

Synagogue 2000: Facilitation Guide

Part One: About S2K Meetings

This guide is especially meant for those who plan and facilitate the work of the Synagogue 2000 (S2K) team. Synagogue 2000 recommends that every member of the S2K team read this guide to understand how the team's work will be carried out. This guide first defines the work of a Synagogue 2000 team. Then, the nature of the S2K curriculum and the tasks of organizing the work of the S2K team are described. Next, the roles of various individuals who take responsibilities for assisting the team in accomplishing all that it sets out to do are outlined. Explanations of the planning functions which will help the team move smoothly through the entire curriculum and through each team meeting follow; p. F-11. In a separate section, group processes are discussed; this section also includes resources and tools for managing situations common in team settings.

A Synagogue 2000 team is a group of people who come together for approximately three years of work in re-imagining congregational life. They are supported by Synagogue 2000 resources, including a curriculum, consultants, and annual conferences.

WHAT IS A
SYNAGOGUE
2000 TEAM?

The S2K team is not a committee, a study group, a strategic planning task force, a *chavurah*, a think tank, or a personal growth group. The S2K team is none of these, and yet it is all of these at different times.

- The S2K team is like a committee in that it has a task. The task of the S2K team is to deepen the spirituality of congregational life. Depending on the current curriculum, the team will focus its attention on sacred community, prayer, study, or social action.
- The S2K team is like a study group in that it encounters Jewish sources and learns from them in the process of envisioning a synagogue as a Jewish spiritual community.

- The S2K team is like a strategic planning task force in that it looks far down the road, envisioning a desired future for the synagogue and planning the necessary steps to make that future happen.
- Like a *chavurah*, the members of the S2K team come to share in one another's life experiences. Each person's joys and sorrows will become part of the fabric binding the group together.
- Like a think tank, new ideas are offered and contemplated, developed, and then proposed to the wider congregation.
- Like a personal growth group, members of the S2K team find themselves changed, often in unanticipated ways. Their ways of thinking, feeling, relating to one another and to their synagogue may all undergo transformation.

During the entire life of the team, it is important that all S2K team members remember that this group has multiple functions which may be carried out consecutively or concurrently. It is vitally important for the long-term success of the group that team members take responsibility for balancing these various functions for the duration of their work together. Some people may be more interested in one function than another. For example, some people may expect to study and resist planning and decision making. The converse may also be true: some may be impatient with study and want to move quickly to action.

Incorporated into the S2K curricula are different kinds of study and activities designed for individuals, the team, and the entire congregation. Accordingly, the team's discussion about the appropriate balance among activities must occur not only at the beginning of the team process but at various times during the year.

The facilitator is the person who makes the team aware of these issues and helps the group resolve them constructively. The facilitator needs to plan the agenda of the meetings with these different functions in mind and, periodically, schedule time for the group to discuss whether the balance among these functions is satisfactory. During meetings, the facilitator should draw the team members' attention to the different functions the team is fulfilling at different times.

Each S2K curriculum provides readings and discussion topics, activities, and suggestions for action. Each S2K curriculum is divided into units. Every unit includes materials that foster personal growth, team bonding, decision-making, spreading the word about S2K, and maintaining relationships with other synagogue entities.

The curriculum contains more material than a team may be able to use during the time it allots to the S2K process. Some teams may work broadly, choosing to address all of the units within a curriculum. They will then select from the materials provided within that unit according to how many meetings they allocate to that topic. Other teams may work more intensively, selecting from among the units those of highest priority. Still other S2K teams may decide to break into smaller mini-teams in order to focus on particular units of interest to particular team members.

Decisions about which units to choose and which material to use within each unit should be made with care. The choice depends on the temperament and interests of team members, as well as on the amount of time and the number of meetings that the team wishes to devote to the S2K process. However, the team should consider the following four elements:

1. Attention to Personal Growth

Activities in the curriculum that enhance personal growth include the opening and closing rituals, disclosure of feelings and personal experiences, grappling with serious ideas, and understanding one another's convictions and aspirations. Personal growth is fostered in settings where people feel safe with one another, and where relationships are accepting and supportive rather than judgmental and critical. Insight and "*aha* moments" often come after periods of intimacy and intensity. These aspects of the team environment cannot be built into the curriculum. They are generated only when the team itself becomes intentional and skillful about creating such environments.

