



## THE HOMECOMING

# *Dance*

Israel  
Independence Day

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Momentum Director of Education and Leadership Development.





## YOM HA'ATZMAUT

“Israel is our homeland. It is also the eco-system of the Jewish soul! It is the rhythm of our psyches; filling us with carity and with confusion, with inspiration and aspiration. With quests and questions! Many feel it as a kind of marrow-deep recognition in our bones. How many of us on the Momentum trip stepped off of that airplane and within moments felt that overwhelming sense of ‘coming home’? How many of us cried, our souls perspiring endlessly as we walked those streets, stood at the Kotel, lit our candles.....shopped in the shuk? How many of us swore to bring our families, to hold Bat and Bar Mitzvahs here....to return? Even though each of us come from such diverse communities and cultures, what united all of us in this way?”

- Adrienne Gold

How do we create nurturing homes for our children? How do we foster belonging and healing in our communities? How do we have a relationship with a country that sometimes may feel like home and at other times may feel foreign to us?

Through texts and song, we will discuss how to create strong, loving, realistic relationships within our homes and with the Land of Israel. We will think about how we can strengthen our families, our communities, and our homeland.

What might we learn from the Israeli concept of *bayit*?

### Some questions to ask yourself as you move through this unit:

- *Where do I feel at home? What is my relationship with the place where I currently live?*
- *What is my relationship with Israel? What is my relationship with the concept of Homeland?*
- *What do I do that make my family and community ‘homey’ for its members? Is there more I’m drawn to doing?*
- *How can I build strong relationships with my family, community, and Israel?*



# HOME

## What does home mean to you?



In Hebrew, there is one word for “house,” “home,” and “homeland:” *bayit*. The Israeli dairy company Tnuva and telecommunications company Selkum created commercials for Israeli television that play on the idea of home. Although they are Israeli commercials, they contain only a little Hebrew and are quite understandable.

The Tnuva commercial does not have any Hebrew dialogue; it portrays a little girl who runs away but ends up returning because “there is one taste that always feels like home.”

In the Selkum commercial, the father asks, “How was practice today?” The commercial ends with the words, “You don’t need to change when you’re at home.”

As you watch these commercials, think about the role that home, *bayit*, plays in these commercials and in your own life. Every family has both challenging and nurturing moments. What do different members of your family do that contribute to making your family homey for each other?

Tnuva commercial: I went to find a new home- הלכתי לחפש בית חדש  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P\\_vFR8LOxDw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_vFR8LOxDw)

Selkum commercial: You don’t need to change when you are at home. לא צריך להשתנות כשמגיעים הביתה  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TN0hPICUf5I>

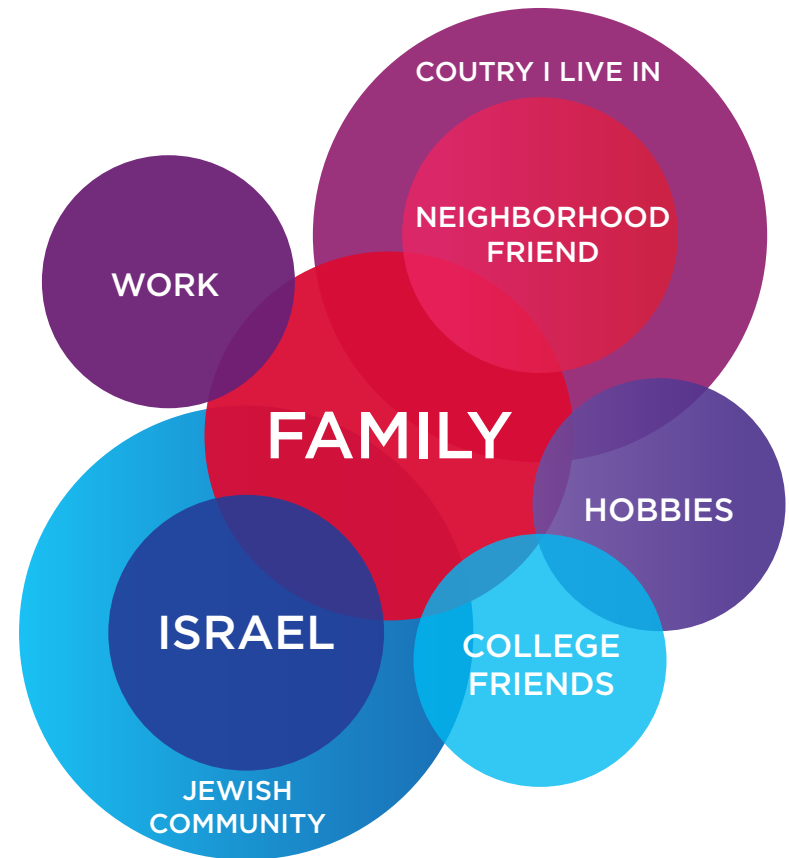
- *We each have different circles where we experience a sense of belonging. Consider where you feel a sense of belonging or ‘feel at home.’ How might you schematically sketch your circles of belonging?*
- *Using paper and markers, make a quick sketch; no art skills needed. Then share and explain your sketches in smaller groups of 3 or 4, or if the gathering is small, share with the full group.*

