



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**  
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

**MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980-2011.**

Series F: CIJE Accrual, 1981-2011, undated.  
Subseries 2: Dan Pekarsky, 1981-2011, undated.

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Box  
73

Folder  
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Change Think Tank. Meetings (Folder 1 of 4), 1997-1998.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the  
[American Jewish Archives](http://AmericanJewishArchives.org) website.

Think Tank #2 8/19/98

## Introductory

Mission: ↑ Approach { Distinctive } { Contributions }  
{ Fruitful } { Emphasis }

Session #1: Genesis-Content

Outcome: Rudimentary P--Issues-Direction

Direction: Focus on phases  
Of these -- "Envisioning/study"

## Rationale

↳ (1) Distinctive Approach/Contribution

(2) Several issues ~ Vision E.g. <sup>who?</sup> ~ study

(3) An interest in "inner work"

= Struggle w/ Q we ask others to look <sup>at</sup>

Instructive = ourselves as F.G.

# Conception of Day

Explore approach via Undergoing a Proc.  
that includes central elements  
+ Reflect on that Undergoing

Creates "Taste" + Implications  
for our  
WORK

## Heart of Approach

Syn. Vision that emerge from a thoughtful en-  
counter  
powerful Conception of Jewish Life

+ Our own Responses

Creates (2) A taste (1) More sophis/Less time

↳ (3) Not one thinker - but several

# Why Heschel?

Growing up "No!" = Watered-down Buber

① I/Thou -- Radical Amazement/Wonder

But Even if true, major diff:

a) Prayer/Observance - Halacha

b) Audience/Accessibility -- Mission

## Speaks Powerfully to Us/Me

① Prayer - Empathic/Expressive

② Shabbat - Shaped my consc/Exp.

"Shabbat/Wonder" - Vs Our Culture

③ "Social Action" / Spirituality

Vs. Inward Turn

Not Extreme - But Passionate

# Structure of Day

- ① Study Heschel in CD 1777-Response
- ② Kind of person + Synagogue
- ③ → Study + Introspection.

But also a third Element:

— Less cognitive/more experiential

Intro + Conception of Day

Power of Summaries

Multiple Thinkers: which? How integrate? Why?

Why thinkers? (vs. Ideas)

{ Demandingness of Process-Payoff??

{ Motivation  $\leftrightarrow$  ① Sense of problem ② Returned to

Change-Process as a theory of learning

Our group as prototype

① Time  $\rightarrow$  Sophistication  $\rightarrow$  Sameness  $\rightarrow$  No decisions needed

Indiv./Community: Heschel - Our project

Study Vs/and Practice + Reflection  
 $\rightarrow$  Avoidance of change

Nessa's Intro + Responses + N Change Heschel

Cherruta + outcomes

$\sim$  Between appreciation/understanding  
 $\rightarrow \sim$  Heschel/our work

$\rightarrow$  Is wonder only entry-point?

# Shabbat and low-hanging fruit

Eli ① Heschel vs Lebowitch/Hassidim

② 3 modes: Phil./Descriptive/<sup>Normative</sup> but  
not Phil.

↳ Spelling  
mode

③ What is Heschel doing?

Writing as { Implementation -  
Strategy

including a Change-Theory

+ Implications for our work:

- 1) conception of process
- 2) change strategy

⇒ Non-demos's vision  
of In/out

Role of social movements ~  
inspiring/catalyzing change

Vs. Great Man theory

~ Theory of change

But how start soc. Move??

→ Strong implications

Post-Exercise 2

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Reflecting on day

Motivation -- sense of problem - will the help?

Change is hard - Need confidence: 1) there's  
a problem, 2) this will help!!

Problem - whose is it? Is it  
decisive if comm. doesn't see it? (AOL?)  
"Smugness" - "Leadership"

→ Is it clear? (Any/HEB) - whose is it?

Do Public schools have clearer sense of problem?

Hint: Begin w/ Taking Stock

← 1) Strengths 2) Build community

3) Empowering

Only talk

Produce/Symbolize/Celebrate

Vision  
Governance  
Clarify problems

Sustainability of process/results  
across changes e.g. leadership

KAR - Conditions of Change

① Perceived Crisis ② Leadership ③ Perceived opp

④ Presence of process that enables  
folks to see problems/ops:

↳ involves outsiders in signif. ways

# 5-Minute Presentation to PA/TA Re: Planning/Spontaneity

I. DP -- courses on role of ed. in society

II Set scene: → in middle of Brown & de-seg.

↳ "Waving hand" → "Parental choice" in MI/UK.

III. My options: No/yes/Later

IV Considerations: "Teachable moment"

"Pertinence"

"Readiness" - mine

"Continuity"

"My overall plan for course"

"Question-friendly env"

① Choice as response to Ineq.

② Role of Ed. in democracy

V. Step back : Planning/Spontaneity

A. Importance of P: Outcomes/Strategy

B) An activity that draws grp in vs Talking

C) When depart from P? No formula

- feel larger objective

- Teachable moment

- Readiness/Continuity

Is it really worthwhile to spend  
45 minutes hearing short  
tips on "teaching"? Is this a  
waste of time?

a) Why might someone say this?  
What considerations?

① Too much/too fast

② Too frontal — — needs  
opps for { examples,  
          { questions  
          { reflection

b) Pertinent Considerations

1) Could this be a vehicle  
of realizing  $\rightarrow$  long  
defective

Set Scene: Planning

→ Pacing / Clarity Re: actions  
①  
②

#2

## Translation/Exercise - Prelude

① To whom is Synagogue addressed?

~~The~~ "Ots"

'In-ant-out'

② Needs/Ends — Social

H. → stays w/ "individual needs"

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Langston Hughes Metaphor

"Thawing the frozen" via a  
dream.

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~~The~~ Role of Social movements  
— inspiring/catalyzing  
change

# Hank — Sources of Change

Horace Mann — Great theory

vs

Role of Social Movements in  
Catalyzing Change

Raises Question: how start a  
social movement?

= Diff. theory of  
Change

— Shared by Sociologists

N Jonathan Sarna

If define work as "creation of  
a movement," then this  
might change the work  
of CUTE.

#1 → Individualistic

Frozen Capacity to wonder

~~Cultivate~~

Hard thinking important

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Job of Synagogue — Unfreezing

→ Turn ritual into meaningful

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Cultivate capacity to experience the wonder!!

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Be a religious person

— Unresolved ↓, always cholly

Can fall "out" if you become complacent

Aldous Huxley

Dead Man Walking

↳ Faith as "hard work"

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Conz. where human beings flatter  
↳ and out -- Still  
comfortable

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What does/would suffice?

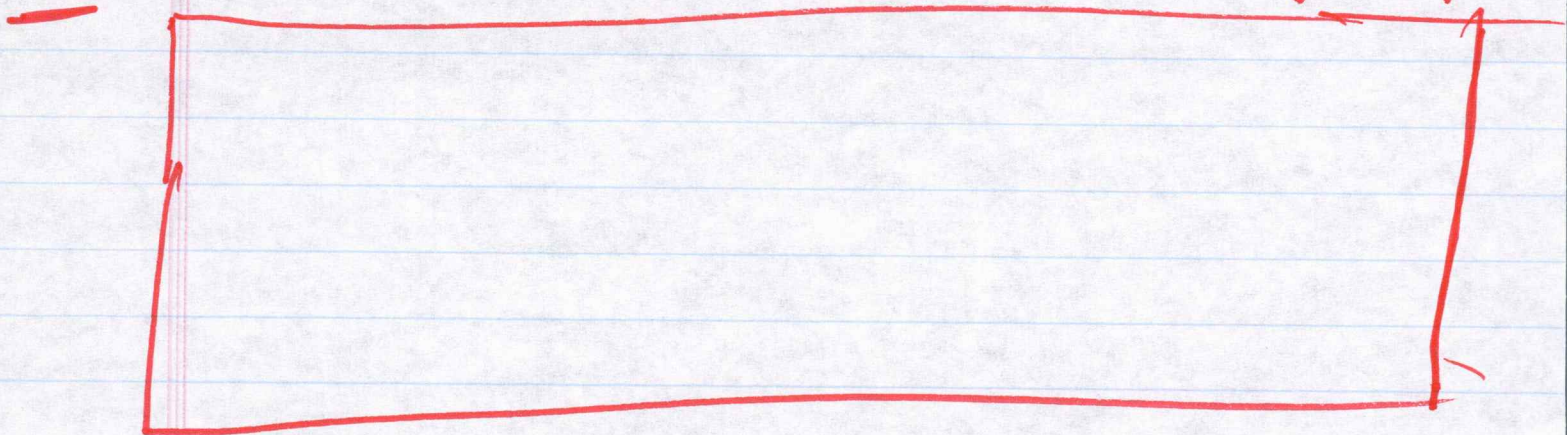
What would "success" look like?

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For Huxley, all 3 aspects!!

- Wonder

- Social Action grounded in  
Prophetic  
Faith



# Leah GRP A - Summary

#1 - ① Capacity to wonder,  
but room for analytical  
thinking.