2. Attention to Team Bonding

Activities in the curriculum which promote team bonding include all those which enhance personal growth and, in addition, others which promote the self-conscious creation of a common team sensibility. The "culture" of the team will be created as the members move through the successive stages of getting to know each other, establishing the rules and customs that organize how the team accomplishes its tasks, working through difficult issues, and implementing the goals that the team sets for itself. These stages do not follow one after the other. Rather, they repeat themselves at various times over the life of the group.

During the first few meetings of the team, the facilitator should devote some time to allow the team to establish its own norms and rules. This period of clarifying the process, mission, and tasks of the group is essential for the team's success; if the answers are not completely clear, puzzled or confused

WORKING WITH THE CURRICULUM

Team Norms: Logistics

Regularly scheduled meetings

Regular attendance

Procedures for missed meetings

Starting and ending meetings on time

Preparing for meetings

Eating together

Team Norms: Processes

Being present
 Paying attention
 Telling the truth
 Listening to one other
 Seeking common ground
 Maintaining confidentiality
 Refraining from gossip
 Being inclusive
 Being supportive
 Attending to S2K values

individuals may raise them again and again in different forms. In order to feel part of the team, people should be able to answer for themselves questions such as: What am I here for? What am I supposed to do? What is the group supposed to do? What is my personal role in relation to others who are here? What is my personal role in relation to the group's task?

Some people need immediate and specific answers; others are more willing to wait and see and have the answers emerge from the group's processes. Answers may be supplied by those who are leading or facilitating the group or by reference to written materials. In addition, people will be able to infer the answers they need as they work together to develop the specifics of the logistical and process norms of the group. Matters that the teams might consider during this initial period might include: how the team will ensure that meetings start and end on time; how the agenda for the meetings will get decided; who will conduct the meetings; how to make sure that the group stays focused on its task; how to inform those missing meetings about what has happened; and the like.

The goals of the group will become clearer as the team begins to work through the outcomes that can be anticipated as an outgrowth of their work together. For some people, personal growth from the study aspects of the curriculum will be most important. For others, immediate and short-term changes will be most important. For still others, the prospect of long-term changes or the likelihood of new ways of thinking will be the sustaining force which keeps them interested and motivated.

After the team has met for several sessions, the group norms should be revisited and either reaffirmed or revised. Later, as the group members bond with one another, other issues may arise, for example: how to handle cliques; how to deal with difficult people; and how to manage disagreements in making decisions. After several meetings, members of the S2K team usually begin to sense that they are no longer simply a collection of individuals but that they are collectively working towards common goals in an agreed upon manner. All the same, questions about the norms and processes of the group may come again in the future. The facilitator should explicitly schedule periodic opportunities for the group to return to these issues and review whether the existing norms and processes are still effective or are in need of revision.

3. Attention to Outcomes

This early period, during which people are getting used to the S2K meeting format and to one another, is also the time for the group to develop its own goals and expectations for what it can accomplish over the long term as well as for each meeting. There are four types of outcomes that might be expected from the team's work. The first is personal growth, including a profound sense of accomplishment in developing a deeper understanding of synagogue and prayer. The second is the variety of small changes ("low-hanging fruit") which can be made quickly and easily, whether by someone on the team or

delegated to someone in a position of authority in the synagogue. These will give everyone a sense of what is possible and of how small things can make a big difference. The third type of outcome is the more comprehensive new projects or initiatives. These require planning and consultation with others; the team may want to delegate the actual implementation of these initiatives to other individuals and synagogue entities. Most important is the fourth outcome: new ways of thinking which shift the culture of the synagogue and the way its congregants see its purpose and operations.

Team Outcomes

Personal growth

Low-hanging fruit

Projects or initiatives

New ways of thinking

4. Relationships with Other Synagogue Entities and Congregants

The S2K team exists within the current synagogue context. Team members should be clear about their role and relationships with other synagogue entities such as the board, committees, and auxiliaries. They should also understand their relationship to the clergy, educators, other synagogue professionals, and synagogue staff. In some congregations, the team is regarded as a portfolio of the board and reports to the board routinely as do other portfolios. In other congregations, the team is seen as a board task force or a think-tank that reports to the board periodically. An early task of the team should be to initiate discussion with the Board and other committees about how the team will work in relation to them. A similar discussion about roles, responsibilities, expectations, and boundaries should be initiated with the professionals in the synagogue. Especially in large synagogues, it is important that staff who are responsible for management, administration, education, public information, and other functions understand what the S2K team is doing and how it might affect their own work.