### Activity

We each have different circles where we experience a sense of belonging. Reflecting on these and sharing them with our sisters in itself builds community and belonging. Consider different circles where you 'feel at home.' This may include different parts of your family, friends, colleagues, different communities, countries, and other affiliations.

How do your different circles of belonging relate to each other?  
How might you schematically sketch your circles of belonging?  
Would they be concentric circles? Would some partially overlap?  
Are some separate stand-alone islands?

Using paper and markers, make a quick sketch; no art skills needed. Then take turns sharing your sketches in smaller groups of 3 or 4, or if the gathering is small, share with the full group.



## CAN YOU BE BOTH AT HOME AND A STRANGER?

Can we truly be at home in places where we have reservations, critique or even feel estrangement?

**Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik** (1903-1993) was a rabbi, Talmudist and modern Jewish philosopher. As the head of Yeshiva University's rabbinical school, he ordained close to 2,000 rabbis.

When Abraham negotiated with the people of Het for a burial place for his wife Sarah, he described himself as being both a resident and a stranger. Rabbi Soloveitchik points to the fact that these seem to be mutually exclusive terms. He explores the ways in which Jews throughout history have felt both like “residents,” participating in and immersed in the general culture, and “strangers,” distanced and without a sense of complete belonging. Rabbi Soloveitchik’s language can sometimes be difficult. Read the passage slowly, a few times, to absorb his message:

Our first patriarch, Abraham, already introduced himself in the following words: ‘I am a stranger and a sojourner [resident] with you – *ger v’toshav anochi imachem*’ (Gen. 23:4). Is it possible to be both *ger v’toshav* [stranger and resident] at the same time?

Is not this definition absurd since it contravenes the central principle of classical logic that no cognitive judgment may contain two mutually exclusive terms?

And yet, the Jew of old defined this time-honored principle and did think of himself in contradictory terms. He knew

well in which area he could extend his full cooperation to his neighbors and act as a *toshav*, a resident, a sojourner, and at what point this gesture of cooperation and goodwill should terminate, and he disengage as if he were a *ger*, a stranger.

-Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, Confrontation, *Tradition: A Journal of Jewish Thought*, 1964 Vol 6, #2



### Writing Exercise

Give yourselves 5-10 minutes to write down your answers to these questions. Writing in silence allows your thoughts to flow freely, unedited. When you are finished writing, discuss with your sister some of the issues and ideas that came up for you in this exercise.

- *When and where am I “at home” in the country where I was born?*
- *When and where am I “a stranger” in the county where I was born?*
- *When and where am I “at home” in Israel?*
- *When and where am I “a stranger” in Israel?*
- *Where do I want to be more at home? Where do I need to step back and gain more perspective as an outsider?*
- *In celebrating Israel Independence, Yom Ha’atzmaut, to whose perspective might we listen to help foster unity without uniformity in our community?*

## WHERE YOU FOCUS MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Have you ever been to a place where you thought you should feel belonging but didn't? The late Israeli poet, Yehuda Amichai, reflects on tourists to Israel, and offers an insight for us all.

