
- Openness to interfaith couples/families
- Openness to innovation
- Openness to religious exploration
- Its independence
- Openness to active participation by women
- None of the above

**17. In the past year, have you made any financial or in-kind contributions to <@Name@> (check all that apply)?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Membership/partnership dues			
Event/program participant/attendee fees or meal charges			
Other financial contribution			
In-kind contribution (food, supplies, etc.)			

**18. Compared to two years ago, do you think you participate in <@Name@> more, less, or about the same amount as you did then?**

- I joined only in the last two years or my community is less than two years old so I can't compare
- I participate more now than 2 years ago
- About the same participation
- I participate less now than 2 years ago

19. Please answer the following questions "yes," "no," or "not sure."

	Yes	No	Not sure
Have you ever invited any of your friends to services at <@Name@> ?			
Do you have a strong sense of belonging to <@Name@>?			
Do you have any close friends in <@Name@>?			
Were you regularly participating in a "conventional" congregation before you started coming to <@Name@>?			
Have <@Name@>'s leaders encouraged you to find and use your talents and skills here?			
Is participating in <@Name@> very relevant to your everyday life?			
Do you consider your life to be centered around <@Name@> ?			
Is <@Name@> your primary Jewish community?			
Does <@Name@> have a clear vision, goals or direction for its mission?			
Have you gone out on a date with someone you first met at <@Name@>?			

**Your Views, Beliefs, and Opinions**

20. How important is being Jewish in your life?

- Very important
- Fairly important

Not very important  
 Not at all important  
 Not sure  
 Not Jewish

**21. How important is religion in your life?**

Very important  
 Fairly important  
 Not very important  
 Not at all important  
 Not sure

**22. What best expresses your belief about God?**

I don't believe in God  
 I am uncertain, lean toward not believing  
 I am uncertain, lean toward believing  
 I definitely believe in God

**23. About how often do you personally attend Jewish religious services at any type of congregation, minyan, or other spiritual community?**

Not at all or only on special occasions (a Bar/Bat Mitzvah a wedding)  
 Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur)  
 A few times a year  
 About once a month  
 Several times a month  
 Weekly or more

**24. During the past 12 months, at how many *different* synagogues, prayer communities, congregations, minyanim, spiritual communities or chavurot have you attended services?**

None  
 1 place  
 2 places  
 3 places  
 4 places  
 5-6 places  
 7 or more places  
 Don't know

**25. Over the last two years, the level of your involvement in Jewish activities in general has ...**

Increased Decreased Stayed about the same Increased & decreased  
 Not sure

**26. To what extent do you feel . . .**

	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not sure
Close to other Jews?				
Close to Israelis?				



Close to non-Jewish Americans?				
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**27. How emotionally attached are you to Israel?**

- Very attached
- Somewhat attached
- Not very attached
- Not sure

**28. How often would you say that you feel proud, ashamed or ambivalent about Israel?**

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Proud				
Ashamed				
Ambivalent				

**29. Do you agree or do you disagree with each of the following statements?**

	Agree strongly	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Disagree strongly
I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people					
Any Jewish community that I'm part of should welcome non-Jews					
I have a Jewish responsibility to care for people in trouble (as with Darfur or Katrina)					
I have a special responsibility to take care of Jews in					

need around the world					
It bothers me when people try to tell me that there's a right way to be Jewish					
Most synagogue services are not interesting to me					
I really don't feel committed to any particular denomination of Judaism					
I try to make the Sabbath a special day					
Most leaders in congregations don't care about you as a Jew, except if you can make a serious financial contribution					
Most Jewish programs for people in their 20s & 30s aims to help them find other Jews to marry					
Most Jewish leaders care only about how many people come, rather than the quality of the experience					

Jewish organizations stifle free and open discussion of Israel					
Jews should marry whomever they fall in love with, even if they're not Jewish					
I'd be upset if my child were to marry a non-Jew					
I am concerned that the number of Jews in the US will diminish over the next couple of generations					
Caring about Israel is a very important part of my being a Jew					
Given all my Jewish involvement, it's probably fair to say that I'm a "super-Jew"					

**Your Background**



- 30. Is the main type of Jewish education you received before the age of 14? (Mark one)**
- None
  - Sunday School
  - Hebrew School or other part-time Jewish school
  - An Orthodox Yeshiva or Day School

A non-Orthodox Day School  
 Private tutoring  
 Any other type

**31. Were you raised Jewish, converted to Judaism, or are not Jewish?  
 What about your spouse or partner, and your parents?**