Team members should assiduously spread the word about S2K to congregants. In some synagogues, the work of the team is widely publicized to the congregation in bulletins and from the *bima*. In other congregations, S2K readings are made available for distribution. Some teams make individual presentations to synagogue auxiliaries, or occasionally invite board members, committee chairs, or other leaders to participate in S2K meetings. Team members may also introduce parts of the S2K meeting format into other meetings that they attend. Team members should regularly devote time to deciding together how they will spread the word to others in the congregation about what they are doing and thinking.

COORDINATING THE S2K TEAM

Coordinating Roles

Facilitator(s)

Content Specialist(s)

Meeting Organizer(s)

Chronicler(s)

During its first meetings, the team should decide together how to plan and conduct its meetings. They may choose to delegate the planning responsibility to a small group or to a single facilitator. Alternatively, before the team meets for the first time, a small planning group can review the entire curriculum and make provisional decisions about what to do at each meeting, and then discuss the entire year's agenda with the team during its first meetings.

There are several roles which should be assumed by team members in order to facilitate the planning and conduct of meetings.

Facilitator(s)

In order to help the group function effectively, each team needs one or more facilitators who should have an understanding of group dynamics and skill in making appropriate interventions. A facilitator:

- Creates the foundation for working together—clarifying roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This process is more intensive early in the life of the group, but norms must be revisited occasionally. The facilitator judges when it is necessary to engage team members in discussions about these roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

Attributes of a Skilled Facilitator

Ability to listen closely

Ability to remain neutral and objective

Genuine interest in people's issues

An optimistic can-do attitude

Collaborative style that prefers win-win to win-lose

Appreciation of others' time and effort

Ability to adjust flow of conversation to satisfy needs and accomplish tasks

- Organizes into an agenda those activities from the curriculum which are appropriate for the team. The facilitator assigns responsibilities for different parts of the meeting to various team members in advance of upcoming meetings.

- Manages group processes during the meeting. This includes starting and ending the meetings on time, keeping the group on target and on task, ensuring that participants are engaged and involved, attending to the team environment, and being responsive to interpersonal dynamics.

- Encourages awareness of and reflection on group processes. This might mean appending a discussion about group process to a meeting, or perhaps devoting an entire meeting to such a discussion. It might also include calling attention to the successes and achievements of the group and celebrating the milestones attained along the way.

- Moves the team towards its desired outcomes in terms of implementing "low-hanging fruit," organizing comprehensive projects and encouraging new ways of thinking. This means helping the team think through how each of these outcomes will be achieved.

Content Specialist(s)

Content Specialists are people who have been assigned, in advance, to prepare for the meeting by reviewing the material, and planning the objectives and discussion scope. Initially, the clergy may take the lead in explaining con-

tent until team members begin to feel comfortable taking on this function when they are familiar with the curriculum resources. This responsibility can be rotated among team members.

Meeting Organizer(s)

Meeting Organizers manage logistics such as food arrangements, room setup, and sending reminder notices or e-mails to team members. This assignment may be rotated with each unit.

- **Food arrangements.** Eating together is a very big part of any S2K study session. Personal connections and spiritual community are deepened when team members break bread and join in the ritual blessings together. The team may decide to order prepared platters, have potlucks, or provide snacks. The team should decide what will work best, and the meeting organizer should facilitate it.
- **Room arrangements.** These are as important as food in sending signals about the ambiance of the meeting. Some teams like to meet in a lounge with comfortable chairs. Others prefer a room with small round tables. One large table often inhibits informal and casual exchange of ideas and should be avoided if possible.
- **Meeting notification and follow-up.** It is very helpful for the organizer to send e-mail or phone reminders until the habit of team meetings is established. The meeting organizer is also responsible for calling people who missed a meeting to fill them in on what happened and let them know that their continued involvement is important to others.

Chronicler(s)

Chroniclers are note-takers. Because the S2K team process is complex, it is helpful to have one or more people in charge of maintaining the group memory in writing.

- **Keeping the group memory.** At each session, someone should be assigned to take notes of the discussions that can be distributed to team members. These notes become the archives of the team and can be used in a variety of ways to communicate with the rest of the congregation.
- **Creating a Reminder Portfolio.** S2K strongly encourages every team to keep a Reminder Portfolio. The Portfolio may include ideas for “low-hanging fruit,” projects, or for new ways of thinking. These ideas may emerge either spontaneously or as a planned outcome of activities. The Reminder Portfolio should be updated regularly and be available at meetings. Some teams may wish to keep their Portfolio on butcher paper or a large pad, so that it can be readily displayed during meetings; others may prefer a smaller written format, and may distribute an updated version at every meeting or at each unit’s conclusion.

HOW ARE TEAM MEETINGS PLANNED?