**Yehuda Amichai** (1924-2000) is recognized as one of Israel's greatest poets.

In this selection from his poem "Tourists," he emphasizes the importance of Israel as home rather than a collection of historical relics.

- *What does Amichai feel the tour guides miss when they focus solely on Israel's archaeology and history? Do you agree? How might this apply to other settings?*
- *Was there a time on your Momentum trip when you made a personal connection with Israel or Israelis? In what ways did those moments help Israel feel like home?*
- *Where in your life might you want to remind yourself to focus on people and relationships?*

### Tourists

Once I sat on the steps by a gate at David's Tower,  
I placed my two heavy baskets at my side. A group of tourists  
was standing around their guide and I became their target  
marker. "You see  
that man with the baskets? Just right of his head there's an arch  
from the Roman period. Just right of his head." "But he's moving,  
he's moving!"  
I said to myself: redemption will come only if their guide tells  
them,  
"You see that arch from the Roman period? It's not important: but  
next to it,  
left and down a bit, there sits a man who's bought fruit and  
vegetables for  
his family."

"פעם ישבתי על מדרגות ליד שער במצודת דוד, את שני הסלים הכבדים שמתי לידי. עמדה שם קבוצת תיירים סביב המדריך ושימשתי להם נקודת ציון. "אתם רואים את האיש הזה עם הסלים? קצת ימינה מראשו נמצאת קשת מן התקופה הרומית. קצת ימינה מראשו." "אבל הוא זו, הוא זו!" אמרתי בלבי: הגאולה תבוא רק אם יגידו להם: אתם רואים שם את הקשת מן התקופה הרומית? לא חשוב: אבל לידה, קצת שמאלה ולמטה ממנה, יושב אדם שקנה פירות וירקות לביתו."

## OUTLOOK

What outlook fosters belonging? Rabbi Kook acknowledges that there are flaws to the nascent Jewish nationhood and yet in his writings, he maintains: “You are entirely beautiful!”. What can we glean from his outlook?

**Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook** (1865-1935) was a Torah scholar and mystic, fervent Zionist, and the first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of British Mandatory Palestine.

“You are entirely beautiful, my beloved, you are without blemish (Song of Songs 4:7)” – The great love which we have for our nation will not blind our eyes from scrutinizing her flaws. But we find her essence-even after the most unrestrained scrutiny-to be clean of any flaw. “You are entirely beautiful, my beloved, you are without blemish!”

“כולך יפה רעייתי ומום אין בך-האהבה הגדולה שאנו אוהבים את אומתינו לא תסמא את עינינו מלבקר את כל מומיה, אבל הננו מוצאים את עצמיותה, גם אחרי הביקורת היותר חופשית, נקיה מכל מום. כולך יפה רעייתי ומום אין בך!”

- *How could Rabbi Kook see the flaws in the Jewish nation and yet also see it as entirely beautiful?*
- *Think of a relationship that you have with a child or partner. Are you able to see their flaws yet still deeply love them and see them as “entirely beautiful”?*
- *What are your hopes and dreams for the State of Israel? How do you react when you see its imperfections? How could Rabbi Kook’s vision of a relationship that both acknowledges flaws and yet sees total beauty help you as you continue to develop your relationship with Israel?*



## CONTRIBUTING TO SACRED SPACE



Some places give a wonderful feeling when you walk into them, while some places feel cold. How do we cultivate a special warm feeling in our homes? What nurtures sacred space in a family, a group, or a community?

Israel as home and homeland was set apart in the Torah as sacred Land. During the wandering in the desert, after the Exodus, the Israelites were presented with the Tabernacle, a model of a space set apart as a sacred dwelling place. The Tabernacle, *Mishkan*, was constructed by the people as a tangible place for the Divine presence to dwell in the very midst of the community. To build it, the Israelites were told two almost contradictory injunctions. They were instructed to give resources and simultaneously, that the giving needed to be voluntary – from one's heart:

### Exodus 25:2

Tell the Israelites to bring me contributions. Accept contributions for me from each person whose heart is moved to give.

