A Year of Connection, Resilience, and Growth

2021
Dear Friends,

We want to begin by saying thank you. Whether you come to our daily meditation sit, have participated in our online courses, are an alumnus of our cohort programs, a financial supporter, or simply share our commitment to Jewish spiritual practice – you truly have helped make 2021 a year of connection, resilience, and growth.

IJS has touched the lives of tens of thousands of people of all backgrounds throughout North America and around the world. In 2021, IJS reached more people than ever before. In this report, you will hear from four people directly impacted, including a young Jewish professional working with students and young adults, a rabbi leading a congregation through another challenging year, a JCC Association staff member supporting his colleagues and community, and one of the more than 10,000 who deepened their personal practice through accessing our free online offerings this year.

Even as we pause during this Shemitah year to reflect, reconnect, and renew, we are hopeful about what the coming year will bring: a new strategic plan to build on our success; new opportunities for you to deepen your own practice; and new partnerships to help even more people grow their Jewish spiritual lives. We are excited to share with you in the coming months about all of this and much more.

In the meantime, we invite you to join us in reflecting on the good we have done together over the past year. As the challenges of the world persist and intensify, the need for our work only grows. Thank you for partnering with us to make spiritual practice a vital part of Jewish life.

With gratitude and blessings,

Ann Greenstein
Chair, Board of Directors

Rabbi Josh Feigelson, PhD
Executive Director
IJS envisions a world in which spiritual practice is a vital part of Jewish life, leading to compassion, justice, and peace.

IJS’s mission is to develop and teach Jewish spiritual practices so that individuals and communities may experience greater awareness, purpose, and interconnection.

Loving Connection
Chesed
We experience God as present in all aspects of Creation. We engage in spiritual practice in community to cultivate awareness of God’s love flowing through us, and, in the Divine image, to extend compassion and love to all beings.

Silence & Stillsness
Shabbat Mind
We understand that letting go of our striving and doing to create moments of silence and stillness enables us to hear the still, small voice within, calling us to our true divine nature and into right relation with other creatures and our planet.

Practice for Social Transformation
Tikkun Hanefesh – Tikkun Haolam
Our inner work leads us to acts of compassion and justice that mend and heal the larger world.

Lifelong Practice
Avodah
We experience spiritual growth as a lifelong process that requires ongoing commitment, practice, and guidance.

Emergence
Hitchadshut
We witness that everything is always changing and new again, that Revelation is ongoing. We engage in practice to continually renew our relationship to self, community and Jewish tradition, and thus enliven Jewish life.

Inclusion & Equity
Tzedek u-Mishpat
We strive to be mindful of our own biases, limitations, and privileges. We practice so that every person may nurture their expression of spiritual life and equitably contribute to a vibrant Jewish community and world.

Diversity & Integrity
Shivim Panim
We inherit a unique religious and cultural tradition and we respect the integrity of others. We learn from the wisdom of other traditions and find our Judaism enriched thereby.

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Finding Meaning through IJS

So much has changed since I became involved with IJS. Over the past decade, I’ve developed life-long relationships – with teachers, my chavruta (learning partner), and other students. They’re more than friendships, really. I think of them as just a small step removed from my relationship with God. They’re that meaningful to me.

Before IJS, I didn’t have a relationship with God. I had no understanding what it meant to be in relationship with the Divine. I’d never talked to God, but now God speaks to me all the time. I don’t always understand what God is saying, but God speaks to me.

Because of all this, I no longer take things too seriously. I understand that most things are ephemeral and will pass. This helps me enormously with the challenges in my daily life. I’m less reactive, less easily thrown off. I’m much more grounded. I’m not going to get all of my relationships right, but I understand now that the most important relationship for me is the one with the Divine, and that it’s a relationship that’s ultimately unknowable. This understanding helps everything else in my life fall into place.

– Louis Gitlin

IJS provides numerous programs for the general public, many of them free of charge. Over 10,000 people participated in one or more of these offerings in the past year. Our master teachers lead the daily sit, weekly Torah study, and online Yoga studio. We offer online courses introducing people to Jewish mindfulness meditation, Tikkun Middot, and prayer as personal practice. We host a podcast, lead online retreats, and engage in conversation with leading thinkers on Jewish spirituality. Louis Gitlin has participated in almost every program that IJS offers.
Transforming the Lives of Young People

Over the past year, IJS and New Voices Magazine piloted the Resilient Writers Fellowship, an eight-week cohort program designed to bring together college-age writers in a virtual community to cultivate a Torah of creative, embodied Jewish spiritual practice. New Voices Editor-in-Chief Rena Yehuda Newman and IJS Senior Program Director Rabbi Myriam Klotz, who teaches trauma-informed embodied spiritual practices, collaborated on this project.

To read the fellows’ work, please see the IJS blog.

“At a time of anxiety and isolation for so many young people, this virtual fellowship enabled the students to connect with each other as writers, friends, and spiritual chavrutot (learning partners). Together, we built a remarkable community that spoke to the spiritual experience of writing, gaining a new understanding of the relationship between our bodies and our creative process. For Jewish writers in particular, this isn’t always an easy relationship.

Myriam Klotz’s teaching was transformational, and the courage of the fellows and the chemistry of this partnership yielded amazing things: collective lists of embodied activities, opportunities for the fellows to meet their bodies as friends through dance and movement, and several truly powerful published pieces that shine with passion. Our partnership with IJS has expanded New Voices’ vision of what it means to cultivate the next generation of Jewish mediamakers in body, mind, and spirit.

