

# *Expanding, Inspiring, Leading*

IJS Impact Report 2022



Institute for  
Jewish Spirituality

## 2022 by the Numbers

Participants joined IJS's Daily Meditation Sit over **40,000** times

IJS's mailing list grew to over

**23,000**

Nearly

**5,000**

People registered for our public programming, including "days of practice" and conversations with leading Jewish thinkers, artists and writers

**450**

Average number of people that IJS's weekly yoga program reached monthly

**105%**

Increase in major gifts in FY22 from FY21

**1,736**

Number of people registered for the IJS *Shemitah* & Antiracism six-month Program

We grew our annual budget from \$3M to over

**\$4M**

Foundation grants grew

**71 percent**

in FY22 over FY21

**49%**

Increase in overall IJS fundraising in FY22, compared to FY21

**1K**

Close to learned about *Tikkun Middot* through IJS's two Awareness in Action courses

*Expanding, Inspiring, Leading*

## Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we want to begin by thanking you for joining us on this journey and for being part of our community.

Since the onset of the pandemic, IJS has dramatically expanded its reach and audience. We developed an array of free online resources that have engaged community members **over 300,000 times** since March 2020. Through partnerships with organizations ranging from the JCC Association to PJ Library, we expanded the audiences we serve and the ways we reach them. And, we are pioneering new research into the spiritual lives of young American Jews that will enable IJS to help address the critical challenges and opportunities they face.

In January 2022, IJS adopted a four-year Strategic Plan which aims to lead the Jewish community in making spiritual practice a vital part of Jewish life. While we aim to continue to serve the community we have developed over many years, we are focused on three programmatic priorities:

- **Diversifying our Audience** to serve teens and young adults, Jews of Color, and the LGBTQ+ community
- **Developing New Leadership** to educate and support leaders, both clergy and beyond
- **Building the Field** of Jewish Spirituality through research and advanced training for a growing cohort of highly skilled instructors

In pursuit of these strategies, we are developing new programs and content, and investing in strategic partnerships that will bring our work to a dramatically expanded audience and move mindful Jewish spiritual practices to the center of Jewish life. This past year, IJS took significant steps towards reaching these ambitious goals. This report tells you about the seeds of our efforts and what we hope to accomplish in the coming years.

Thank you for journeying with us,



**Marvin Israelow**  
*Chair, Board of Directors*



**Rabbi Josh Feigelson**  
*President and CEO*

# IJS Core Programming for the Community

IJS brings meaningful and accessible Jewish spiritual practice into the center of individual and collective Jewish life. In 2022, our free online offerings have included the IJS **daily meditation sit**, a weekly **Jewish Yoga Studio**, and **Torah Study to Sustain the Soul**. In addition, IJS's tuition based courses reach hundreds of participants:

- **Gift of Awareness** cultivates mindfulness through Jewish meditation.
- **Awareness in Action I** introduces participants to IJS's mindfulness-based approach to *Tikkun Middot*, or character development.
- **Awareness in Action II** was offered for the first time this year to provide a deeper dive into the *Middot*.
- **Prayer Project Intensives** are designed to help participants explore Jewish prayer as a personally meaningful practice.
- **IJS's Text Study** series offers an opportunity for spiritual growth and development through the contemplative study of Jewish texts.

In addition to these core offerings, IJS will be introducing new opportunities in the coming year. "Awaken: Essential Jewish Mindfulness" is a program in foundational Jewish mindfulness practices. "*Shema*: The Practice of Sacred Listening" will help participants develop skills in mindful and resilient listening. We are also launching "*Yesod*," a year-long, deep dive into Jewish mindfulness meditation practice.

Number of hours IJS content was viewed on  YouTube :

# 10,208

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*"I feel as though in some ways, I have found my "tribe" in the Awareness in Action program and Daily Meditation sits. Modeh Ani."*  
— Awareness in Action participant



## Broadening Our Reach

While maintaining and expanding offerings to serve people who have been part of our community, IJS is committed to engaging, serving, and welcoming people and communities across the lifespan and among many diverse identities. This past year, IJS introduced programs that specifically sought to engage Jews of Color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and young adults.

- **Cycles of Rest, Release, and Liberation: *Shemitah* & Antiracism as Spiritual Practice**, which ran from January to June, reached a broad audience of 1,736 registrants that were significantly more diverse than our historical audience, including a sizable percentage of Jews of Color (JOC) and a markedly younger average participant age. This six-month course, led by Dimensions Educational Consulting CEO Yavilah McCoy, explored the practices of release, restorative justice and repair, transformational changes and new beginnings, and commitment. In addition to these webinars, IJS offered separate caucus groups for both Jews of Color and white-bodied Jews that each met eight times.
- IJS Senior Core Faculty member Rabbi Myriam Klotz facilitated ten 75-minute sessions of a ***Queering the Middot Beit Midrash (QMBM)*** over a five-month period. (*Middot* are character traits.) In addition to weekly sessions, the sixteen participants met for *hevruta* learning in pairs in between sessions. Building on the *middot* curriculum developed by IJS Core Faculty Member Rabbi Marc Margolius through the **Awareness in Action** course series, the QMBM members studied various *middot* in the curriculum, and brought their lenses to the teachings to better represent their lived experiences. Individual participants volunteered to present a *middah* each session and offered rich insights, queries, and understandings which will both inform a major revision of the curriculum and lay the groundwork for continued projects to better reflect and integrate the experiences of LGBTQ+ Jews in IJS's work.

