

Document B: Buddhism Enhances Judaism

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Teacher Spotlight: Rabbi Sheila Weinberg

Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg is a senior teacher at the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, and serves as a spiritual director to rabbis, cantors and educators. She has served as a Hillel director, day school teacher, and congregational rabbi, including 13 years as the rabbi at the Jewish Community of Amherst. She is a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, a major contributor to the Kol Haneshamah prayerbook series, and is the author of *Surprisingly Happy: An Atypical Religious Memoir*.

Overview

As you read and listen to the materials below, please pull out the arguments Rabbi Weinberg makes for or against the blending of Judaism with Buddhism. Please also consider these questions as you read:

- How does Rabbi Weinberg think about and understand Jewish meditation?
- What are the sources of her beliefs?
- What does she think about Judaism's relationship with Buddhism?
- Why do you suspect she feels the way that he does? What factors do you think shaped her perspectives?

Please skim:

- Weinberg, Shelia Peltz. 2012. *Surprisingly Happy. An Atypical Religious Memoir*. White River Press. p. 83-87.
- Weinberg, Shelia Peltz. 1999. "Meditating as a Practicing Jew," In Avram Davis. *The Way of the Flame: A Guide to the Forgotten Mystical Tradition of Jewish Meditation*. Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishers, p. 139-148.
- Weinberg, Sheila Peltz. *Torah through the Lens of Mindfulness Practice*. Unpublished document written for the Institute for Jewish Spirituality's Jewish Meditation Teacher Training.

Video

Mindfulness Practice and the Jewish Year by Rabbi Sheila Weinberg (Listen from beginning to 4:15)

<http://dharmaseed.org/retreats/836%5D>

OR

Introduction to Contemplative Jewish Prayer by Rabbi Jeff Roth (who co-teaches with Rabbi Weinberg): <http://www.awakenedheartproject.org/podcasts> (listen from beginning to about minute 3)