**Connecting to the Jewish People**

**Kesher Amiti Activity (1 Hour)**

1. **Open activity with questions: What are the ways that individual Jews connect? What do they have in common? Are they part of the same story? What makes the Jewish people one community?**

**Object**: To demonstrate how Jewish individuals can connect to each other on many levels and in many unexpected ways. Not every person will connect to another in the same way. Everyone has a unique story that can connect with another’s to unite and bond as a community without being uniform or the same. Everyone brings his/her chapter to the unique and on-going story of the Jewish people.

**Activity**: One long paper is presented in the center of the room on a long table. Participants gather around the table and are given 4 different pastel colors. Give the following instructions: Draw four circles about the size of your palm, on the paper using different colors.

* Write your name (first or last name, in English or Hebrew if possible) and a one word meaning beside it.
* Write in another circle next to it, the name of a value that is significant to you.
* Write in another circle, next to it, the answer in one word–

“Israel for me is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

* Write in another circle next to it, a memory connected to the Jewish world.
* Take a moment and walk around the table to look at other people's circles.
* Try to find connections between your answers and others'- no matter the question you and they were relating to
* Draw connecting lines between your circles and other participants' circles without drawing over other people's circles and **give each line** a new **title** that reflects the essence of this connection.

1. Ask: What can we see here? What is the story of this group made up of individuals previously from different places?
2. Invite each participant to introduce their name and a title of a connecting line of their choice. Do not go around in a circle, allow people to talk at their own pace. After a person speaks, s/he can invite the person with the connecting line across the paper to speak. If there are participants who do not want to share or take part ask them just to introduce their name.
3. Write the titles of the connecting lines on the board.
4. Ask the participants to look at the words of the board and come up with the names of “categories of connections” that can describe the way individual Jews relate to each other.
5. Introduce BH six categories of connection (= peoplehood pillars), explain them in easy terms and show how some already exist in the titles:
6. Collective memory,
7. Israel as a multi-dimensional term (Land, homeland, State, longing…),
8. Jewish faith and practice (ie holidays, Shabbat…)
9. Creativity and Culture (text, music, art, dance, Judaica, etc),
10. Values (Tikkun olam, Charity, visiting the sick, feeding the poor),
11. Hebrew and Jewish languages.

The meaning of peoplehood is to belong to **an imagined extended family** that shares multiple deep structures, not merely a single core. Not everyone relates to the same structures in a similar way: some hold one or two, some hold more, some view particular structures as crucial that others view differently. The importance of the peoplehood connection is therefore to highlight our common ground in a Jewish world that sometimes emphasizes our differences.

**Conclusions:** Today we saw how even with our own individual stories, there are complex and multi-dimensional ways in which we connect both and with the larger story of the Jewish people.

Screen the short video: [You Are Part of the Story](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8_8z2quiBs) to close the workshop and ask participants to share final views of the film based on the Kesher Amiti activity. Explain the title of the workshop: “Kesher Amiti” means “A Meaningful or Real Connection” AND “ A People or Community Connection”.