*“I have done a lot of antiracism/ DEI work over the years. This was hands-down the one that most influenced me at a very deep level, challenged me in good ways, and helped me see how my faith tradition could be foundational in integrating antiracism into my Jewish practice. It was very powerful and will stay with me for a long time.” —“Cycles of Rest, Release, and Liberation: Shemitah & Antiracism as Spiritual Practice” participant*

Like all of the Institute's work, IJS's programming tailored to these and other diverse populations aims to help people develop emotional resilience, community, and a deeper sense of belonging in Jewish life. We plan to continue this outreach in 2023, with **Queer Monthly Sits** in partnership with **Keshet** (for LGBTQ+ equality in Jewish life) and with **At the Well** (organizing Rosh Hodesh experiences for women). IJS is also excited to announce a new partnership with **OneTable**, which empowers young adults (21–39ish) to find, share, and enjoy Shabbat dinners. IJS's weekly text study will be shared with One Table's 85,000+ email list. Finally, IJS is planning to continue our **Jews of Color Caucus**.

*"It wasn't until attending the daily sit for the past 2 1/2 years, that I discovered the depths of Jewish tradition with its spirituality, wisdom, daily applications, and the sheer joy Judaism embodies. I am deeply grateful to the IJS staff for guiding me to fall in love with Judaism and to manage the overwhelming challenges of our time." — Bleema Moss*



## Serving More Leaders

Clergy have always been a cornerstone of IJS's work. In 2022, IJS offered our two flagship programs for Jewish Clergy: the **Clergy Leadership Program (CLP)**, a cohort- and retreat-based program, and **Hevraya**, an ongoing community of learning and practice for CLP alumni. These programs provide essential support to the Jewish clergy who serve as our "spiritual first responders."

As the pandemic has continued to take a toll on clergy and Jewish professional leadership, we are seeing in real time the vital importance of IJS's work. In a recent survey IJS conducted of *Hevraya* clergy, two-thirds rated their emotional-mental-spiritual resilience as much higher or above average, as compared with their non-IJS colleagues. The survey highlighted their reliance upon spiritual practices contemplative prayer, the *Hevraya* network and spiritual direction.

While we continue our commitment to clergy, IJS is exploring ways to reach other types of Jewish spiritual leadership, including educators in a wide range of settings from Hillels to JCCs to day schools, Jewish professional leaders, and spiritual leaders who do not come through traditional ordination channels. In addition, IJS plans to train a new cadre of Jewish meditation teachers and spiritual directors in coming years, as well as support interested Rabbinic interns.

# 66%

*Portion of Hevraya clergy that rated their emotional-mental-spiritual resilience as much higher or above average, as compared with their non-IJS colleagues*

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*"... It feels truly beshert that I joined a Clergy Leadership Program cohort just in time for COVID. The caring, wise, and skilled IJS faculty provided teachings and practices that supported me and my congregation through a tumultuous time. I pray that I will be able to continue to be a part of the IJS community through Hevraya as we continue to breathe and learn, practice and share together." — Rabbi Ron Muroff, Chisuk Emuna Congregation (Conservative), Harrisburg, PA*

# Building the Field of Jewish Spirituality

A recent study of Americans ages 13–25 found that Jewish young people feel less of a sense of belonging and connection with their tradition than any other religious group. The same study reported that young American Jews feel they are “not flourishing” at the highest rate of any religious group. For all of our communal investment over recent decades in continuity and community, too many American Jews — especially young American Jews—are still suffering emotionally and disconnected Jewishly.

Working to support youth and young adults through Jewish mindfulness and spiritual practice is a key component of our strategic plan. Through a partnership with six organizations — OneTable, Hillel, Moving Traditions, Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), Jewish Education Program (JEP), and Teen Resiliency Collaborative — IJS spearheaded a research effort with [Springtide Research Institute](#), to study the spiritual lives of American Jewish 13–25-year-olds.

One of the most important questions we are looking to understand is: What are the spiritual needs and interests of young Jews today? Where do they seek and find meaning? What contributes to their spiritual flourishing? While Jewish teens and young adults have been surveyed many times in the past, this set of questions is trailblazing as it centers spiritual experience within Jewish social science research. The study includes a survey of over 1,000 Jewish teens and young adults and follow-up focus groups. A full report will be forthcoming in early 2023.

In the coming year, IJS will be disseminating the results of the study and utilizing it, along with our partners, to create new ways to enrich the spiritual lives of young Jews.



## FY22 Financials

### Revenue

Individuals	\$ 1,453,974
Grants	\$ 1,078,500
Program Income	\$ 554,512
Government Grants	\$ 236,520
Other	\$ 1,920
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 3,325,426</b>

### Expenses

Salary & Benefits	\$ 1,934,665
Consultants	\$ 662,143
Equipment & Supplies	\$ 116,560
Total Facility	\$ 102,342
Travel & Meetings	\$ 166,887
Insurance, Fees & Other	\$ 96,887
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$ 3,079,484</b>

*IJS envisions a world in which spiritual practice is a vital part of Jewish life, leading to compassion, justice and peace.*

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



# IJS Leadership

## Officers 2023

Marvin Israelow, *Chair*  
Sue Ellen Corning, *Treasurer*  
Rex Perlmeter, *Secretary*

Ann Greenstein, *Immediate Past Chair*  
Rabbi Josh Feigelson, *President & CEO*

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## Board of Directors

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Dr. Steven Targum  
Dorian Goldman, Emerita  
Larry Schwartz, Emerita

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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  
Sharna Goldseker

Sarah Hurwitz  
Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie  
Dr. Lisa Miller

Abigail Pogrebin  
John Ruskay

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## 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 President/CEO, Board and Staff.*

Rabbi Nancy Flam  
Rabbi Shelia Peltz Weinberg  
Larry Schwartz



Institute for  
Jewish Spirituality

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