Most S2K teams decide on a two-and-one-half hour monthly meeting, but many find that this is not enough time in which to conclude a satisfying discussion, especially if they choose to eat a meal together. They often extend the time to three or more hours in order not to feel rushed. Some teams move to bi-weekly meetings. Some alternate shorter evening meetings with occasional longer Sunday morning meetings.

Whoever plans the team meetings should:

1. Review this Facilitation Guide and the Notes to the Facilitator which precede each unit.
2. Reach a decision about how many meetings will be devoted to the upcoming unit.
3. Make selections from among the readings, discussions, or other activities.
4. Assign individuals to take responsibility for particular activities, as appropriate.

Planning an S2K Meeting

- 1. Review facilitator guidelines for the unit
- 2. Review readings and activities
- 3. Decide on opening ritual
- 4. Decide on check-in format
- 5. Decide on readings or activities
- 6. Make working agenda with time estimates
- 7. Remind people of meeting
- 8. Arrange for food
- 9. Arrive early to check room arrangements and supplies
- 10. Greet people as they enter

5. Plan the opening ritual, either your own or selected from the suggestions below. You may want to assign the responsibility for the opening ritual to someone else.

6. Devise the appropriate “check-in,” either your own or from the suggestions provided. Note that a large team might divide into smaller groups if team members want more time for check-in.

7. Plan for “process checks” or personal reflections on how the meetings are going, either as part of each meeting or every two or three meetings.

8. Plan the closing ritual. You may want to assign this responsibility to someone else.

9. Create a working agenda with a rough approximation of the time devoted to each activity. This should be posted or distributed and then reviewed at the start of the meeting.

Well-run meetings that move smoothly and allow everyone to share their emotional and spiritual selves as well as their thinking and decision-making selves are a joy to experience. They exemplify spiritual community and serve as a model for how other synagogue meetings might be conducted. The S2K meeting framework can create this sense of “meeting well-being.”

S2K team meetings, like other meetings, may encounter unexpected bumpiness. It falls to the facilitator to recognize such problems and either deal with them directly or help the group deal with them.

S2K team meetings should feel different from typical meetings in that everyone should be attentive to each other’s feelings and to the dynamics of the team as it works together. Members should strive to resolve tensions rather than merely enduring or complaining about them. The team should value respectful speaking, listening, collaborating, and reaching closure.

The team itself should be a microcosm of a lived spiritual community.

HOW ARE TEAM MEETINGS CONDUCTED?

Running an S2K Meeting

- 1. Arrange to greet people as they enter
- 2. Start meeting on time
- 3. Schedule time to eat before, during, or after meetings
- 4. Initiate opening ritual
- 5. Conduct check-in
- 6. Review agenda and time estimates. Solicit comments
- 7. Discuss/decide. Record views. Add to Reminder Portfolio. Keep it in public view
- 8. Reflect on process/evaluate meeting
- 9. Discuss next steps
- 10. Initiate closing ritual
- 11. End on time

S2K MEETING FORMAT

S2K Meeting Format

- Food
- Opening ritual or prayer
- Check-in
- Readings, discussion, activities
- Process check
- Closing ritual or prayer

Food

Food encourages social connections. Surrounding a meal with the ancient blessings invests eating and enjoying one another's company with Jewish meaning.

Opening Ritual or Prayer

Begin every meeting with a prayer or ritual. Opening in this fashion marks the gathering as a Jewish spiritual occasion and formally announces the start of the meeting. Depending on the wishes of the group, prayer may be interwoven into the course of your meeting: a *d'var Torah* after checking in; prayers before or after study; the *Birkat Hamazon* after eating; a spontaneous prayer or *niggun* for the Concluding Ritual.

Check-in

This may take from a few minutes to more than half-an-hour. People have the opportunity to share with one another what is happening in their lives, whether it be celebratory and joyous or sad and stressful.

Readings/Discussion/Activities

These occupy most of the meeting time. The specifics of what is to be studied are worked out ahead of time by those who plan the meeting. From time to time, during study time, decisions or action plans are made about spreading the word, trying out "low-hanging fruit," creating the vision, or formulating a project.

Process Check

Periodically, the team should pause in its work to assess its own process and to address any concerns or issues members bring up. This is often called a "process check."

Closing Ritual or Prayer

Teams usually end their meetings with a quick go-round of "last words" to elicit how people are feeling, followed by a simple closing circle, song, poem, or short prayer.

Part Two: Facilitator Tools

MANAGING GROUP PROCESS

Develop team ground rules

At the beginning of the team process, develop with the team a set of commitments and standards that members agree to uphold. These may address issues such as confidentiality, punctuality, and attendance. Provide copies of the guidelines to all team members, or post them in a prominent place in the meeting room. Review and reaffirm these occasionally.