דָּבַר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לִבּוֹ תִקְחוּ אֶת  
תְּרוּמָתִי

- *How might each person contributing help to cultivate sacred space?*
- *Why both vulnerary contributions and required? What about that makes sense?*
- *How might you bring this to your home? How does it play out in your Momentum group?*
- *The Israelites gave so generously, morning after morning, that eventually Moses had to tell the people to stop. What are you most passionate about contributing to?*

President Harry Truman said: “I had faith in Israel before it was established, I have in it now. I believe it has a glorious future before it - not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our civilization.”

- *What vision of sacred space in Israel resonates with you?*
- *How can you contribute to that vision?*
- *What is a next step toward something your group can do together to contribute toward Israel even if your visions are not the same?*

## LEARN WITH YOUR FAMILY

### Mekonen: The Journey of An African Jew

The film “Mekonen” follows the backstory and personal journey of Mekonen Abebe, a young, African-Israeli Jew, once a young shepherd in Ethiopia and now a commander in the Israel Defense Force. Born and raised in an Ethiopian village, Mekonen was a 12-year-old shepherd when his father died suddenly, less than a day before his family was to move to Israel. After a difficult adjustment period in Israel, Mekonen was fortunate to attend the Hodayot High School, which educates children from troubled backgrounds and helps integrate them into Israeli society. Mekonen became a decorated officer in the IDF while staying true to his Ethiopian roots and culture. The film accompanies Mekonen to Africa on an emotional journey. He explores his roots, makes peace with his past, and embraces his future in Israel.

#### Family Discussion Questions

*In the film, Mekonen struggles to overcome great obstacles in order to fulfill his and his father’s dream of moving the family to Israel. Yet, the same challenges helped to shape the man he would become.*

*Mekonen’s friends and commanders in the Israeli Defense Force committed to supporting his success and, in so doing, offer living examples of the power of Jewish Peoplehood — the unity that undergirds a sense of belonging to and a shared responsibility for the extended Jewish family.*

- *In what ways does your childhood shape who you are?*
- *How do your past experiences influence your behavior and choices today?*
- *What personal characteristics of Mekonen play a role in the success of his personal journey?*
- *What did you notice Mekonen’s friends and commanders doing that encouraged and enabled him to continue striving for his goals?*
- *Can you think of times when your friends and family supported you and made you feel strong enough to face challenges?*
- *How is Jewish peoplehood similar to a large extended family?*

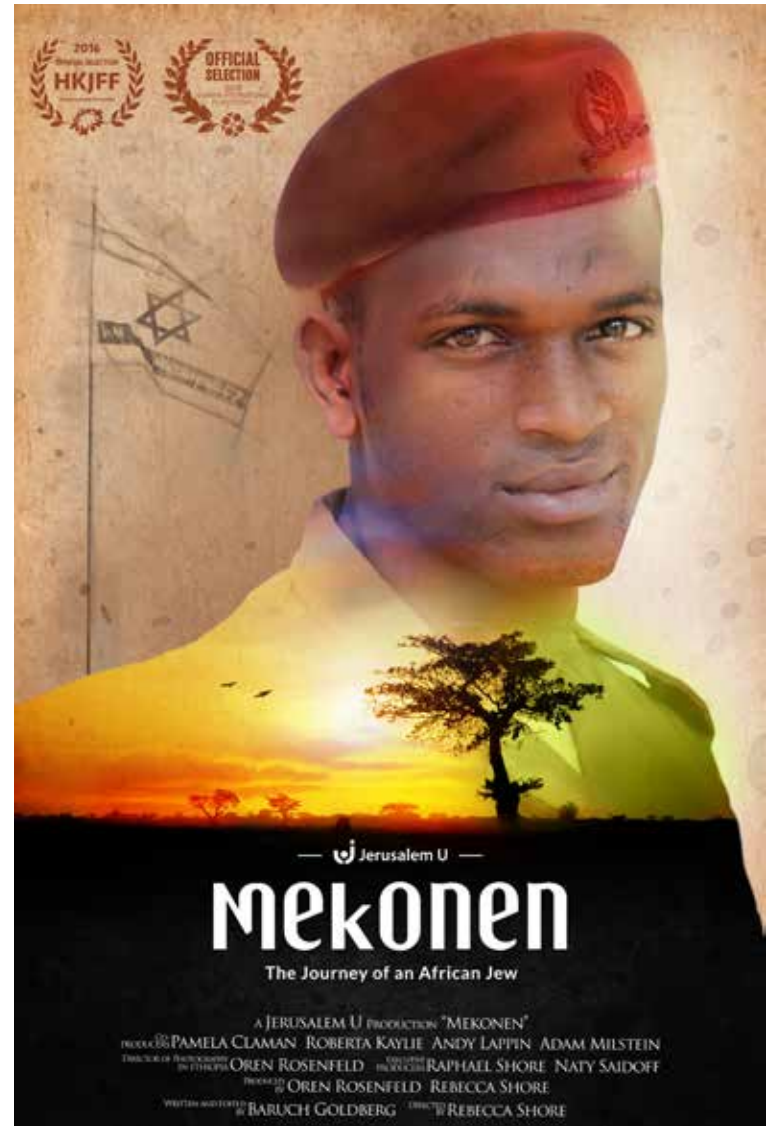
Learn more about the Ethiopian Aliyah:

