

Limits of Labels:
Addressing the Challenges to Jewish Unity

"AM YISRAEL" CAN WE CALL OURSELVES ONE?

INTRO: (Read aloud)

While we may all feel a pressure to label ourselves, maybe there is a way to move away from that. A way to truly feel unified and part of a Jewish Nation, a Jewish Peoplehood.

(Same as in Part 1: We are now going to assess various quotes and videos that will cultivate a greater discussion around this topic. There will be a couple of guiding questions in between the sources along with ones that create a discussion around the topic as a whole.)

QUOTES: (Read Aloud)

"Both those who meticulously define subgroups and those who refuse to play the labeling game take denominational designations way too seriously. If the recent and much-discussed Pew Research Center study of American Jewry is any indication, American Jews treat denominational affiliation as a function of identity and even use the terms "identity" and "affiliation"— two distinct concepts — almost interchangeably. For Pew, the opposite of a denominationally identified Jew is an unaffiliated Jew." - [Elli Fischer](#)

"The bonds of Jewish peoplehood are not unbreakable. If we keep dividing ourselves, pushing away that which we don't like and clinging only to what's comfortable, we'll wake up one day without a Jewish people. We'll have small circles of like-minded people, but no eternal bond, linking us through time and space." - [Samantha Vinokor](#)

"...I am arguing for a perspective through which all of Jewish life is seen as constitutive of the broader Jewish collective, of Jewish Peoplehood. If we hold onto a Jewish Peoplehood consciousness, we won't consider any of these issues without bearing in mind that the Jewish People is a global collective, with a multi-faceted civilization that provide sources of inspiration and resources for the future, for all Jews wherever they are." - [Clare Goldwater](#)

WATCH:

Why am I a Jew? - Rabbi Sacks

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=380&v=CAbiFbpQP8o

Strong Together

Lack of Jewish Unity is the Source of Anti-Semitism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ofr6PtsSS0>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Through your discussions, do you feel that while your opinions may differ, you have many of the same questions and issues as your counterparts?

How may that help us to look beyond our own personal stance and see eye-to-eye with others?

Why do non-Jews see us as one Jewish nation (i.e. anti-semitism is directed at all of us - not one group versus another) but we ourselves don't feel this unity?

If we take away the ability to label, would you still be able to describe your Jewish identity?

What really makes you Jewish? Do you feel part of a "Jewish Peoplehood" as it's portrayed above?

How would you describe the concept of "Jewish Peoplehood" in your own words?

How can we maintain these labels while still seeing ourselves as a "Jewish Peoplehood"?

How does recognizing Jewish Peoplehood as a central component of Jewish identity help us better connect with the Jewish state? And how does our connection to the Jewish state of Israel help us better appreciate our inclusion in the global Jewish peoplehood?

Strong Together