Solicit frequent feedback

Ask the group for feedback on how the meeting is going or what can be done to improve group process. This might be done routinely and briefly at the end of team meetings. Or, a longer review of process might be planned for every few meetings. This enables you to make corrections before problems get out of hand. It also enables everyone to participate in team process.

Maintain a balance between process and product

Your group will likely be composed of both “process” people (those who would like to study and reflect without making decisions), and “product” people (those who have little tolerance for anything that doesn’t appear to move towards decisions and action). A well-functioning group needs a balance of both. Help the group strike that balance by acknowledging that people have different preferences, and encouraging group members to be open to new ideas and ways of working.

Allow the team to manage the agenda rather than the other way around

Occasionally, the team will deviate from the planned agenda. If discussion of a particular issue is animated and “hot,” don’t cut it short. If someone has a pressing issue, you may need to take time to address it. Use your judgment and group feedback to make these decisions.

Maximize group participation

Make sure that all people who want to speak are invited to do so. Encourage participation from less verbal members. Be willing to curb the input of highly enthusiastic or aggressive individuals when needed. If a topic seems particularly interesting for participants, break into smaller groups in order to ensure that everyone has time to talk.

Encourage respect for one another

Encourage group members to avoid comments that are negative or seem to be personal attacks. Remind the group to critique the idea and not the individual who proposes it. Avoid *lashon ha-ra*, the “evil tongue,” by refraining from gossiping or maligning the character of those not in the room as well as those who are present.

Manage transitions between agenda items carefully

Listen and watch for signals that the group is ready to move from one agenda item to the next. Make sure that everyone is ready for the transition and that you move on together. Clarify the connections between the items.

INVOLVING OTHERS WITH S2K IDEAS & PROCESSES

The Synagogue 2000 team is the clergy-lay group that is engaged most intensively in an on-going conversation about deepening spiritual community within the congregation.

Talking: S2K team members should be taking their spiritual community experience into the synagogue—talking informally with friends and acquaintances, making formal explanations to their synagogue groups, and ensuring that the professionals in the synagogue, board members, committee members, and others are regularly updated about S2K discussions.

Demonstrating: In addition to presentations about S2K, team members might introduce S2K readings or exercises to various groups in the congregation, and involve them in discussions similar to those in S2K meetings. Handouts of S2K materials could be made available.

Introducing the S2K meeting format: S2K members might suggest that other meetings follow an S2K format—at a minimum, do an opening and closing ritual and a brief check-in.

IMPLEMENTING LOW-HANGING FRUIT

What is “low-hanging fruit” and why is it important? By low-hanging fruit, we mean ideas for small changes that can be easily made within a synagogue setting.

These ideas will emerge from team discussions and will be captured in the Reminder Portfolio that each team keeps. Before making decisions about these low-hanging fruit ideas, it is important to pause and ask two questions. Sometimes what appear to be easy-to-make changes may need further exploration, either by the S2K team or by those in positions of responsibility. Therefore, answers should be sought as to who will be affected by this change, and who else should be asked their views before it is implemented.

Low-hanging fruit ideas may be carried out by clergy, other professionals, or lay leaders. They may be referred to committees or groups who already have responsibilities in a particular area, or be presented for broader discussion.

When the S2K team makes suggestions for low-hanging fruit to others in leadership roles or to the congregation, it signifies that the team is able to move forward on changes or ideas that have been waiting for someone to take the initiative. Further, it assures members of the S2K team that they can have some immediate, tangible influence without waiting till the end of a long study process. Finally, initiating small changes in congregational life can become occasions for explaining S2K ideas to many people.

In working through the various curricular units, the S2K team or one of its mini-teams may decide that a project—a coordinated series of activities much more comprehensive and long-term than low-hanging fruit—is needed in a particular area.

The entire team should agree on the nature of these activities. They should then formulate a proposal which includes the goals and rationale for such a project, a list of the activities and tasks to be completed, suggestions as to who might be responsible for taking the next steps, and even a desired time line. This proposal should become an S2K team recommendation to be considered by the board or other synagogue entities.

After approval, the project proposal could be implemented by the S2K team itself or, more likely, referred to a steering committee or to an existing group to work out the details and to oversee implementation as well as the solicitation of feedback and assessment data.