② People can move in/out  
in their lives  
-- Continuing challenge

#2 - "Practice"

#3 - Importance of Ticken Dam

#4 - Educ. Practices

(a) Sensibility / Soc. Act

(b) Wrestling (vs. Piece of  
mind)

Nurturing Capacity to words  
— educationally — please  
How might this  
contribute?

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Prayer

↳ Expression vs Empathy

↳ gliding

Cutting above as possibility

Emphasis on individual —  
prayer

sense of words  
Prayer as educational

Recognizing that wonder isn't the  
last point!!

In/out

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Woocher, Vision and Cnsu

Gordian knot of  
Praying ~~can~~ // teach  
prayer

Nessa on GRPA

Kind of profs. -- Can't address  
w/o richer discussion of #1.

Does one need professionals?

VS. "Community of talent"

No One or two profs.  
could do it all!

Need a broader range of  
folks -- not profs in  
traditional sense

Struggle is central

# Reflecting on the Process Undergone

## Goal

- ① ↳ What would motivate me to get involved in such a process, requiring such an engagement?
- ② What would I want to get out of a visioning-process? Would this help me?
  - Perhaps start at a more specific level!!
- ③ Why go through rather than "ideas/values"?

EG. תאריך, עבודה, אפילו תאריך

why not start here? Vs great thinkers.

Are there real advantages going this ~~to~~ route? e.g. given time-constraints

Amy

A) what is the problem to which this Change<sup>Project</sup> process is an answer to?

B) Change is hard!! → you better have a good sense of why you're doing this!!

How build the process so as to revisit the question of why?

How would H. answer the question of "What's the problem?" "Why we need to change?"

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KAB

Energy for change

- ① Need to know problem
- ② Sense of a possible solution at them

N Dewey

KAR -- Not so hard to  
define the problem:

But Amey: Do the communities  
feel there's a problem?

KAR: yes

LT: Very different diagnosis  
are out there.

there's a need to  
clarify "the problem."

Berry: who thinks synagogues  
are broke?? Do the  
congregants?? Good  
Q.

Public Schools vs our schools

↳ Clearer sense of the problem.

Can you motivate people w/o strong sense of the problem?

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Not only VISION is ~~the~~ emergent, but also sense of problem

Says Hank: Even in public schools, diagnosis is contested!!!

Hint: Begin w/ "taking stock"

① → Start w/ activity that

a) builds community:

b) ~~a~~ Focuses on strengths

- Could do this w/ a congregation

- Take a dimension:

- Services

- Parental Involvement

-

→ Let them define the dimensions

= Empowering

② Work-Groups investigate

.....

Celebrations include "Wall of Strengths" - Concerns

Working on shift that's common!!

① Discover & discover talents of others.

② Feel Empowered

Don't talk about vision & governance until then!!

Working together

Need to produce + Symbolize

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## Leah

- A)  $\rightarrow$  At every step, Synthesis will have changed  $\rightarrow$  Need to re-evaluate . . .
- B) Sustainability = <sup>of process</sup> of outcomes  
 $\rightarrow$  Building Blocks  
- given, e.g., changes in Cong. leadership.

Nessa:

Suppose people don't think  
things a problem — —  
that doesn't mean "there  
isn't a problem."

N "Challenge of  
leadership"

Hscheliam Perspective  
in "Smugness"

VS. Rousseau

## ~~KAB~~ - Conditions of Change

- 1) Perceived Crisis
- 2) Perceived opportunity
- 3) Arrival of new leader
- 4) Presence of process that enables folks to see problems & OPPS, even if undramatic.

In #4, powerful role for outside.

The Road - Runner mile

↳ Always brightest  
before ~~the~~ fall!

KAB on Day 4s whole

How is what we're  
doing contributing to  
understanding of  
problem?

Is there something different  
here? Why do we

think it will bring us  
to a deeper place?

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If "a real day" in  
life of lay person,

frustration & no

change in

practical

= a danger

McKunsey —

All say,  $\rho e i v e \sqrt{}$

What do they mean?

(1) They're all studying ...

VS What is "prayer"?

What are criteria?

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What's "the problem"?

Barry:

(1) Misc. quotes run the risk of ~~being~~ "not holding together."

(2) Why Heschel & not Solov?

~~3.~~ (3) ~~ITP~~

How do we move  
to a compelling user  
from X, Y, Z? ?

Lisa

"give rise" → ???

① Literals pedagogy  
or element

② What's missing?

→ How would  
Synagogue's vision  
incorporate  
multiple visions  
around the  
table?

① ~~At~~ Me

② Around table

③

What kind of  
technique???

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Goal - ~~State~~ Heskel

can

synagogue

could be  
more than one thing.

Perhaps start w  
Englished experiences  
that embody it  
of x & y and  
the step back.

Need to use it as  
a foil - "Wanda"  
"Succa"  
"Acho"

# Linda

A) Complexity of Idea Study  
to Vision

B) Multiple routes to  
ideas → Text

→ Rich Exper

↳ Portfolio of books

↳ Multiple processes  
for A!!!

"Mystery" in Hesiod

↳ The process  
— — how things  
come together.

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~~GIVE~~

We live in community  
where people inhabit  
multiple visions  
— a post-modern  
reality

# Elie Re: Process

(1) Too simple to ask for "translation"?

Are there possible models of translation?

(2) What does it mean to know a philos?  
won't reach unless I understand X's world view

How much do we have to know in order to understand Heschel?

Ellie - Finally

Jewish Ph.I.:

- 1) Source of vision
- 2) Useful to need writings as part of strategy for change.

Karen

Inside of "Black Box"

→ Study  
→ Articulation of V  
→ Experience  
→ Action

→ Each of 4

Need Double-click

Study - what kind of  
How study? kind of test  
Study → test

Is Articulator of  
a Vision a good  
thing?

Kind of Experience  
you need - Need  
to reflect n Exp

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Achor - Do you  
need explicit links?

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Order -- If I haven't done it  
work, what do

we do???

Ordering - Q

↳ How lead the

Mix?

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Nessa

→

Nessa

Change as פתח חיים  
as death

Two journeys

creates light and darkness

Morning: Light

Now: the dark side

Heschel: Not naive Re: the dark side,  
and his choice to focus on  
the other.

Simone Schueber

Principal

פ'תן זז

Palo Alto

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415

**From:** Nessa Rapoport <74671.3370@compuserve.com>  
**To:** Dan Pekarsky <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>  
**Date:** 6/12/98 11:53am  
**Subject:** Fwd: Afterthoughts

It's not the project about which I'm skeptical; it's the assignment. If you're not skeptical, AND if you think I am making a contribution to both the thinking and the burden, I'll happily stay with it throughout. (I do think that next week's meeting with Karen should clarify the assignment.)

I love thinking and learning about change and Jewishness; I'm much less certain about anyone's being able to arrive at a somewhat generic change process for a generic transformed synagogue. Those are both very vague to me.

And I'm puzzled by your puzzlement, since you seem to share my questions. Let's be sure to speak either before or after our meeting with Karen about your perplexity.

Nessa

CONVERSATION WITH LISA MALIK

1. Will provide us with "visions of success"
2. Boston -- Me-ah (100 hrs. Of Jewish learning for lay people), Shearim,...
3. Synagogue 2000 nuts and bolts
  - a. Retreat (need powerful spiritual experience for the core-group. It will energize them, and they'll go home and get others excited.)
  - b. Participants go home and create team of 20 to 30; they engage in some kind of study for year 1 -- dealing with prayer or healing. Set curriculum, co-taught by those who were at Ohai.- These curriculum guides are called itineraries. The aim to is clarify the kind of synagogue we would like to become "respiritualized"
  - c. Each synagogue group takes on a low-hanging fruit project designed to get closer to the vision, e.g. "A Greeting Group".

Year 2: Same group returns after first year to Ohai. Theme is "Respiritualizing the infrastructure of the synagogue" -- membership-intake process; Jewish Journey Groups; Marketing. Second phase is very Tachlis!!

Note: there is a "liaison-team" (consultants) charged with maintaining communication with the different congregations; this is their job.

ECE

Lisa thinks they **do** have a guiding vision. They use language of learning rather than spirituality.

Congregation of learners, learning congregations.

ECE, a lot of protocol for whole process.

1. Each Synagogue has a task force of some twenty people charged with defining congregation's vision of learning and low-hanging fruit. Also a leadership team that guides the task force -- rabbi, educator, group facilitation experts from within congregation. L

HI, NESSA. MY EMAIL ISN'T WORKING VERY WELL, SO I'M FAXING THIS INSTEAD. LET ME KNOW WHETHER YOU THINK THIS ADEQUATELY CAPTURES WHERE WE'VE GONE. PERHAPS WE SHOULD GET KAREN'S RESPONSE?? LET ME KNOW.

DP

MEMO TO: Nessa  
FROM: Dan  
RE: Our thinking to date concerning the Change Think Tank  
DATE: June 7, 1998

As we continue on our effort to conceptualize the year's agenda for the Think Tank, I thought it would be valuable to put on paper some of what we've been discussing. It may be that we'll want to share this document, or something like it, with Karen. Let's discuss.