— Rena Yehuda Newman
## By the Numbers

### Participation

IJS is growing dramatically and supporting thousands of people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>21,000 downloads of our podcast (over 600 unique listeners each week)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19,500+</td>
<td>19,500+ people registered for The Shofar Project, a month of programs to prepare spiritually for the High Holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>6,500 people registered for our public conversations with leading Jewish thinkers, artists, and writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000 participants attended our four online retreats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,900</td>
<td>8,900 people have signed up for the daily sit</td>
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</tbody>
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### Program Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Impact Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98% of students in our online courses would encourage others to enroll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87% of Awareness in Action students say they now respond more intentionally and wisely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84% say they are more aware of their emotional triggers and habitual reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87% of Gift of Awareness students say they are committed to continuing their Jewish mindfulness practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fundraising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>122%</td>
<td>122% increase in total donations in FY2021 over FY2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103%</td>
<td>103% increase in new donors in FY2021 over FY2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300+</td>
<td>300+ people sponsored a daily sit in honor or memory of a loved one</td>
</tr>
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Supporting Clergy, Uplifting Communities

Working closely with clergy is central to IJS’s mission. Over the past two decades, IJS has served more than 500 rabbis and cantors, who collectively touch the lives of more than 250,000 people. Our main programs for clergy are the Clergy Leadership Program (CLP), an 18-month fellowship experience, and Hevraya, which provides ongoing support for CLP alums. Both programs help clergy reenergize and deepen their spiritual lives.

Rabbi Rachel Timoner is a long-time member of the IJS community, a CLP graduate, and an active participant in Hevraya. She’s also a graduate of our Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Teacher Training Program, which she credits with enabling her to lead online meditations for her congregation every day during the pandemic, 575 days and counting.

“We live in a moment when people are choosing how and even whether to participate in Jewish communal life. So it’s essential that Jewish leaders provide our communities with offerings that are fully authentic, alive, and responsive to congregants’ needs as human beings in the world today. IJS helps us learn how to do this.

What IJS has given me is invaluable – infusing my Jewish practice and my leadership with mindfulness, a deep connection to my body, and the understanding and language to draw others into contemplative practice.

This matters because Jewish communal life must connect to our inner lives. We must create the space for people to be in touch with their lived experience so that the prayers we sing, the words we say, and the actions we take are alive, with no disconnect between inner and outer. IJS offers a way to infuse the outer forms of Jewish life with the most essential aspects of our inner experience. This is everything.

— Rabbi Rachel Timoner
Spiritual Practice at Work: A Collaboration Between IJS and JCC Association

Tikkun middot practice made a huge difference for me personally and for my colleagues in Tucson. It’s a cliche to say last year was stressful, but it was. This program and our partnership with IJS gave our Jewish and non-Jewish staff a way to better regulate our sometimes rollercoaster emotions and build resilience for the stresses and anxieties that kept coming. Personally, tikkun middot practice helped me become a more thoughtful professional and a better colleague. IJS clearly cares deeply about the mental, emotional, and spiritual health of Jewish community professionals. Our partnership helped us learn new ways to tap into Jewish wisdom and practice, and it provided us tools that really help us be our best selves at work and at home.

— Josh Shenker

Josh Shenker
Chief Program Officer, Tucson JCC

IJS and the JCC Association of North America initiated an exciting partnership that helped hundreds of JCC staff learn Jewish mindfulness practice. Given the pandemic’s ongoing stress and isolation, JCC Association was looking for ways to help their staff rebuild community, cultivate resilience, and deepen connections to Jewish practice. IJS supported 300 JCC professionals across the country, first training a cohort of 25 in tikkun middot practice through our online Awareness in Action course. These leaders then brought the practice to their own JCCs, facilitating groups of their colleagues.

Feedback showed that 82% of participants feel closer to their colleagues, 70% are more aware of emotional triggers and habitual reactions; and 69% respond much more intentionally and wisely. 96% would recommend the program to their colleagues.
## Financials

**Fiscal Year 2021**

### Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>$1,036,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$638,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Income</td>
<td>$535,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$2,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,212,678</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>$1,624,780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>$434,987</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Facility</td>
<td>$94,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment &amp; Supplies</td>
<td>$70,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Paid by IJS</td>
<td>$43,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance, Fees, &amp; Other</td>
<td>$31,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Meetings</td>
<td>$15,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,314,892</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Expenses by Program Area

- **Public Programs**: 44%
- **Clergy Training & Support**: 21%
- **Supporting Jewish Professionals**: 13%
- **Educators & Schools**: 7%
- **Operations & Fundraising**: 15%
Board of Directors

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Advisory Council

The Advisory Council is a diverse group of influential leaders who provide the organization with perspective and expertise and who help IJS develop relationships with partners and supporters in order to advance the Institute’s mission.

Jane Eisner
Rabbi David Ellenson
Sarah Hurwitz
Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie
Abigail Pogrebin
John Ruskay

Wisdom Council

The Wisdom Council is composed of people who, by virtue of their long experience with and personal investment in IJS, have developed an exceptional understanding of the Torah, history, and soul of the Institute. They provide guidance to IJS’s Executive Director, Board, and Staff.

Rabbi Nancy Flam
Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg
Larry Schwartz

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