- *Shehechyanu*
- Offer blessings for one another
- Reading of a poem, saying, or quotation
- *Chevruta* (partner) study of one of S2K values (see “Partnership” section, page P-13.)
- Personal reflections
- Silent reaction to poem, saying, quotation, or reflection
- Moment of silence
- Guided meditation
- *Niggun* or song

Music is a powerful tool to help people begin to focus on the task at hand, and leave behind the hectic and busy world from which they have come. It is important that the music be easily accessible, and if there are words to the song, that there be a song sheet with easy-to-read transliteration. The last thing you want to do with an opening ritual is alienate someone from the start, by having them feel uncomfortable. The goal is, in fact, to begin together, in harmony as a community. You might also use a tape so that people can sing along. As a closing ritual, the melody almost takes on a new life. The community who gives voice to the melody has just shared a couple of hours of deepening their own spiritual community, and if you listen to each other, which is of course what this is all about, you might even hear the difference! You might like to try singing *Hallelu*, *Hinei Ma Tov*, or a wordless *niggun*.

MANAGING LONGER-TERM PROJECTS

RESOURCES FOR OPENING OR CLOSING RITUALS

IDEAS FOR
CHECK-IN
"TRIGGERS"

Either go-round or in small groups:

- What has happened to you since we last met?
- What have you left behind to come to this meeting?
- What do you want people to know about how you feel this evening?
- What are your upcoming plans for _____?
- What is a goal you have for yourself for the next [xx] months?
- What is something you have learned recently?
- What recent experience did you have concerning _____ that surprised you?
- What does [holiday, event, date, etc.] mean for you?

IDEAS FOR
REFLECTION &
MEETING
EVALUATIONS

Either oral or written:

- One thing I really liked about today's meeting . . .
- Something that would have made this meeting better for me . . .
- I really appreciated when . . .
- I was dissatisfied with . . .
- Something I learned for the first time was . . .
- A new insight I got was . . .
- Something I will make a top priority is . . .
- Something that I will continue to think about as a result of this meeting is . . .
- I would like more of . . .
- I would like less of . . .
- I wish . . .

STIMULATING GROUP INTERACTION

There are many techniques for studying and discussing in large and small group configurations. One method often used in meetings is a presentation followed by questions from the whole group. This method should be avoided, or used only infrequently. More fruitful discussions—because individuals have more “airtime” and can become more intimate with one another—usually happen when variations of large and small group activities are used in meetings.

Working in a large group:

- All team members may have been asked to read the same passage and come prepared to volunteer their opinions.
- One individual may have been assigned to read and comment on a passage, and arrive prepared to lead a discussion.
- Everyone might read a passage, aloud or silently, and then be polled as to their opinion by having each person talk in turn. This technique is called “Fanning the Room.”
- To stimulate discussion, the facilitator might write a key word on the board and ask everyone for their associations, writing down phrases as they are offered. The facilitator may then cluster or analyze the phrases or ask team members to do so. This technique is called “Webbing.”
- To generate ideas for resolving an issue or making a decision, team members may offer suggestions which are then written on the board without discussion or evaluation. After all suggestions are collected, they are sorted or discussed individually or in clusters. This technique is called “Brainstorming.”
- To give everyone a chance to collect their thoughts before they need to respond to a topic, the facilitator may provide a minute or two of silence where people write down their thoughts or reflections. This technique is called “Quick-writing.”

Working in small groups:

- Members may be assigned to small groups in order to get the proper mix of people in the group. Such groups may be either heterogeneous or homogeneous with respect to a particular attribute or interest.
- Small groups may be self-selected, as in: Everyone who is . . . , Everyone who has this opinion . . . , Everyone who wants . . .
- Small groups may be pairs. Pairs are useful for study or intimate conversation. Triads or foursomes are useful for variety. A group of more than seven people begins to feel like a large group and should be avoided.
- Small groups can work together for a short time—five or ten minutes—or for longer periods. Group members may then return to the larger group to report their views and have further discussion. Or, small groups can work on a topic, return to the larger group for discussion, and reconvene in the

same group, perhaps several times over the course of a number of meetings, for additional conversation.

- Small groups can work together on an issue. Members of this group might then combine with members of another group to work on the next stage of an issue. For instance, “role-alike” groups may come together initially and then re-form into “task groups.” Or, the reverse order may be used. This technique is called “Jigsawing.”