**Aim of Think-Tank Project.** The aim of this project is to arrive, by the end of next spring, at an approach to institutional change (with special attention to synagogues) which can will then guide the development of CIJE pilot projects in the field beginning the following year. Such projects will be designed to make a contribution to the field, as well as to test and refine the initial approach to change. The desired approach to change needs to be one which is true to central CIJE convictions concerning the place of vision and Jewish ideas in educational change and practice; and it needs to offer helpful guidance "in the field".

**Strategy.** In trying to design the Think Tank, we have imagined a process that begins with the articulation of CIJE's existing ideas concerning the character and aims of institutional and Synagogue change. These ideas would be discarded, reframed, refined, otherwise revised, and/or supplemented in response a) to critiques emanating from thoughtful individuals, b) to inputs that prominently include approaches to change that have proved powerful in other domains (like corporations and public schools), and, down the road, c) to pilot projects in which these ideas are put to the test.

Following the initial session in which our extant ideas are put on the table, we imagined a sequence of approximately 5 day-long meetings across the year, each of which should be designed to enrich the initial conception. We also imagined that each session would include a significant element of Jewish study, the content and pedagogy of which are chosen with an eye to enriching our deliberations. Critical to the success of this effort are the following ingredients:

- a. "Powerful content" for each session that has the potential to enrich our thinking.
- b. Thoughtful, sophisticated participants in these sessions who bring with them the where-with-all to enrich, critique, and offer powerful alternatives to the ideas under consideration;
- c) A willingness on the part of those guiding the Think Tank process to keep a careful log of issues and insights that emerge in each session, with attention to

their implications for the approach to change we are developing.

d) Each session would include, probably near the beginning of the day, a response to critical questions/challenges that emerged in the preceding session.

### **SOME POSSIBLE WAYS OF APPROACHING THE THINK TANK**

Working within this general framework and through a process that's involved projecting a plan of action and then subjecting it to critique, we have articulated a number of variants of a Think Tank agenda. Here's my attempt to summarize them:

#### **Plan A.**

Plan A. is an articulation of the earliest conception of the Think Tank, as modified by the suggestion, at our first session on April 29, that it would be important for us to do some "inner work" (in which we ourselves try addressing some of the questions we think changing institutions will need to address).

#### **Session 1 (which has already taken place):**

CIJE's extant ideas concerning the process and aims of change.

#### **Session 2:**

Learning from approaches to change in world of corporations.

#### **Session 3: The challenge of vision**

Part of the day would be devoted to "inner work" that includes a process of visioning that includes study as an integral part. The challenge is twofold: to put on the table and examine some of our own ideas concerning a thriving Synagogue; and to think carefully about how to organize the change process so that the activity of Jewish study is not disconnected from the process of visioning.

The other part of the day would focus on the visions of some synagogues pointed to as thriving, e.g. Bnai Jeshurun in NY, with the help of their leaders. The challenge would be to understand the visions of these institutions and to learn about how they emerged and came to be shared.

#### **Session 4: Change in the world of Synagogues**

Drawing on input from thoughtful representatives of recent synagogue-change projects, we would examine ideas about the process and aims of change emanating from these efforts.

**Session 5: Approaches to change in general education**

In this session, we would full advantage of the expertise offered by Hank Levin and Amy Gerstein.

**Session 6: Wrap-up; drawing the different threads together.**

**Our own response to Plan A.** As we reflected on Plan A, we had a number of reactions:

1. that our own distinctive approach to change -- one that emphasizes the power of vision and the need to develop a vision that takes Jewish content seriously - is not adequately represented in Plan A. We were concerned that we might emerge without having systematically thought through what it means to develop an approach that takes such emphases seriously.
2. We weren't sure that we need a whole session organized around Levin's and Gerstein's approaches, the reason being that we already have some familiarity with their approaches and that we will have the benefits of their insights in an ongoing way.
3. We agreed that the plan we described did not adequately take into account what we might learn from Lisa Malik's research on Synagogue Change.
4. The theme of personal change and its implications for institutional change processes -- important because institutional change necessarily requires personal change -- were imperfectly represented in Plan A.
5. The value of looking at concrete cases.

Plan B. tried to be responsive to these considerations.

**Plan B.**

**SESSION 1 (which has already taken place):**

CIJE's extant ideas concerning the process and aims of change.

**Session 2. The challenge of vision**

a. Review of Extant approaches to vision (Senge, the Coalition, ECE, Accelerated Schools, et.)

b. "Inner work" that includes a process of visioning that encompasses study as an integral part. The challenge is twofold: to put on the table and examine some of our own ideas concerning a thriving Synagogue; and to think carefully about how to

organize the change process so that the activity of Jewish study is not disconnected from the process of visioning. Guests would include "critical friends" from out of the world of congregations who would be invited to speak to the adequacy of the process we are suggesting.

**Session 3. Interesting Cases; personal change.**

a. Consideration of the visions associated with (reputedly) thriving congregations, e.g. Bnai Jeshurun in NY or Chizuk Emunah in Baltimore, with the help of their leaders. The challenge would be to understand the visions of these institutions and to learn about how they emerged and came to be shared and institutionalized.

b. Personal change: what kinds of personal changes are entailed or assumed by institutional change; and what are the implications for the selection of appropriate institutions and for the process of change itself.

**Session 4: Examining Recent Synagogue Change processes**

This session would encompass presentation and discussion of Lisa Malik's findings to date concerning Synagogue Change processes, as well as presentations/discussions of ECE and Synagogue 2000, led by appropriate representatives of these movements.

**Session 5: Learning from approaches to change in the world of corporations.**

**Session 6: Bringing the strands together. Taking in and critiquing the conception of the change-process that is emerging.**

**Plan C:**

Plan C puts the concept of "Jewish Change" at the center. It builds on the insight that each of the sessions projected for the Think Tank is associated with a Jewish festival-period (Yamim Norahim; Sukkot/Simchat Torah; Chanukah; Pesach; shavuot) that highlights a different dimension of change as understood within Jewish tradition.

The intuitive idea was to use the Jewish understanding of change associated with each of these festival-periods as the foundation for the day's inquiry, drawing in, as appropriate, insights from the more general "change-literature".

On reflection, we were concerned that a Think Tank organized in this way might not culminate in the kind of change-process

that is to be the culmination of the year's activity. But we continued to like the idea that our Jewish learning should focus on seasonal insights into the nature of change, and that the sessions associated with each insight be framed in such a way as to integrate the insight in question into the day's work.

#### **Plan D.**

This plan breaks down the challenge of the Think Tank in an altogether way. It takes as its starting-point KAB's approach to the change-process. Each session takes one honest look at one dimension or element of this change process and tries to systematically develop it. If, for example, visioning (informed by Jewish Study) is a central element, this would be the subject of at least one session; and if "leadership development" is a critical (and ongoing) theme, this too might be the focus of a day's activity.

The challenge of Plan D is to identify 5 or so critical elements in KAB's process that would benefit from systematic examination. We assume - but are not committed to - the idea that Jewish study would take the form identified above (at the end of C); conceivably, though, a Think tank organized thematically would suggest other kinds of study.

**Concluding comments.** We came to no closure on these matters, but we seemed agreed 1) that the focus on vision, as developed through Jewish learning needs to be central; 2) that ideas about change embedded in the cycle of the Jewish year might prove a rich source of insight; and 3) that building the sessions around the different elements of KAB's approach might be more effective than embarking on an open-ended inquiry into approaches to change in different domains.



15 East 26th Street, New York, NY 10010-1579

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: Dan Pelcovsky		FROM: Jessica Holstein	
Ellen Goldring		DATE: 5/22/98	
Elie Holzer		FAX NUMBER: 212-532-2646	
		PHONE NUMBER: 212-532-2360	
RE: Staff retreat materials		TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 4	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> URGENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PLEASE REPLY	

NOTES/COMMENTS:

Karen Bath asks that you look over the attached materials on the <sup>1999</sup> workplan ahead of the discussions on Tuesday at the staff retreat.

\* Please call me to confirm receipt of this fax.

Thanks.  
Jessica



## 1999 draft 18 month Workplan

### JEWEL

Pilot – Professional  
Pilot – Lay  
Planning Part II  
TEI Cohort III  
Professors  
Forum?  
Rabbinic conference  
High school leaders?

### CFWW

Start-up of Network  
Conference  
1 – 2 Pilots (JCCA?)

### R & D

Indicators  
Economics

### Field Sites

Synagogue Change  
Early Childhood

### Administration

Internal communication  
External communication  
Fundraising  
Board & Chairman's Council

### Publications

- Policy brief on Professional Development
- Beit Rabban Case
- Rabbinic Education?

## STAFF RETREAT AGENDA

### Day 1 – Tuesday, May 26, 1998

- Discussion of 1999 workplan
  - Strawman
  - insides of each project
  - staffing
- Evening – Barbeque, Guiding Principles/School of Thought

### Day 2 – Wednesday, May 27, 1998

- Support staff and office infrastructure (with Susan Cane)

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE THINK-TANK  
Summary of Meeting #1, April 29, 1998

BACKGROUND

The institutional change think-tank was called into being with the aim of developing a meaningful and usable approach to institutional change -- an approach which we could then experiment with, revise, and refine through forays into the field. Though our interest extends to educating institutions of various kinds, our initial focus will be on synagogues. This emphasis reflects CIJE's belief that the transformation of synagogues is a critical ingredient in the effort to revitalize American Jewish life, as well as our intention of launching a Synagogue Change Project a year from now.

