



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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Jewish secondary school leadership initiative. National Jewish
High School Leadership Seminar, 1998 March.

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

TRANSLATING A VISION OF SPIRITUALITY INTO EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

For this exercise, our plan is to break into a total of four groups (two around each thinker). Here is the assignment:

Imagine that your institution has decided to make the ideal of spirituality described by Bernie Steinberg OR Art Green central to its mission, and that you have been appointed to translate this commitment into practice throughout the life of the school. Keeping in mind relevant insights from Joe Riemer's session on adolescence and spirituality, what implications would the adoption of this guiding ideal have for your school?

A. Free-associate, writing down your thoughts in your journals, and then discuss your thoughts.

B. Think through the implications for several, if not all, of the following areas:

- 1. Hiring policies**
- 2. Admissions policies**
- 3. Pedagogy/curriculum in science classes**
- 4. Pedagogy/curriculum in Bible**
- 5. Tfillot**
- 6. Athletics**
- 7. The work of the guidance counselor**
- 8. Other**

C. On the sheets of a flip-chart summarize your group's decisions.

REFLECTING ON THE CONCEPTIONS OF SPIRITUALITY

1. Which, if either, of the conceptions of spirituality we've been considering, or which elements of these conceptions, speak to the mission and reality of institutions like your own?

2. Are there significantly different conceptions of spirituality that we should be considering that are to be found in institutions like your own and other contemporary educating institutions?

3. What next steps suggest themselves at the local level for addressing the place of spirituality in the life of your schools?

RESPONDING TO THIS CONCEPTION OF SPIRITUALITY

Use the next 20 minutes to respond to the conception of spirituality we've just encountered. The following guiding questions may prove helpful in organizing your thoughts, but do not feel constrained by them.

1. How do you personally react to this conception of spirituality?
2. How congenial would spirituality in this sense be to the different segments of your school-community (for example, parents, teachers, students)?
3. To what extent (and where) is spirituality in this sense to be found in your school?

LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF RECENT GRADUATES

As an opening to a conversation, here are some suggested questions for the recent graduates to speak to:

1. In what ways did your high school promote your spiritual growth?
2. In what ways did it fail to nurture your spiritual growth? Were there, for example, missed opportunities?
3. What recommendations would you make to your school, were it to seek your input about improvement in this area?

GUIDE-QUESTIONS FOR INFORMAL SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

1. If you're comfortable doing so, spend five or so minutes briefly describing (in your journals) a spiritual experience you've had that was significant for you. Include a few words about whether you think your schools should encourage this kind of spirituality -- and how (if at all) it would need to be different in order to do this.

2. Break into random groups of no more than 4. If possible, gather with people you have not yet gotten to know well. In these small groups, do as much of the following as you meaningfully can, given time-constraints:

a. Those of you who are comfortable doing so, share the experiences you've described.

b. Prior to the seminar you were asked to bring with you a text that reflects an aspect of your personal definition of spirituality. Share these texts with one another, explaining, if possible, why you find them meaningful.

c. How, if at all, does this activity help you to think about spirituality and about its place in the mission of your schools?

SOME POSSIBLE POST-SEMINAR ACTIVITIES BACK HOME

1. A meeting with your staff organized around the question of the school's contribution to the spiritual life of its members, both ideally and in practice.
2. A meeting with the school's board around this question.
3. Focus-groups (with sub-groups of teachers, or students, or parents) about the place - actual and ideal of spirituality in the life of your school.

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

4.

5.

6.

7.