Reporting back to the large group:

Often the entire group wants to hear the main themes or questions raised in the small groups. A conventional but frequently tiresome way to handle this is simply to let each group summarize their discussion. More interesting variations include:

- Each group reports, in turn, the most important, the most surprising, or the highest priority item that they discussed. Groups coming later can indicate their agreement with earlier groups, but should move on to new offerings.
- Each group posts its notes, which everyone has a chance to read. Group members then answer questions or offer a summary of the discussion.
- Each small group joins with another small group (for instance, two pairs talk together, then those four join with another group of four) and together they discuss their commonalities and differences. This combining can continue until the entire large group comes together.

MANAGING INTER- PERSONAL DYNAMICS

What to say to individuals who digress from the topic:

- Paraphrase what the individual said so that he/she knows that they are being heard and understood:

“So, what you’re saying here is . . . ”

“The three points you are making are . . . ”

“How would you summarize what you just said in a sentence or two?”

- Encourage specificity:

“Please say some more about how that might work.”

“Could you give an example?”

- Refocus:

“I thought we had reached closure on that. Help me understand why we are revisiting this now.”

“It seems that we are drifting from our objective. Let’s get back to the topic.”

What to say to individuals who monopolize the conversation:

- Make space for others by saying:

“Excuse me for interrupting, but Sally has been trying to get a word in for a while.”

“I’m sorry, George. I need to stop you for a moment. I want to make sure that everyone gets some airtime. How would you summarize your point?”

“Lucy, you’ve shared a lot of useful information with us today. Let’s stop and hear from some of the other team members who have been rather quiet. What can the rest of you add to what’s been covered so far?”

- Use non-verbal cues to redirect the conversation: use eye contact with people who have been quiet to encourage them to talk. Walk away from the chatty ones and towards the quieter ones.

What to say to individuals who are angry:

Remember that your goal is to help people vent their emotions without insulting, embarrassing, or inflaming others in the meeting. You don’t want to damage individuals, relationships, or the purpose of the team. With these goals in mind, you might:

- Stop and reframe:

“Let me stop you for a moment. It seems that you are (angry, offended, dissatisfied, etc.) with (add). Help us to understand what your concern is and how we can help you address it.”

- Stop and raise awareness:

“Hold on for a minute, folks. Notice what is happening in this discussion. Several people are talking at once. Let’s back up a bit and see where and how we got stuck and what we need to do to refocus.”

- Stop and encourage the expression of feelings:

“Your point is well taken, Daisy. I believe we understand that you want us to do X and not Y. When you continue to repeat it like that, I feel hammered and start to resist the idea. Let’s all listen to one another and consider one another’s ideas openly.”

- Refer back to the objectives, ground rules, and/or tasks. Tactfully point out how someone’s behavior is straying from these agreements.

What to say to individuals who are reticent:

- Ask direct and open questions:

“What are your reactions to . . .”

“I’m interested in how this fits with your perspective.”

“What are some ways we might approach this? What are some possible solutions? What are your concerns?”

- Overtly include others:

“We haven’t heard from this side of the room yet. Let’s give some of the rest of you a chance to respond.”

- Pause. Allow for silence. Say:

“May I ask why you are so quiet today?”

Niggun #1

Dmin

A7

Composer unknown

1
ya babim bam ya ba ba bim bam ya ba bim bam

Dmin

4
ya ba ba yah ba bim bam ya ba bim bam ya ba ba bim bam

A7

Dmin

7
ya ba ba ba ya ba ba ba ba,

Niggun #2

Shlomo Carlebach

1 Amin Dmin
Ya lai lai

3 Amin
lai Ya lai lai lai Ya

6 Bb A7
lai lai lai lai lai lai

10 Dmin
Ya lai lai lai lai

13 Dmin7 C
lai lai lai lai lai lai lai

16 Dmin
lai lai lai lai

Hinei Mah Tov

Folk Melody

1 Cmin
hi - nei ma tov u - ma

3 Fmin Cmin GMaj
na - im she - vet a -

6 Cmin
chim gam ya - chad

9 Cmin Fmin
hi - nei ma - a

12 Cmin GMaj
tov she - vet a - chim gam

15 Cmin
ya - chad.

(English Translation: How good it is for brothers and sisters to be together.)

Hallelu

Based loosely on a Sufi chant

1 Emin
ha - le - lu ha - le - lu ha - le -

4 D Emin
lu

7 D Emin
lu - u ha - le - lu

11 D
ya ha - le - lu - ya - ah ha - le -

15 Emin
lu ha - le - lu - u - yah ha - le - lu -

19 D
yah ha - le - lu - ya - ah ha - le -

23 C D Emin
lu ha - le - lu - u - yah

Part Three: Spreading the Word about S2K

This is a short menu of how some Synagogue 2000 teams have spread the word about Synagogue 2000 and the work they are doing. There is no “one right way” to spread the word. Each Synagogue 2000 team should consider its own situation and decide on the most appropriate ways to share what they are doing. The sections below are divided into: lay leaders, staff, and the congregation-at-large.