In preliminary conversations concerning the Think Tank, it was projected that the group would meet 5 or 6 times in the course of the year, and that at each meeting, it would have a chance to encounter and learn from approaches to change associated with a particular domain (e.g., general education, the world of corporations, community-change efforts, and existing synagogue-change projects). The challenge would be to assess the relevance of the insights and approaches associated with these other domains to our own work in Jewish education; and, by the end of a year's time, to emerge with a serviceable approach to change that is true to our own convictions and integrates pertinent ideas encountered during the work of the Think Tank.

We also decided that prior to encountering beliefs about and approaches to change associated with other domains, it would be important for us to articulate our own present ideas concerning the process and aims of the change-process. Through subsequent encounters with various approaches to change throughout the year, this body of ideas would then be deepened, revised, or refined.

These considerations led to a decision to devote our first meeting to an effort to articulate CIJE's current approach to change: during the first part of the day, we would focus on fundamental CIJE convictions about the process and aims of change; and in the second part of the day, we would look at a concrete approach to change that reflects some of these ideas as well as Karen Barth's experience in this domain. The day would also include a chance to examine Jewish sources that might inform our thinking about change, as well as an opportunity to think about next steps.

In preparation for the meeting, Dan Pekarsky drafted a short

document that attempted to articulate (what seemed to him) some central CIJE-beliefs concerning change. This document, along with his pieces on the place of vision in educational reform, the two pieces authored by Amy Gerstein for CIJE concerning the change-process, and Seymour Fox's piece on Ramah, were sent to participants prior to the meeting.

Critical to the success of the Think Tank, we realized, was not just our ability to identify articulate representatives of powerful approaches to change in different domains, but also our ability to bring to the table a thoughtful group of individuals bringing rich and complementary perspectives to our conversations concerning these different approaches. We were especially eager to include individuals who are already very sophisticated concerning educational change and individuals who could enrich our discussions with powerful Jewish ideas concerning the process and aims of change. The initial group of participants we agreed on included: a) core-CIJE staff, including Eli Holzer and Lisa Malik; b) members of the Guiding Ideas Study Group ("GUIDES"); and c) Hank Levin. It was understood that it may prove desirable to add other individuals to the group.

The following individuals were able to participate in our first meeting: Karen Barth, Gail Dorph, Amy Gerstein, Cippi Harte, Alvan Kaunfer, Hank Levin, Lisa Malik (via conference-call), Daniel Pekarsky, and Nessa Rapoport.

#### RESPONDING TO SOME FORMULATIONS OF CIJE'S IDEAS CONCERNING CHANGE

After some introductions, participants were invited to spend about ten minutes reviewing two documents purporting to express some basic CIJE ideas concerning change: a somewhat revised version of the piece by Dan Pekarsky that had already been sent out to participants; and a piece by Karen Barth, written some time ago, entitled "CIJE's Change Philosophy." (**See Appendix 1**) Below is a summary of some of responses to these documents:

1. The relationship between the "Building Blocks" document and the "CIJE Philosophy of Change" document was unclear to one participant.
2. There is a need to more effectively order the principles articulated in the Building Blocks document, so as to distinguish between philosophical commitments, strategic principles, and

other pertinent categories.

3. The Building Blocks document is insufficiently differentiated with respect to the different kinds of leaders involved in a change process (e.g. informal and formal, lay/professional), the respective roles of each, the relationship between the leadership-team and other constituencies in the process of identifying and coming together around a vision, etc. It was suggested that the distinction between a sales- and marketing-orientation among leaders would be pertinent to consider.

4. The Building Blocks document may suggest more orderliness than is characteristic of change-processes. Typically, even very successful processes are fairly messy and idiosyncratic. We should avoid language and metaphors that understate this messiness and suggest that change is clean, linear, and continuous.

5. The Building Blocks document could be taken to imply that the various tasks it identifies needs to be addressed only once. In fact, many of the elements of a vital change process, (e.g. leadership, the nature and buy-in to the vision, etc.) need to be returned to again and again. More radically, one person suggested that we should avoid thinking of the change-process as a whole as a one-time journey with a determinate beginning and end; rather, we should be thinking about institutionalizing a process that will be on-going.

6. We should not think that all of the conditions of change need to be in place for a meaningful change-process to be inaugurated. As Lizbeth Schor suggests in COMMON PURPOSE, it is often possible to develop those critical pre-conditions that are not initially present.

7. The "Why are we engaging in this time-consuming process?"-question needs to be revisited periodically during the process of change. Change is hard work, and along the way participants may lose sight of the purposes that have given rise to the process (with the result that they may grow disengaged or lose a sense of direction).

8. Because change is hard work, it is important that there be rewards for the participants along the way. These might range from opportunities to engage in serious Jewish study as part of the process (a strong perk for at least one participant!) to opportunities to implement certain do-able and meaningful changes early-on ("low-hanging fruit").

9. Who is change for?? These documents don't address the inreach/outreach issue. Is change aimed at those constituencies that are already actively involved -- or at the mass of individuals who are uninvolved? Typically, such processes are energized by those who are already very involved, and these folks tend to be individuals whose needs are already reasonably well met by the institution. A change-process organized by them is unlikely to meet the needs of, to draw in, the uninvolved. If our aim is "to bring people back", we must attend to this issue.

10. A vision must be palpable. Typically, the institutional/educational experience of most Jews in Jewish settings has been deadening and uninspiring. Progress requires a vision of something better; but for such a vision to take hold in the hearts of the critical stake holders, it has to be more real than rhetoric -- it must be palpable!! This means giving them powerful experiences through which they can "taste" the vision, experience it first-hand. Otherwise, there is a danger that they will aspire to no more than a somewhat improved version of the impoverished reality they have experienced.

11. Be sure not to confuse a vision with a vision-statement. At best a vision-statement is an articulation of an institution's vision; at worst, it's a poor substitute.

12. The distinction between an institutional vision and the vision of an educated Jewish human being (or of a meaningful Jewish existence) that the institution is designed to encourage and support tends to be lost in these documents. There is insufficient emphasis on "existential vision" and its relationship to institutional vision in the synagogue-context. These matters need clarification and articulation.

13. We should avoid viewing the institutional culture as an obstacle to change; we should try to identify the way in which it can be the ally of the change-process.

14. At least one participant encouraged us to revisit basic questions concerning why we believe synagogues need changing and to imagine a genuinely transformative vision. While not offering such a vision, she suggested that an adequate would need to respond to the deepest anxieties of our time and would interpret central Jewish categories in relation to them.

15. One participant asked us to consider the possibility that in practice - and perhaps in the ideal - synagogues feature more than one vision.

16. One participant discovered the following critical issues embedded in the documents:

a. **sustaining interest and involvement.** The idea of change may initially be very exciting. But the work is demanding and it takes a long time. Hence, the problem of sustaining interest and involvement.

b. **Meaningfully infusing powerful Jewish ideas.** It may be possible to engage the participants in a change process in serious Jewish study; but the encounter with powerful Jewish ideas, however meaningful to the participants, is no guarantee that these ideas will then infuse efforts to develop a guiding vision. Is there a way of introducing powerful Jewish ideas so that they do suffuse the change-process?

c. **The possibility of a powerful vision shared by diverse individuals.** In communities that feature substantial ideological diversity (for example, many synagogues), the development of a vision that is powerful, widely shared, and concrete enough to offer practical guidance may prove a difficult challenge.

d. **The problem of broad-based buy-in to the change process.** While it may be possible to generate high investment in the change-process among a core-constituency, it may be significantly more difficult to get a broad-base of buy-in from the membership of the institution. Can a change-process be successful without this broad buy-in? Are there ways of encouraging such buy-in?

e. **Readiness conditions.** Not all institutions will be ready for a serious change-process. What conditions need to be in place (or readily achievable) for a change-process to have a fighting chance of success?

f. **Role of "outsiders" in the process of change.** What role, if any, should be assigned to outside-facilitators in the process of change? How much and what kind of responsibility should they assume for guiding the process of change?

17. Enthusiasm was expressed for:

a. making Jewish learning and ideas central to the process

of identifying a guiding vision;

b. making learning/education both the vehicle and the aim of the change process (although, it was suggested, this idea needs greater emphasis).

18. Our discussion was punctuated by repeated and varied references to individual change. It was suggested that:

a. the ultimate goal of synagogue change-efforts is individual change -- facilitating deeper, richer, more spiritual experiences for the individuals who make up the institution's community.

b. change in individuals is integral to the process through which institutional change takes place.

c. there are significant and instructive parallels between individual change and institutional change.

#### DEVORA STEINMETZ'S SESSION ON JACOB

#18 offers a springboard to the session led by Devora Steinmetz, which focused on the transformation of Jacob around the time of his leaving Laban and his re-encounter with Esau. In examining Jacob's growth, we considered a number of themes and insights that may be pertinent to our work, including the following:

a. Jacob isn't entirely transformed -- that, for better and/or for worse, some of the old survives in the new!

b. some of the continuity of the old and the new arises from the circumstance that Jacob changes alone; that is, those who surround him haven't undergone a similar process of change.

c. what makes Jacob capable of undergoing a series of changes is a larger sense of purpose (in relation to which specific goals and forms of conduct carry the experienced status of means/strategy).

d. change is painful and involves struggle.

e. outside catalysts may be necessary in order for significant change to come about.