**Ethiopian Aliyah**, <http://www.jewishagency.org/aliyah/program/301> provides an overview of various waves of Ethiopian Jewish immigration to Israel from the 1950s through today.

**Rescue: The Exodus of the Ethiopian Jews** by Ruth Gruber details the long and perilous road to Israel traveled by 15,000 Ethiopian Jews, prior to Operation Moses which airlifted thousands more to the Jewish homeland.

**Operation Solomon: The Daring Rescue of Ethiopian Jews** by Stephen Spector details the 1991 airlift of 14,000 African Jews to Israel in just a day and a half.

**Mekonen: The Story of an African Jew**, a film by Imagination Productions, is available for a low rental fee via Amazon, Pluto, Roku, TubiTV, and XUMO.



## LEARN WITH YOUR SISTER

### Spotlight on Israel: An Israeli Perspective on the Momentum Trip

by Ayela Meroody  
Human Resources and Executive Assistant  
Alexander Muss High School in Israel

What can an Israeli citizen possibly learn from traveling around Israel with non-Israelis? People may be surprised to learn that many of us, Israeli moms, are also looking for the same inspirations and connections as those in the diaspora.

While on the JWRP trip in November 2016, people asked me why I came on JWRP and what I, as an Israeli, was hoping to find that I couldn't find on my own living in Israel. It was difficult to explain- that feeling of living in a Jewish country but being a completely secular Jew. So what does it mean to be Jewish when living in Israel? What can I connect to in my Judaism that isn't overrun with political issues and speaks to me in a way that I haven't heard before?

It's not that I don't have any experience in connecting people to the land of Israel - after all, I work for Alexander Muss High School in Israel, a program that prides itself on giving High School students an in depth study and love of Jewish and Israeli history. At AMHSI I work behind the scenes with the executive



staff, bringing groups of international High School students to study up to a semester in Israel. Similar to JWRP, we give our students a once in a lifetime opportunity to connect to Israel, to their Judaism, and to begin to better understand themselves.

Coming on JWRP as a student myself allowed me to see Israel and my Judaism in a new light. On one of our first mornings, Nili gave a speech about relationships in which she discussed the issue of 'keeping score' in a marriage, and how we have to view relationships not as giving 50-50, but as giving all that we can. Marriages can be difficult, and her words really spoke to me and altered the way I see my relationship with my husband. From that moment on, I opened myself up to the possibility that this trip really would change my world view in the same way it does for those coming from outside of Israel.