This group includes the Board, its officers and members, the chairs and members of standing committees, long-term active and influential members, regardless of what their “official” status is at the moment, as well as the leadership and members of other synagogue groups such as Sisterhood and the PTA.

SPREADING THE WORD TO LAY LEADERS

- Informal and casual conversation between people who know one another is most important. Lay leaders should hear about Synagogue 2000 from their friends who are members of the team and from the clergy. The S2K team might develop “talking points” which answer the questions team members are most often asked so that each team member doesn’t have to “make it up on the spot.”
- Members of the S2K team who are on the Board and on standing committees should intentionally bring up topics and ideas emanating from their S2K discussions during meetings, so that naturally and in the course of doing their work, the Board and committees become aware of the thinking and experiences of the S2K team.
- Members of the Board and of standing committees should be invited to participate, when appropriate, in S2K meetings and, following their visits, asked their reactions and impressions.
- Regularly scheduled updates about what is happening at S2K meetings should be on the agenda of Board meetings.
- From time to time, as appropriate, topics, discussion questions, or exercises from the S2K curriculum can be introduced at meetings of other groups, not simply as “demonstrations” but as forms of involving an ever-widening circle of people in the ideas and message of S2K. These must be selected carefully so that the experiences do not depend on previous knowledge of the S2K context.

SPREADING THE WORD TO PROFESSIONAL & ADMINI- STRATIVE STAFF

In addition to clergy who are likely to be personally participating in S2K meetings, there may be others, such as the Executive Director, the school administrators and teachers, and the administrative and custodial staff who should come to understand what it means to them that their congregation is dedicated to being a spiritual and caring community.

- As with lay leaders, personal and informal conversations among people who know one another or who work together are the most effective and persuasive means of sharing S2K experiences.
- Presentations about S2K, or the introduction of S2K discussion topics, might also be appropriate at staff meetings, trainings, or at other forums.
- An essential aspect of S2K is the creation of a welcoming ambiance, both in the physical aspects of the building, and in the way people treat newcomers and one another. People should be made more aware of how this goal is translated into the small activities of daily life in the synagogue. For example, congregations that include a *Mi Sheberakh* or other healing prayer on Shabbat might invite the names of sick people in the families of their staff members, so that their names too can be included in the prayer. It means a lot to staff members, whether Jewish or not, to know that the congregation cares about their families. Staff members should be asked if they would mind being identified at the time of the prayer, e.g., “Joan Brown, the mother of Kaye Smith, our receptionist in the front office.”

SPREADING THE WORD TO CONGREGANTS

Congregants who come to Friday night or Shabbat services may hear about Synagogue 2000 from the pulpit, either from the rabbi or cantor. For example, if small changes—“low-hanging fruit”—are made in the services or the music, the congregation should be brought in on the Synagogue 2000 thinking behind the changes and be given opportunities to react and respond.

- People can be asked to take home “reaction forms” and mail them back. Similarly, if they are met by greeters, or find new “learning about the services” materials on their seats, or experience a different way of organizing the *Oneg*, they should understand why these changes are being made and have a chance to tell someone how they feel about the changes.
- Several S2K teams have set up a table in the lobby on which they put copies of selected readings of the S2K material. In addition to having them available as handouts, they have posted provocative questions or quotations on the walls to stimulate conversations and informal discussions. Often, they station several team members at the table to greet whoever comes to look at the material and to answer questions.
- An S2K booth might be set up in the lobby, where congregants after a service, or after a Sunday School “drop-off” of their children, can get information on all the ways adults may find worship, social action, and study oppor-

tunities, including a comment sheet on what sort of spiritual, study, or support groups at temple the person would welcome for themselves or others.

- One S2K team printed buttons for knowledgeable people to wear saying “We are a Synagogue 2000 congregation. Ask us what that means.”
- Synagogue bulletins contain information about Synagogue 2000 issues and ideas on a regular basis.
- The S2K team may want to think about planning one, or a series, of congregation-wide activities that would demonstrate the S2K style. Team members might want to conduct, for the congregation, a special service which introduces congregants to S2K practices.
- Any synagogue event or gathering, from Religious School events to fundraising dinners, can be given an S2K “overlay.” Greeters should be everywhere (not just collecting money); printed materials (invitations, flyers) should reflect the spiritual dimension of the event; talks, and/or speeches should include reference to Torah and God.