## COMPARING APPROACHES TO SYNAGOGUE CHANGE

Following lunch, Karen Barth developed an evaluative comparison of three major synagogue-change projects -- the McKinsey Project she had been engaged with, the Experiment in Congregational Education, and Synagogues 2000. In each case, she sought to highlight the project's best and worst features.

### **MCKINSEY**

**Strengths.** Strong market-research. Excellent job of "listening to your customers" (i.e., congregants) via focus groups.

**Weaknesses.** Zero-content!! No new ideas are thrown into the mix, no taste of inspiring alternatives to what participants already know.

Karen notes that there is a need for strategic thinking between vision and implementation -- but it was, as I reviewed my notes, not clear to me whether this point was made in praise or in criticism of McKinsey.

### **EXPERIMENT IN CONGREGATIONAL EDUCATION**

**Strengths.** There is a lot of fruitful interaction between synagogues. The mind-set of lay-people is central to the process ??? [what does she mean?]. Jewish learning is at the heart of both the aim and the process of change. ECE is very strong on "process"!

**Weaknesses.** Though ECE speaks of "communities of learners", it offers no clear vision of a thriving community of learners. In addition, ECE is weak on "content": there is no menu of programming or curriculum-content suggestive of what could be done differently.

### **SYNAGOGUE 2000**

SYNAGOGUE 2000 features two tracks, one Healing, the other Prayer. It's a two-year process. The first is designed to chart a change itinerary via a process of reflection and planning; the second is intended as an opportunity to implement a plan. As part of the kick-off year, participants undergo a powerful prayer-experience that offers them a sense of what's possible.

**Strengths.** Though weakly articulated [Explain!], the

experiential piece is very powerful.

**Weaknesses.** In part because of the experiential piece, there is a great gap between the central players in the change-process and the rest of the congregation. In addition, the actual change-process (intended for Year 2) is very weakly articulated.

After considering all three approaches, Karen notes one criticism that applies to all three: none of them addresses the skills needed by -- and needed to be cultivated in -- critical players (rabbis, cantors, educators, lay leaders, etc.)

### **ECE, WILLOW CREEK, AND INTERMEDIATE OPTIONS**

In our discussion of ECE, a contrast was drawn between its completely open-ended approach to vision and the highly specified approach to vision of Willow Creek, which has, in the spirit of McDonald's, offered franchise institutions very specific guidelines regarding guiding vision and week-to-week implementation.

We considered (what seemed to us to be) more congenial, intermediate positions:

a. target-institutions agree to certain general visional principles, with the understanding that they will be differentially interpreted by different institutions. This is close to the practice of the Coalition of Essential Schools.

b. Along the way to a vision, participants encounter and are encouraged to struggle with powerful questions and content that have the power to deepen and expand (without dictating) their thinking about an adequate guiding vision.

### **BARTH'S FIRST ITERATION OF A CIJE APPROACH TO SYNAGOGUE CHANGE**

For a careful account of Karen Barth's presentation of an approach to Synagogue-change, see Appendix 2. Comments evoked by her presentation are listed below:

1. Overall, the approach to Synagogue change she presented was greeted with enthusiasm. The sense of the group was that this was a great starting-point for the Think Tank's mission of emerging with a meaningful approach to change at the end of a year's time.

2. A couple of participants voiced the concern that the model did

not address the issue of governance sufficiently. (What is the group that steers the process? Who is it made up of? How are they chosen? What is the group's job? etc.)

3. The map and presentation that Karen offered look fairly linear, but the process itself is more web-like, with some activities going on simultaneously and some of them (like evaluation and the development of vision) going on indefinitely (alongside of, and feeding, other strands of the process). While Karen agreed with this critique, she added that in practice one often ends up doing one thing at a time, and she suggested that having a somewhat linear plan-of-action may be of value even if the process turns out to be very web-like.

Not only do some of the activities continue in an ongoing way, it was suggested by more than one participant that the process as a whole needs to be viewed not as an event in the life of the institution but as a way of thinking that becomes institutionalized.

4. Doubt was expressed concerning whether the process of study built into Karen's model would actually suffuse the effort to develop an institutional vision. It being possible that the activity of study, however rewarding, will be self-contained, one needs to ask: how structure the learning and/or the visioning so that these activities enrich one another?

5. It was reiterated that in the efforts to arrive at a meaningful vision, there should be opportunities to experience first-hand, to taste, richly meaningful forms of educational/Jewish experience that take the participants beyond what they have probably experienced in the past [in the way that, for example, participants in Synagogue 2000 were given the chance to undergo very powerful prayer-experiences]; otherwise, there is a strong probability that the possibilities entertained by those doing the visioning will be limited by their own, generally impoverished, past experiences in Jewish settings.

6. While the process articulated by Karen focused on the development of vision and on tracing out the implications of vision for practice, implementation itself was not strongly represented in her description. What provisions can be introduced to make it likely that practical efforts will follow or accompany efforts to articulate and think through the implications of a vision?

7. It was urged by one participant that the model must attend seriously to the gap that sometimes arises between "the leading-

vanguard" and the mass of constituents.

8. In the course of discussing Karen's approach, a kind of vision-continuum was articulated:

a. At one end, the vision is completely and totally in your hands. Sit together and come up with what you will!

b. At the other end, some outside expert or guru offers you a vision to work with, a vision which may vary in its specificity and openness to interpretation.

c. In the middle is a position that sounds like this: "it's your job to come up with your vision, but along the way you need to struggle with a particular body of content and questions."

9. In relation to the issues discussed in #6, the question was raised: how do movements like the Coalition or Essential Schools arrive at the broad-based visions that inform their own work?; and the answer seems to be, "There is no one answer to this question!" It was suggested that, in the case of the Coalition, its guiding principles originated with Sizer. In the case of Accelerated Schools, the guiding vision grew out of reflections on responses elicited by three questions:

a. Describe the dream-school for your own children and design a dream-school for children in an inner-city community. What are the similarities and differences between these schools?

b. What should every child be able to do and to know?

c. Describe a school that would meet your needs [as an educator or as a student??] as an adult.

10. In thinking about the upcoming work of our Think-Tank, it was suggested:

a. that it would be important to identify and make part of our own group the site-coordinator who will be charged with overseeing the pilot-projects to be launched next year.

b. that, in addition to following through on our original plan to look at some concrete cases of change and at approaches to change associated with different

realms of endeavor, it might make sense to launch some exploratory interventions this year, informed by the approach sketched out by Karen.

d. that "internal or inner work" should be a prominent dimension of our own work this year. That is, we should turn ourselves into a kind of focus-group that struggles to find our own answers to such questions as "What would an ideal Synagogue - the Synagogue that would meet our own needs as individuals and families - look like?" Or, if we were moving in a Sizer-direction, what would our own eight or ten guiding principles look like? Put differently, we should set before us and try to answer for ourselves relevant counterparts of the kinds of questions identified in #9.

11. A question was raised about the relationship between the work undertaken by this group and the work of Synagogue Change Research Project that Lisa Malik is steering. This matter needs to be clarified.

12. Someone underscored the importance of on-going documentation and evaluation of the process of change, evaluation conducted by both internal and external evaluators.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE THINK-TANK  
Summary of Meeting #1, April 29, 1998

INTRODUCTORY

The institutional change think-tank was called into being with the aim of developing a meaningful and usable approach to institutional change -- an approach which we could then experiment with, revise, and refine through forays into the field. Though our interest extends to educating institutions, in general, our initial focus will be on Synagogues. This emphasis reflects CIJE's belief that the transformation of synagogues is a critical ingredient in the effort to revitalize American Jewish life, as well as our intention of launching a Synagogue Change Project a year from now.

Here is the initial plan for the Think Tank. It would meet 5 or 6 times in the course of the year; at each meeting, we would have a chance to encounter and learn from approaches to change associated with a particular domain (e.g., general education, the world of corporations, community-change efforts, and existing synagogue-change projects). In each case, the challenge would be to assess the relevance of the ideas encountered to the domain of Synagogue change, as informed by our own convictions concerning the kinds of outcomes we would recognize as "success. The animating hope was that by the end of the year we would have gathered an array of insights into the change process that we could then weave together as elements in a serviceable approach to change.

Critical to the success of this effort, we realized, was not just our ability to identify articulate representatives of powerful approaches to change in different domains, but also our ability to bring to the table a thoughtful group of individuals bringing rich and complementary perspectives to our conversations concerning these different approaches. We were especially eager to include individuals who are already very sophisticated concerning educational change and individuals who could enrich our discussions with powerful Jewish ideas concerning the process and aims of change. The initial group of participants we agreed on included: a) core-CIJE staff, including Eli Holzer and Lisa Malik; b) members of the Guiding Ideas Study Group ("GUIDES"); and c) Hank Levin.

This preliminary conception of the project was revised at a CIJE Staff Retreat in the spring of 1998, at which it was suggested that before planning encounters with others' ideas about change, we would be wise to articulate our own present ideas concerning the process and aims of the change-process. This would represent the corpus of ideas concerning of change which would be deepened, revised, or refined through encounters with other approaches across the year.