One of the most important things I discovered on the JWRP trip was the sense of sisterhood. Being able to experience Israel through the eyes of women experiencing Israel for the first time



made me see my country in a whole new light. I think living in Israel, we can get bogged down with the conflicts and the politics and sometimes forget to simply look around at the amazing home we have made for ourselves in this young country of ours. Surprisingly, JWRP gave me a stronger sense of the feeling of belonging here in Israel and allowed me to tear down some of the artificial walls that I had built between myself, as a secular Jew, and the concepts of Judaism.

I have started turning off my phone on Shabbat and embrace the chance to truly connect with my children and my husband. I know that the Israeli women who came with me on JWRP also feel a stronger connection to their homeland, and we often discuss the concepts and issues that we raised over our group discussions on the trip. The trip allowed me to better understand my Judaism, to understand its values in such a beautiful light, and to open my mind and heart to all that Judaism can teach me.

For more information about Alexander Muss High School in Israel, visit our website at [www.amhsi.org](http://www.amhsi.org)

- *What resonates with you from Ayela's reflection?*



Photo of Ayela Meroody and Bryan Knapp, son of JWRP Co-founder and Founding Board President Jeanie Milbauer

## TRY IT OUT

# PRACTICAL TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

### For Yourself or with a Partner

- Check out the podcasts, videos, and articles on [MomentumUnlimited.org](https://momentumunlimited.org)
- Select a phrase that inspires you, write it on a card and place it where you'll see it. Repeat the phrase to yourself a few times each morning with enthusiasm. Phrases you could consider:
  - I focus on people
  - I make my family 'homey' for all its members
  - I'm building relationships with Israelis
  - I can contribute to Israel as a homeland of the Jewish people
  - I can deepen belonging and maintain perspective

### For Families with Children of All Ages

- The cuisine of the land of Israel is as diverse as its people! When we understand that Jews in-gathered from Yemen and Syria, Egypt and Ethiopia, we develop a broader, more inclusive sense of our peoplehood. Why not gather recipes from different regions and ethnicities of Israeli culture and make 'theme' Shabbat dinners, or integrate the healthy and delicious foods into your day to day cooking? Learn to prepare finely diced Israeli salad, use tehina in your recipes. This is a wonderful family activity that engages kids of all ages and will bring back the "taste" of our trip to your home.
  - Allocate a different Israel charity each month for your and your children's tzedakah dollars. Learn about the organizations and meet as a family to decide together where you will send your tzedakah funds.
  - Purchase trees through JNF as gifts for others at [www.jnf.org](https://www.jnf.org).
  - For children ages 4-13: Learn about Yossi Leshem, an Israeli boy who dreamed of flying with birds. As a family, watch the short video from the iCenter, "The Man Who Taught Me to Fly," and learn how Yossi turned this dream into a career as one of the world's leading experts on birds: <https://bit.ly/2qwRFXI>
- Many colorful birds live in the United States and Israel. There are likely many birds to see in your own neighborhood. Take a look at these helpful websites for more information on bird watching techniques you can use near your home.
- In North America: <https://bit.ly/2edJZn5>
  - In Israel: <http://www.israbirding.com>
  - Transform your kitchen into an Israeli *shuk*, an outdoor marketplace. Give each child some shekels to spend on Israeli foods such as pita chips, hummus, oranges, and biscuits. After eating in the "café," they can take a stroll down "Ben Yehuda Street" to admire and shop for Judaica items. Be creative... Some music and simple decorations go a long way to making young children feel truly transported.

- Make one weeknight an Israeli culture night. Download some of the popular Israeli songs and music, and/or watch a wonderful Israeli film (like Ushpizin or Fill the Void).

### For Families with Young Children

- For children ages 3-8: Watch Sesame Street characters visit Israel in Shalom Sesame ([www.shalomsesame.org](http://www.shalomsesame.org)). To learn more about Israeli towns and cities, watch the segment “Postcards from Grover” (<http://bit.ly/2nvMk35>).