	Raised Jewish	Converted to Judaism	Not Jewish
You			
Your spouse (or your partner)			
Your mother			
Your father			

**32. Referring to Jewish religious denominations, in which of the following were you raised, and what do you consider yourself now?**

	Raised	Now
Mark one option in each list	Please Select 	Please Select 

**33. Among the people you consider your closest friends, would you say that**

- None are Jewish
- Some are Jewish
- About half are Jewish
- Most are Jewish
- All or almost all are Jewish

**34. Have you been to Israel?**

- No, Never
- Yes, Once
- Yes, 2 or more times
- Yes, I was born or have lived in Israel

**35.**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Did you participate in a Jewish youth group as a teenager?			
Did you ever attend a Jewish sleep-away camp during the summer?			
Did you attend a Jewish day school after 8th grade?			
During college or graduate			

school, did you regularly participate in any Jewish organizations (Hillel, Jewish fraternity/sorority, etc.)?			
Are you now a full-time student?			
Have you ever had a romantic relationship with someone who is not Jewish?			
Have you ever registered with a Jewish dating service (JDate.com, etc.)?			
In the past year, have you been invited to a Shabbat meal by someone from your congregation or spiritual community?			
In the past year, have you ever invited others to a Shabbat meal in your home from your congregation or spiritual community?			
Do you feel that God is personally involved in your life?			
Would you like to deepen your relationship with God?			
In the last year, have you had a significant spiritual experience in a Jewish context?			
In the last year, have you had a significant spiritual experience in a non-Jewish context?			
Have you attended any program or activity at a Jewish Community Center during the past year?			
During the past year, have you volunteered for community service?			
During the past year, have you volunteered for a social justice or advocacy			

organization, be it Jewish or not?			
During the past year, have you done any volunteer work for, or sponsored by a synagogue, Federation or other Jewish organization?			
Do you understand simple sentences in spoken Hebrew?			
Are you planning to visit Israel in the next 3 years?			
Since graduating high school, have you spent 4 months or more at one time in Israel?			
In 2006, did you or anyone in your household make a financial contribution to a UJA-Federation campaign?			
Do you regularly read any Jewish magazines or newspapers?			
In the last year, have you attended any concerts or musical performances with a specifically Jewish or Israeli orientation?			
In the last year, have you seen any movie with a Jewish or Israeli orientation?			
In the last year, have you read any books with a Jewish or Israeli orientation?			
In the last year, have you taken any classes with a Jewish or Israeli theme?			
Do you regularly visit Jewish websites on the Internet?			

**Your Personal Background**

**36. Are you:**  
Male

Female

Other

**37. What is your age? (please type numbers only with no commas or spaces)**

**38. In what region of the world were you born?**

United States

Canada

Israel

Former Soviet Union

Europe (other than FSU)

Iran/other Middle Eastern country

Other

**39. What is your ZIP code? (If you are living at school, enter your SCHOOL's zip code).**

**40. What is your current marital status?**

Married/committed to someone Jewish

Married/committed to someone non-Jewish

Widowed

Divorced & not remarried or Separated

Never married

**41. During the past 12 months, have you...**

Dated only Jews

Dated only non-Jews

Dated both Jews and non-Jews

Did not date - married or in a committed relationship

Did not date/not in a relationship

**42. How many children, if any, do you have?**

None

One

Two

Three or more

**43. Are any...**

	Yes	No
Under the age of 6		
From age 6 to 13		
Age 14 or more		

**44. With respect to your political views on most issues, you regard yourself as:**

Liberal Moderate Conservative

**45. With regard to US political party identification, do you regard yourself as:**

A Democrat An Independent A Republican

- 46. You regard your sexual orientation as ...**  
Heterosexual Gay or lesbian Bisexual No answer

Thank you for completing the survey about <@Name1 @>.

- 47. You indicated that you have a connection to <@Name1 @>. If you wish to answer a few questions about <@Name1 @> please select yes. If not, click "No" and then click on the "Next Question" button.**

Yes

No

**This next set of questions pertains to <@Name1 @>. Please answer them with only <@Name1 @> in mind.**

- 48. How did you FIRST hear about <@Name1 @>? Please choose one answer that most closely reflects your experience.**

Friend(s)

Family member(s)

Newspaper article, other than in the Jewish press

Article or advertisement in a Jewish newspaper

A website

E-mail from someone I know

E-mail from an organization

Other

Not sure

- 49. In the past 12 months, how many times have you attended religious services at <@Name1 @>?**

Not at all or only on special occasions (a Bar/Bat Mitzvah a wedding)

Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur)

A few times a year

About once a month

Several times a month

Weekly or more

- 50. In the past 12 months, how many times have you attended other programs at <@Name1 @>?**

Not at all

Once or twice a year at most

A few times a year

About once a month

Several times a month

- 51. To what extent do you feel attached to <@Name1 @>?**

Extremely attached Somewhat attached Not very attached Not attached Not sure

- 52. Do any of the following roles at <@Name1 @> apply to you, whether currently or in the past? (please mark all that apply)**



	Now	In the past
Member of the governing board or leadership group		
Member of a committee, task force or team		
Leading or helping to lead religious services		
Teacher (school, bar/bat mitzvah, adults, etc.)		
Leader of a group, club, or ongoing program		
Leading or helping to lead a specific program or event		
Providing other informal leadership		

**53. In which of the following of <@Name1 @>'s activities are you involved?**

	Never	Infrequently	Regularly
Text study groups			
Visiting or providing food for those with illness or life-cycle needs (births, deaths, etc.)			
Participating in prayer services for mourners (shiva minyanim)			
Social service (soup kitchen, etc.)			
Social action/social justice advocacy			
Greeting/ushering or supporting set-up/clean-up at services and events			

**54. Which best describes your involvement in the making of important decisions at <@Name1 @>?**

- I have been given the opportunity and often participate in decision-making
- I have been given the opportunity and occasionally participate in decision-making
- I have been given the opportunity but don't usually get involved in decision-making
- I have not been given an opportunity to be very involved and this is fine with me
- I have not been given an opportunity to be very involved and I am not happy about this

**55. To what extent are the following reasons why you attend <@Name1 @>?**

	Not at all	A little	To some extent	To a great extent
My spouse / partner /				

significant other attends				
My parent / child / other close relative attends				
I can see my friends there				
I want to be involved with a community				
I want to meet a romantic partner				
I want to study Jewish texts with this community				
I want to make new friends (non-romantic)				
I want to participate in meaningful prayer				
I like to be in community with people my own age				
I want to engage in social justice through this community				
I want the community to provide a Jewish experience for my				

children				
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**56. For each of the following statements, do you agree or do you disagree?**

	Agree strongly	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Disagree str
I have a sense of excitement about <@Name1 @>'s future					
<@Name1 @> is always ready to try something new					
In general, the leadership of <@Name1 @> takes into account the ideas of those who come here					

**57. How often do you experience the following during services at <@Name1 @>?**

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
A sense of God's presence				
Inspiration				
Boredom				
Awe or mystery				
Joy				
Frustration				
Spontaneity				
A sense of fulfilling my obligation				
A sense of community				

**58. Which TWO of the following aspects of <@Name1 @> do you most**

**value?**

	Option 1	Option 2
Mark one option in each list		
	Please Select	Please Select

**59. And which ONE of the following features of <@Name1 @> do you personally most value?**

- Commitment to empowering community members
- Social activities or meeting new people
- Reaching those who do not attend synagogue
- Openness to social diversity
- Openness to interfaith couples/families
- Openness to innovation
- Openness to religious exploration
- Its independence
- Openness to active participation by women
- None of the above

**60. Compared to two years ago, do you think you participate in <@Name1 @> more, less, or about the same amount as you did then?**

- I joined only in the last two years or my community is less than two years old so I can't compare
- I participate more now than 2 years ago
- About the same participation
- I participate less now than 2 years ago

**61.**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Have you ever invited any of your friends to services at <@Name1 @> ?			
Do you have a strong sense of belonging to <@Name1 @>?			
Do you have any close friends in <@Name1 @>?			
Before you started coming to <@Name1 @> were you regularly participating in a "conventional" congregation?			
Have <@Name1 @>'s leaders encouraged you to find and use your talents and skills here?			

Is participating in <@Name1@> very relevant to your everyday life?			
Do you consider your life to be centered around <@Name1@> ?			
Is <@Name1@> your primary Jewish community?			
Does <@Name1@> have a clear vision, goals or direction for its mission?			
Have you gone out on a date with someone you first met at <@Name1@>?			

**62. Is there anything you want to add about your Jewish spiritual community or communities or ANY other matter touched upon in this survey?**

Click on the "submit" button to complete the survey. You will then forward to a page where you will have the opportunity to download a copy of this survey.

**Many Thanks!!!**

If you have any questions or comments about this survey, please [click here](#) to email Steven M. Cohen directly.

We will send you a link to the final report, once available. Our target date is **December 2007.**

Survey administered by Research Success Technologies- ReST Office System 2007