Moved by the power of this suggestion, we agreed to devote

our first meeting to an effort to articulate CIJE's current approach to change. In the course of planning, Dan Pekarsky and Karen Barth moved towards the following agenda: during the first part of the day, we would focus on fundamental CIJE convictions about the process and aims of change; and in the second part of the day, we would look at a concrete approach to change that reflects some of the ideas as well as Karen's experience in this domain. The day would also include a chance to examine Jewish sources the might inform our thinking about change, as well as an opportunity to think about next steps.

In preparation for the meeting, Dan wrote a short document that attempted to articulate (what seemed to him) some central CIJE-beliefs concerning change. This document, along with his pieces on the place of vision in educational reform, the two pieces authored by Amy Gerstein for CIJE concerning the change-process, and Seymour Fox's piece on Ramah, were sent to participants prior to the meeting.

The following individuals were able to participate in our first meeting: Karen Barth, Gail Dorph, Amy Gerstein, Cippi Harte, Alvan Kaunfer, Hank Levin, Lisa Malik (via conference-call), Daniel Pekarsky, and Nessa Rapoport.

#### RESPONDING TO SOME FORMULATIONS OF CIJE'S IDEAS CONCERNING CHANGE

After some introductions, participants were invited to spend about ten minutes reviewing two documents purporting to express some basic CIJE ideas concerning change: a somewhat revised version of the piece by Dan Pekarsky that had already been sent out to participants; and a piece by Karen Barth, written some time ago, entitled "CIJE's Change Philosophy." It was suggested that after this review, members of the group would each have a chance to respond to these documents. Below is a summary of some of these responses:

1. The relationship between the "Building Blocks" document and the "CIJE Philosophy of Change" document was unclear to one participant.
2. There is a need to more effectively order the principles articulated in the Building Blocks document, so as to distinguish between philosophical commitments, strategic principles, and other pertinent categories.
3. The Building Blocks document is unduly undifferentiated with respect to the different kinds of leaders involved in a change process (e.g. informal and formal, lay/professional), the respective roles of each, the relationship between the leadership-team and other constituencies in the process of identifying and coming together around a vision, etc. It was suggested that the distinction between a sales- and marketing-orientation among leaders would be pertinent to consider.

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8. Because change is hard work, it is important that there be rewards of various kinds along the way for those engaged in the process. These might range from opportunities to engage in serious Jewish study as part of the process (a strong perk for at least one participant!) to opportunities to implement certain do-able and meaningful changes early-on ("low-hanging fruit").

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14. At least one participant encouraged us to revisit basic questions concerning why we believe synagogues need changing and to imagine a genuinely transformative vision. While not offering such a vision, she suggested that it would respond to the deepest anxieties of our time and would interpret central Jewish categories in relation to them.

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**Weaknesses.** Though ECE speaks of "communities of learners", it offers no clear vision of a thriving community of learners. In addition, ECE is weak on "content": there is no menu of programming or curriculum-content suggestive of what could be done differently.

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**Weaknesses.** In part because of the experiential piece, there is a great gap between the central players in the change-process and the rest of the congregation. In addition, the actual change-process (intended for Year 2) is very weakly articulated.

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### **ECE, WILLOW CREEK, AND INTERMEDIATE OPTIONS\**

In our discussion of ECE, a contrast was drawn between its completely open-ended approach to Vision and the highly specified approach to vision of Willow Creek, which has, in the spirit of McDonald's, offered franchise institutions highly specific guidelines regarding guiding vision and week-to-week implementation.

We considered (what seemed to us to be) more congenial, intermediate positions:

a. the target-institution agrees to certain general visional principles, with the understanding that they will be differentially interpreted by different institutions. This is close to the practice of the Coalition of Essential Schools.

b. Along the way to a vision, participants encounter and are encouraged to struggle with powerful questions and content that have the power to deepen and expand (without dictating) their thinking about an adequate guiding vision.

### **BARTH'S FIRST ITERATION OF A CIJE APPROACH TO SYNAGOGUE CHANGE**

For a careful account of Karen Barth's account of an approach to Synagogue-change, see the accompanying summary of the presentation that she made, including the graphic image of the approach. Here my intention is point to the questions and comments evoked by her presentation.

1. Overall, the approach to Synagogue change she presented was

greeted with pretty much universal enthusiasm. The sense of the group was that this was a great starting-point for the Think Tank's mission of emerging with a meaningful approach to change at the end of a year.

2. A couple of participants voiced the concern that the model did not address the issue of governance sufficiently. (What is the group that steers the process? Who is it made up of? How are they chosen? What is the group's job? etc.)

3. The map and presentation that Karen offered looks fairly linear, but the process itself is more web-like, with some of the activities (like evaluation and the development of vision) going on indefinitely (alongside of, and feeding, other strands of the process).

4. Doubt was expressed concerning whether the process of study built into the model would actually suffuse the effort to develop an institutional vision. It being possible that the activity of study, however rewarding, will be self-contained, one needs to ask: how structure the learning and/or the visioning so that these activities enrich one another.

5. While the process articulated by Karen focused on the development of vision and on tracing out the implications of vision for practiced, implementation itself was not strongly represented in her description. What provisions can be introduced to make it likely that practical efforts will be introduced?

6. In the course of discussing Karen's approach, a kind of vision-continuum was articulated:

a. At one end, the vision is completely and totally in your hands. Sit together and come up with what you will!

b. At the other end, some outside expert or guru offers you a vision to work with, a vision which may vary in its specificity and openness to interpretation.

c. In the middle is a position that sounds like this: "it's your job to come up with your vision, but along the way you need to struggle with this body of content and questions."

**Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE)**

**CHANGE THINK TANK MEETING**

**April 29, 1998**

**ISSUES:**

1. Sustaining interest/involvement
2. Infusing powerful Jewish ideas into the process meaningfully
3. Willingness to invest quality time in the process
4. A powerful vision shared by diverse individuals
5. Broad-based buy-in to the change process
6. Readiness conditions for initiating a process
7. Role of outsiders in the process

DP ① Study → Vision ③

② Implementation

③ "Vision" — Continuous

① you

② Encantment context

③ we offer a  
vision:

Interpretable  
Principles

④ Who/How many??

# Reactions/Main Ideas

① Cohesion/v of 2 docs.

② DPI's Doc. ~~Bullying Block~~ Diff. kinds of  
principles -- need to categorize  
- Philosophical commitments  
- Strategic principles  
- Roles/Responsibilities

→ Confusing

③ Existent re: process of change  
needs to be grounded - Jewish  
+ ↑ understanding of Judaism  
⇒ APK in hard process

④ Buildy Blocks — Not one-time  
oningly added <sup>events</sup> — Need to  
leadership/ or vision  
See Alvan's exp. in Prov.

Common Purposes, Liz Scherr  
↓

⑤ Don't assume that all the  
critical ingredients need to be  
present at onset. There  
may be ways to teach/develop  
missing ingredients

⑥ Like idea that edu. is both  
vehicle & object of change;  
could be more powerfully articulated

⑦ Critique of "quest/duty" vision  
elicits response (Linda) Recall  
iterative nature of process!

⑥ Responding to Amy, Linda notes that for some "the book" is exactly re: change-process rather than Jewish learning

⑦ Too little about lay people & other crucial players -- e.g. Cantors

\* ⑩ DP's #13 → Doesn't take sufficiently into account the complexity, messiness of change vs "carefully monitored"

⑪ "Why are we doing this."  
— gets lost along way. Need to return to this theme along the way

(2)

Document is vague re: leadership's ideas re: what should be and "the constituents"!

(13) The doc., esp. ~~the~~, focuses on institutional rather than existential vision -- danger of losing existential thrust

→ Need to clarify relationship between Ed gen rhetoric and institutional vision.

As it is, in DP's doc. a danger of losing the "Change for what" issue -- this is addressed in Hare's #1.

Karen suggests a grid

	Ind.	Inst
Context		
Process		

- 3 themes:
- ① Ed. ju
  - ② thriving network
  - ③ Process of "getting there"

DP didn't get it!

Missing from them does:

~~the~~ in-reach/outreach issue - who is change for!!

→ The designees are typically "insiders looking for minor changes and aren't terribly concerned w/ the concerns of outsiders = alienated.

If we view synagogues as vehicles of "bringing people back", this is serious problem!

---

Don't think of change/processes having beginning/end - rather, continuous + challenge - - how build it into life of institution

---

Steinmetz

Need to view institutional culture as  
a vehicle of change -- not as  
obstacle; or something to be overcome

Change = balance of conserving  
& reforming

---

Avoid metaphors suggesting that  
change is smooth, continuous,  
unmessy

---

Are there perhaps multiple visions  
at work in any one Synagogue  
-- in fact? Ideally?

---

Kinds of leadership : sub-divide

↳ Rabbi + other profs

↳ Informal leaders

↳ Lay/Prof. relations

Attributes of  
leaders:

sales/matcheb

what  
not  
want to  
sell

needs of  
customers  
Balance

Relationship between goals/vision needs to be clarified -- "goals may change."

---

Nessa's Qs: why is synagogue the locus?