### For Families with Older Children

- Download podcasts about Israel. The English-language podcast Israel Story ([www.israelstory.org](http://www.israelstory.org)) tells everyday stories by and about diverse individuals in Israel.
- Find your favorite Israeli stamps, and learn the history behind the stamps that capture your attention most, at <https://bit.ly/2GYultc>. Throughout the years, Israeli stamps have been issued related to, among other things, Jewish history, holidays, art, Bible, and nature.
- Watch Crossing the Line 2: The New Face of Anti-Semitism on Campus with your college or older high school age children, email a link to them, or watch it yourself. This 30-minute documentary exposes the rise of anti-Semitic activity on North American college campuses. Hear from the students themselves as they share their experiences and the challenges

they face with the proliferation of the BDS movement.

<https://ctl.jerusalemu.org/#watch>

- **BDS Discussion Guide**

Answer all your questions about the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement. <https://bit.ly/2YJyWYS>





Use this chart to plan and track your progress regarding Israel:  
Home and Homeland

### Acknowledgment (*Vidui*)

Where are you with engaging with Israel and fostering belonging and a sense of home and homeland for your family and community? What examples from your life come to mind? What have been strengths and challenges?

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### Vision (*Kavanah*)

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## Goals (*Kabbalah*)

What is one or more small, actionable step that you can do in your daily life that is realistic and you could easily schedule, that will support you in growing toward your vision in terms of engaging with Israel, and fostering belonging and a sense of home for your family and community?

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## Accountability

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# FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

## The Homecoming Dance: Home and Homeland – Israel Independence Day

In this session we explore the value of Israel (Yisrael ): Home and Homeland.

### The Guiding Questions in this unit are:

- *Where do I feel at home? What is my relationship with the place where I currently live?*
- *What is my relationship with Israel? What is my relationship with the concept of Homeland?*
- *What do I do that makes my family and community 'homey' for its members? Is there more I'm drawn to doing?*
- *How can I build strong relationships with my family, community, and Israel?*

### Meaning-ful Vocabulary

|                         |   |            |
|-------------------------|---|------------|
| Israel Independence Day | <i>Yom Ha'Atzmaut</i>   | יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| House home/homeland     | <i>bayit</i>  | בֵּית      |
| Hope                    | <i>tikvah</i> ,<br>and the Israeli national<br>anthem, called 'the hope',<br><i>Ha'tikvah</i> | תִּקְוָה   |

## Facilitating the Session

### 1. Seek Participant Input

In advance, invite a few sisters to take a small role in leading the session such as:

- Planning an activity to accompany the study session (see **Extras! Program Ideas**)
- Hosting the session and Israel Movie Night;
- Co-facilitating a discussion about Yehuda Amichai's poem "Tourists."

**\*\*Involving participants helps them take ownership over their learning, and prepares them to take the lead in their family and community!**

### 2. Choose Your Session Activities (in advance!)

**Remember:** You know what will best engage your participants, and we encourage you to tailor the session to their interests and needs. **Soul Sparks** activities carry a particular power, and we encourage you to include them where possible!

### 3. Prep Your Space

Before the session begins, prepare the room, for example, by helping the hostess put out food and drink and arrange the space in the spirit of Israel. Think about what materials you will need and make sure you have everything prepared.

### 4. Welcome & Warm- Up

Make a ritual of transitioning your participants from their hectic, everyday lives to your safe space of learning and growth. Consider engaging your participants in a short stretching exercise or focusing on deep, relaxing breaths. Invite a few women to share how they brought home the learning from the previous session.

### Reminder! Sisterhood Safe Space

Remind everyone that you are in your Sisterhood Safe Space of confidentiality and compassionate listening, free of judgment and unsolicited advice.

### 5. Intro & Inspiration

Before the session, ask the women to review their Momentum Trip Journals. Ask them to look for favorite memories and points of personal connection they made with Israel. Ask them to bring the journals with them to the session and ask the women to volunteer to share a memory or connection they made with the larger group.

### After the participants have shared, discuss the following questions:

- Every trip to Israel is different. What did it feel like to land in our Jewish homeland as part of the Momentum trip?
- What did it feel like to explore sites sacred to our shared history and culture?
- What did it mean to you to experience Israel with other Jewish women from your communities?
- What did it mean to you to interact with Jews living half a world away?