How do we know it needs changing? what if consumers are happy?

Complexities of rabbinic role as a factor - ambivalence towards rabbi

Why = God not part of our conversation?

What would a transformative vision look like? Needs to respond to great anxieties of Jewish people & to reinterpret basic categories in relation to them

---

Hint

Avoid equating V w/ V-statement

At best, statement = reminder; at worst, a poor substitute.

Vision needs to be palpable = Experiences that take us beyond uninspiring, deadening past experiences

# DP's List of Issues

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

# KAB Synaptic Appraisal of Some Prominent Syn. Change Processes

	Best	Worst
met		
ECF		
Synaptic		

# McKinsey

+ (1) Market-research: "listen to your customers"  
= Congrats  
via "focus groups"

(2) Need strategic thinking between  
vision & implementation.

1 [Is she saying that M. is  
good or bad at this]

(-) Zero-Content - No new ideas,  
no taste of inspiring alternatives  
to what they know.

## ECB

- + 1) Interaction between synagogues
  - 2) "Mind-set" of lay-people is at center.
  - 3) "Jewish educ." is both process and the aim!!
  - 4) Very strong on "process!"
- 1) No vision of a thriving community of learners
  - 2) Weak on Content
    - There is no menu of programming or curricular content, suggestive of what could be done differently

Willow Creech

Successful at  
self-replication  
down to  
details

ECB

Completely  
open-  
ended  
with  
emergent  
vision.

→ Half-way houses:

- 1) Coalition: general principles  
differently interpreted
- 2) Encounter *greshaskat*  
on way to vision,  
but vision → self  
made.

# Synagogue 2000

Features: 1) Diff. tracks — Healy  
Prayer

2) 2 year-long process

year-long  
change  
itinerary!

— a) Reflection — plc

b) Try to implement  
a change

Kick-off year:

Powerful prayer exp. = "What's Possible?"  
for Participants!!

But great gap w/ non-participants

⊕ Experimental pieces

↳ Powerful (though weakly articulated) ✓

⊖ Weakly articulated change process  
for year 2 (post-itinerary)

Weakness of all 3

None of the addresses  
skills needed by critical  
players

↳ Profs  
Publics  
Cantors  
educators

---

---

KAR'S Approach →

Change, in general

Institutional changes

— { Synagogues }  
{ Case }

Lisa Malkin, Synagogue Change  
Research Project

→ Stanford — institutionalization  
of family ed

Amy Gershtin  
School-level/policy-level — change

Alvan Kaurfer — Fed. Process of ed. change  
for Rhode Island

---

Hank Levin

---

Karen Barth — (1) Change management,  
meeting  
(2) synagogue  
change  
(3) BCE

Cippi Harte — How people change  
as relevant

Linda Thal —

Goal

Cleveland

"Vision" — { New institutions }  
{ what would be necessary }

→ How encourage

My two fold goal is

- 1) Challenge
- 2) The People

People-Change

Sense of what we're  
really about

(1) Not clear

(2) Not lived

Institutional/Individual.

---

Nessa -

DP

Issues

Jealousness of the process

Leadership

A) Infusion -- Powerful Jewish ideas

↳ Important - Difficult

B) Implementacja - Connection

Amy

- ① It does resonate w/ CITE
- ② Did DP look to Kahn's piece  
— Are there contradictions??

③ Bulky Blocks — Diff. principles

a) Strategic —

e.g. Facilitator of a  
certain kind

b) More philosophical

— e.g. #1

→ c) Roles/Responsibilities

→ Confusing — — Need to  
categorize.

④ New idea -- Process of  
change needs to be  
grounded in Qudus --  
and to deeper understanding  
of Qudush

⑤ ~~Any~~ - Because change is  
hard, there need to  
be parties. Gravity  
pushing some such  
parts

⑤ Building Blocks -- not  
one-time events; many  
need to be inquiringly  
attended to e.s. leadership.

④ Can't develop a vision once and expect that it's handled forever  
e.g. Alva in Providence

Common Purpose Edh. Schorr

↳ Change in educ/welfare/ch. 16  
/ CAIT

↳ Rich Resource

There are ways to teach/develop  
the critical ingredients  
that may be missing

Linda Thal - { Educ. as vehicle  
and object of change

↳ Could be more powerfully articulated

Iterative nature = response to quick &  
dirty visioning

Readiness-conditions may require  
a lot of time -- iterable

"Visioning-process" may not  
be possible as we've

envisioned -- movement  
history

→ Develop

Perhaps  
readiness-  
conditions

---

Linda -- In some places, "the  
change-process" -- not the  
push learning -- is the  
hook (vs. Amy)

Tool/He here about lay people's  
involvement - processes!

Not is the reference to other  
key players - - Cantors

#13 -- Don't take sufficient  
account of complexity,  
messiness of change,  
"carefully monitored"

---

"Why are we doing this"  
is an important recurrent  
element along the  
way!!

Alvan

Who are "the people"?

- what are ~~the~~ { leaders  
stakeholders  
constituents

Need greater clarity

→ c) - also need constituents  
{ ideas re: what  
should be.

( How relate their  
sense of need/perception of  
constituents w/ the  
vision generated by  
leadership )

How integrate vision w/ periphery  
of constituents?

#5 - - The question focuses  
on institutional - - not  
existential

→ e.g. Points of  
access.

Danger of losing the  
essential thrust!!

Goals (1) GP Phone Re: Ed. Jew  
(2) Vision of institution  
→ What relationship is, needs  
clarifying -

→ What's our understanding of what  
it's about? - -

Garl gets confused re: connection  
between and vision / historical vision?  
N Change for what?  
Karen's doc. addresses this  
some in #12

---

Karen - Need to fill in 4 boxes:

	Ind.	Inst
Content		
Process		

- ① Ed. Juv
- ② Throughly understand
- ③ Process Re: how you get there?

Need to separate these  
diff. boxes [Aste Kaven]

Missing : { In-reach  
Out-reach

→ Designers of change  
are ~~the~~ member.

→ The "insiders" who are  
involved are looking for  
minor changes. -- aren't  
concerned w/ the  
concerns of "outsiders"  
-- who are very alienated.  
Not addressed here!!

If Synagogues are vehicles of bringing people back, then is a problem?

---

It may be a mistake to think of a process as Begin/End, as opposed to Continuous.

⇒ How build this into life of the institution?

## Devora

- ① Jacob - a life of change  
↳ Both a person and a nation } Rich
- ② Problematic - It's a complex story  
But: today just a beginning

Chap. 32: Jacob's struggle w/ the  
Angel.

Context: Re-encountering 1E8.

- ① Leaving Laban's house after 20 years
- ② After quasi-dangerous encounter w/ L.,  
he leaves
- ③ 2/3 - - Clued - to transition by  
meeting w/ angels

p. 224 In Ch. 28 - - transition is  
marked w/ angels  
Why "two camps"?

Esau 400 people came

J. prays to God -- no response  
Sends gifts to brother.

At night, crosses wife/possessions over ford

We read 24 to end of ch.

Why does J. remain by himself?

① Protect family

② Give himself space to think.

③ A space to encounter God

④ Went back because he's forgotten something

9:17-18 → TWO CAMPS

"I've become 2 camps."

⑤ ~~left behind~~ needs desire on  
past

Confusion of people/property,

J. → little L. → Dangerous to stay in L.'s house

Jacob's preoccupation w/  
Property II. — Characters

"Crossing over" — harder for

Meta-  
Phor } Jacob then for his  
family. For him,  
it's a "coming home"  
& a "leaving".

A taking-stock  
process at great  
transition

Separates -- Multiplicity Encounters  
Oneness } Quality }

??'  
CROSS  
OVER

??  
??'  
WRESTLE

"Camps" --

Identity - Formahar

Stream itself changes name:

??' - [??']  
→ Diff. person / Diff. stream

Jacob continues to be called Jacob  
-- unlike Abraham. -- why?

---

???" changes -- but it  
doesn't mean ~~the~~ family  
changes → "Abraham" continues.

→ Can't fully drop ~~the~~ past!!

"heel"  
"???" - Get ahead at expense  
of others - Dup' to  
this point in history

(2) Manipulation

(3) Hand to heel -- NOT  
face to face!!

גָּזַל -- Crooked = ~~Isaiah's~~ perception of Jacob.

הִלְכֵי עֵשָׂו -- הִלְכֵי עֵשָׂו  
הִלְכֵי עֵשָׂו אֶרֶץ

הִלְכֵי עֵשָׂו VS גָּזַל

Now (הִלְכֵי עֵשָׂו) → הִלְכֵי עֵשָׂו

But how עֵשָׂו is he really  
w/ גָּזַל?? or w/ גִּבּוּר??

e.g. גִּבּוּר story (גִּבּוּר)

→ Tricky stays in the family!  
Perhaps  $\text{שָׁלוֹם}$  is saying, "In this world, you can't be pure/whole, whole?"

$\text{שָׁלוֹם}$  = Exile -- Never whole

"Struggle" - why?

"Being sent out" - - 2 ~~interpretations~~

↳ 2 opposite meanings,  
but don't know  
which will be fulfilled?