Talk about how Israel is the Jewish homeland: that Jews around the world, regardless of nationality, level of religiosity, or political affiliation, have a deep and abiding connection to Israel, a connection that has endured for thousands of years. Ask the women what it means to have a homeland aside from their current homes. What does it mean to visit this homeland, but not live there? How do they think about Israel and the places they live now? Now that they've been on the Momentum trip, what place does the Jewish homeland hold in their hearts?

After everyone has shared, think together about the themes, longings, and conflicts that emerged. Make a note for yourself about which of these themes you can explore in this session, and which themes you would like to follow up on in future meetings.



## 6. Soul Sparks Activities

There are different activities in the session that will encourage learning and growth; we suggest choosing one or two for your session. Below are some of our favorites:

### **Home: What Does Home Mean to You?**

Show the Israeli commercials for the dairy company Tnuva and the telecommunications company Selkum. Don't worry that the commercials are in Hebrew! They are mostly action, rather than dialogue-based and are understandable even to non-Hebrew speakers. Discuss with participants the ideas about home that emerge from these commercials and how they compare to their own country's views of home. Tell participants that in Hebrew there is one word for house, home and homeland: *bayit*.

The Activity section for this session (found on p. XX) provides detailed instructions for guiding participants through reflection and conversation about circles of belonging.

### ***Can You Be Both at Home and a Stranger?***

Refer back to the sketches that the participants created that showed, among other things, where they feel "at home." Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik adds another dimension: He says that

sometimes we can feel both "at home" and like a stranger in relation to the same place.

Discuss these two aspects of a Jew's relationship to the world with participants, and then invite them to engage in personal writing reflections on their relationship to the place where they live and Israel. When they are finished writing, invite participants to share with the group something that emerged from their writing reflections.

### ***Outlook***

How can you build a relationship with family members, communities or a Homeland that contain imperfections? When Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook wrote about the nation of Israel, he said that he saw its flaws but that its essence is "without blemish."

Think together about relationships with a child or partner, where you see their imperfections and still think of them as totally perfect, and how we can extend this kind of approach to our relationship with our communities and Israel. How can being cognizant of their imperfections and yet believing in their essential perfection help us when we encounter difficulties in developing our relationships with them? How do we share these ideas with others?



## 7. Reflection & Closing

Recall the main ideas explored in the session and create an opportunity for reflection.

**Reflection Suggestion:** Ask participants to reflect on the following, “What is one takeaway you’ll be going home with after our session today?” or “A way of connecting to Israel I’d like to begin with my family is . . .”

Invite them to respond to the prompt by writing, drawing, or thinking silently. After individual reflection time, you may ask your women to partner and share their reflections, which can be followed with group voluntary sharing.

Direct the women’s attention to the “**Try It Out: Practical Tips and Resources for Families.**” These suggestions will help them bring the learning they have done home to their families in interesting and fun ways. Encourage them to choose at least one thing they will do with their families and come back next time and report on how it went. Give a brief overview of the rest of the unit. Give them an opportunity to schedule a time with their learning partner before they leave the session today. (See “**Learn With Your Sister**”, pages XX.) Let the women know when you’ll be meeting again and what theme will be explored. Encourage the women to continue to share with each other how they plan to bring the ideas home and homeland into their lives.

## Extra! Program Ideas

To enhance your session, you may consider one of the activities below:

- Plan a Community Movie Night using the film *Mekonen: The Story of an African Jew* (found in “Learn with Your Family,” page 290.) You could show the film, and then have a talk-back session with someone in your community about Israeli immigration and absorption or the Ethiopian experience in Israel. Alternatively, place discussion questions around the room and have members of the audience walk over to the questions that interest them, and engage in discussion with other members of the community who are similarly interested in those issues. Some examples of discussion questions can be found in the “Learn With Your Family” section of this session.
- Spouse-Children Activities: While the women engage in their learning, plan separate activities for the rest of the family, using “Try it Out: Practical Tips and Resources for Families” (page 294.) Following the session, bring all the Momentum families together for a screening of *Mekonen*.



The sales of Year of Growth are used entirely to cover costs of creating, producing, distributing, and supporting the successful use of this educational resource.

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