"Total transformation" vs  
person who continuously  
struggles

Jacob's struggle N Outside  
Catalyst  
God

Change involves

{ Pain / struggle  
Splitting / reuniting  
Change in name / essence  
Outside catalyst }

Don't change completely

Jacob invites ~~the~~ encounter  
w/ Esau!! why?

— Wholeness!

— Prudence!

Esau can't change!!  
why can he change??

Jacob's sense of a destiny,  
his capacity for change

Change — Jacob/Isaac/  
Abraham  
Different stages of change

More radical than  
Transformation growth

## Tzippi

Change throws things off.

Need to constantly revisit  
focus

Relationship between goals &  
vision -- needs to be  
clarified.

Goals may change

## Nessa

Why a Synagogue as locus?

How do we know it needs changing?

What if congregants are happy?  
Would we still want to  
change things?

Problem of authority of Rabbi

Pressures on Rabbinic Role -

↳ Hate Rabbi/infantilize

What's missing? God is  
not part of the conversation

⇒ What might a transformative  
vision look like?

Where would it come from?

↳ Need to look at great  
anxieties of Jewish People?  
& interpret basic categories  
- relation to them?

Need Examples of Strong Visions that  
include Jewish categories & respond  
to anxieties of time?

---

## Hanks

① Avoid equating vision  
w/ "vision-statement"

At best, words are  
reminders.

At worst, a  
poor substitute

② Plausibility of vision  
is key!

→ People need experience  
that take them  
beyond their uninspi-  
ring past experiences

---

Most have been  
deadened by their past  
experience

---

② "School culture" as  
a vehicle of change  
— not an obstacle.

Tension between what we

conserve/reform...

Balance between  
~~the~~ — a creative  
way

Avoid metaphors that  
suggest that

change is smooth,  
continuous, un-

messy? Don't be seduced by  
language

# LISA

wants to create categories

① Institutions/Ind/Change-  
Processes

② Means vs Ends

— — in some cases  
not clear.

{ E.g. "Leadership"  
and "Success"  
→ Is a certain form  
of leadership good  
as an end in itself?

Lisa --

Synagogue as educational  
institution -- } means an  
end.  
↳ or both?

Vision -- } Whose vision??

↳ there isn't "one  
Synagogue" -- Perhaps  
multiple visions ~  
one Synagogue!!  
↳ In practice/ideal

Lisa -- Leadership -- need to sub-divide

① → Raber & other Profs  
→ Informal leaders

② Attributes of leaders

Sales/Marketing Perspective  
Balanced  
Needs of customer  
~~what~~ what we want to sell

③ Lay/Prof. Relations

---

DP's List of Issues

Karen

Synagogue Change Processes  
I've heard

Best

Worst

Mck.

ECI

Syn 2000

# Mckinsey Process

## Best

- ① Market-research:  
listen to your  
congregants:  
"focus groups"

[Between vision/implementation]

- ② Need Strategic  
thinking

# O-Content:

↳ No new ideas

↳ N Hank's

→ no sense of  
what's  
possible

ECF

Best

① Interaction between  
Synagogues

② "Mind-set" of  
lay people & centers

Process/Aim IS  
Jewish education

(3) Very strong process

## Negatives

(1) No vision of a thriving community of learners

(2) No { Menu = Program-  
Content = Civic  
Contact  
= concrete ideas  
of what they  
could do differently

Willow Creek is successful  
at ~~at~~ replicating  
itself

Monday  
morning

Sermons  
Learning  
materials

Vision

(1) Encounter ideas/texts

(2) No V ————— V.  
Coalition

Willow Creek ————— EQ

ASK Q.:  
Encounter Content

Lisc - { Learning as  
an end-in-itself

→ Vision

---

Karen

↳ What does it mean to  
bring V/context to table?

Syn. 2000

- (1) Diff. tracks: Healing  
Prayer
- (2) Year-long  
change itinerary  
Reflect -

(3) year-2: Try to implement a change

## Kick-off year

\* ↳ "Powerful prayer Experiences" for participants as a way of showing what's possible.

↳ Good - - but  
great gap between  
participants & non-  
participants

## Plus

Experimental piece

A powerful vision  
(but weakly articulated)

## Weak

- A "change-club"
- - the 20 who go through the process

↳ weakly articulated change  
} process for post-itinerary

Weat in all 3

Skills of { Prof.s  
Public  
Cantors  
Educators

→ ~~D~~ None address that  
Problem.

# Study / Visions

Readiness

- (1) Tough truth about change
- (2) Learning about our vision  
— very broadly construed
- (3) Visits / Experience to examples of  
'our vision'
- (4) Congregational day
- (5) Write on why they want to  
change.

Study/Research — Aste Harker

↳ Jewish texts/Educ. Ideas/synagogues/Cases of great learning

Research = Who studies??? <sup>cong. settings</sup>

VISION FORAYS

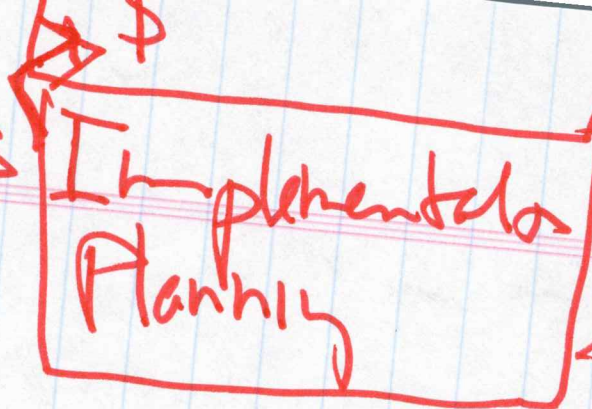
Some visionary process, built on period of study, w/ a lot to the critical choices

→ Simultaneously: trying small things out, along side of big stuff

slow hangs fruit

Immediate

Strategies



Need \$ for human resources.

Evaluation

Vision #2

---

Leadership training

# Hank

- ① Likes & / worth trying
- ② Need governance -  
body — group  
that  
guides  
the process

---

① Governance

② ~~Imp.~~ Study → Vision

③ Impl.

# Think Tank Summary

(1) Do our own internal work.

e.g. { Our "Ten principles"  
Our ideal congregation  
Our ideal congregant

↳ Treat ourselves as focus-grp

(2) Find <sup>site</sup> coordinator now!

(3) How do guiding visions arise?

Sizer: Invitations -- join me  
if you will

Levin's - Some exercises --

~ Nessel's challenge -- #1.

(4) Forays this year - - test....

(a) Think: ~~you~~ Dream school - year ... Inner

(1) Design dream school - similarities/Diff

(2) What should every child able to do? / know

(3) A school that meets your needs as an adult

Intro

## Nessa

Is there a "Before" or "After" in the recent set of change-efforts?

Goal: In Westchester,

① Shabbat - Exp. becomes part of people's lives

② Curric changes follow on changes in awareness.

---



**Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE)**

**CHANGE THINK TANK MEETING**

**April 29, 1998**

**AGENDA**

- 9:30 – 11:15** Surfacing Some Assumptions Concerning the Process and Aims of Jewish Institutional Change (I): *Dan Pekarsky*
- 11:15 – 12:15** Text Study: *Devora Steinmetz*
- 12:15 – 1:00** Lunch
- 1:00 – 3:00** Surfacing Assumptions (II): *Karen Barth*
- 3:00 – 4:30** Crafting an Agenda for our Future Work: *Karen Barth*

Karen agrees w/ on-goingness, but  
in practice, one at a time!!

Need - An agenda, even if it  
turns out to be web-like

Goal : (1) Maybe one change-  
group per congregation  
is a mistake

(2) Document/Evaluate  
-- needs to start  
right away

Take : Need on-going  
internal and external  
assessment!!

Amg

Scouting-parties - Pioneers

{ Terms of membership

{ - - Participate  
seriously in the  
process!!

---

Small group ~ Mass  
How solve this  
problem?

## Next Steps

Karen: Diff. realms of endeavor  
(1) Cases (2) Theories

Educ -- Business -- Community

+ Sessions focused on diff.  
pieces of process Karen  
laid out

Hank: there's enough to  
start with already!

Dange of Back-Berner

---

Amy: Do we need to model  
the process ourselves?

Amy : Forays this year in  
Boston & NY?

Should we be writing

Lisa : Research Projects  
connections??

Hank : Avoid very big  
Synagogues

Nessa : Do the internal  
Asker work!!

Our own views on ideal  
Synagogue!!

Hank

↳ Need <sup>the</sup> now person who will  
manage the pilot-  
PROJECT -- to participate  
in the process!!

---

How do "Broad-based Visions"  
develop?

Ted invents his own! ~~etc~~  
Who will join me?

---

Hank  
what would dream school  
be for our kids → Universalize

Hane's dream-school exercise:

① For inner-city kids

② For poor kids

3 Qs

① Design dream school  
for your own children

② Look for similarities/differences

③ What should every child  
know/be able to do?

④ Design a school that  
meets your needs as an adult?

Where do ~~the~~ questions come from?

Look for strengths? Build on strengths?

{ Community of Purposes  
Strategy decided by school }

Build on strengths

{ Curiosity  
Experience }

Use ourselves as  
a focus group!!

① l.s "Ideal  
Synagogue"

② Our ten Principles

+ ① Accelerated  
School

② Coalition