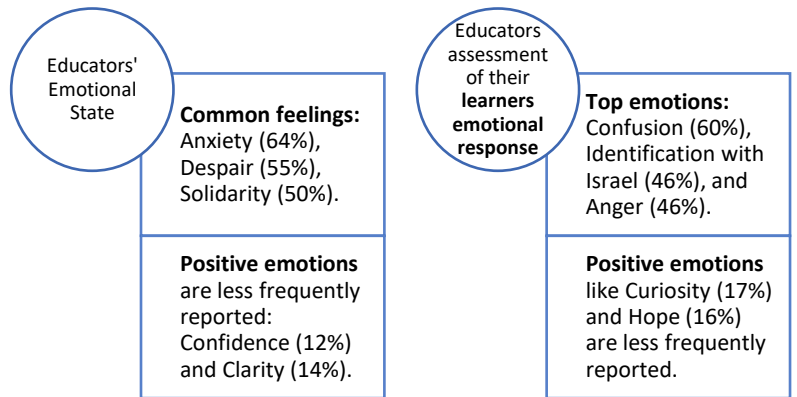


# A Call for Action: Jewish Education on Israel – Post-October 7th

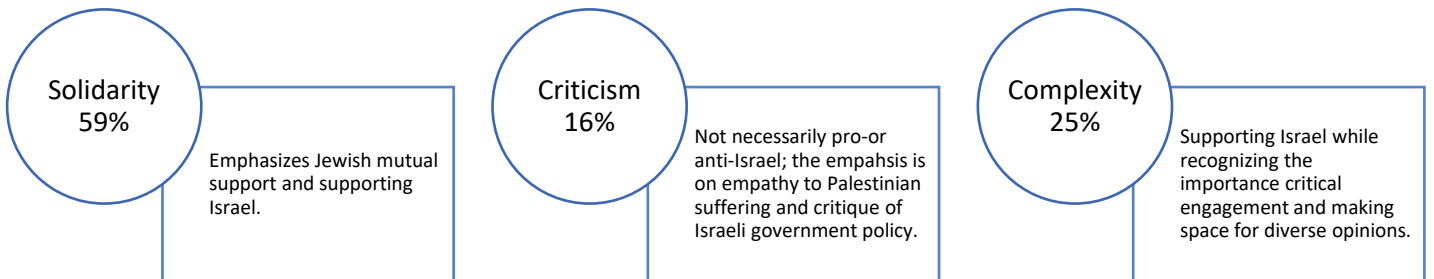
This research offers a lens into the challenges and needs of Jewish educators during a historic moment. The research is conducted in partnership of the Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education, The Jewish Education Project and M<sup>2</sup>: The Institute for Experiential Jewish Education with support from the Jim Joseph Foundation. 1281 educators surveyed, in-depth interviews and focus groups. Full report available: <https://tinyurl.com/falloutreport>

## Why do we need a new educational strategy?

In the wake of the October 7th, Jewish educators face unprecedented challenges triggering anxiety, confusion, and the pressing need to navigate deeply divisive issues, all while seeking to strengthen their learners' relationship to one another, Jewish community and the Jewish People. We draw on the research to offer an educational guide to transforming this moment of profound disruption into an opportunity for healing, understanding, Jewish connection, mutual support and commitment.



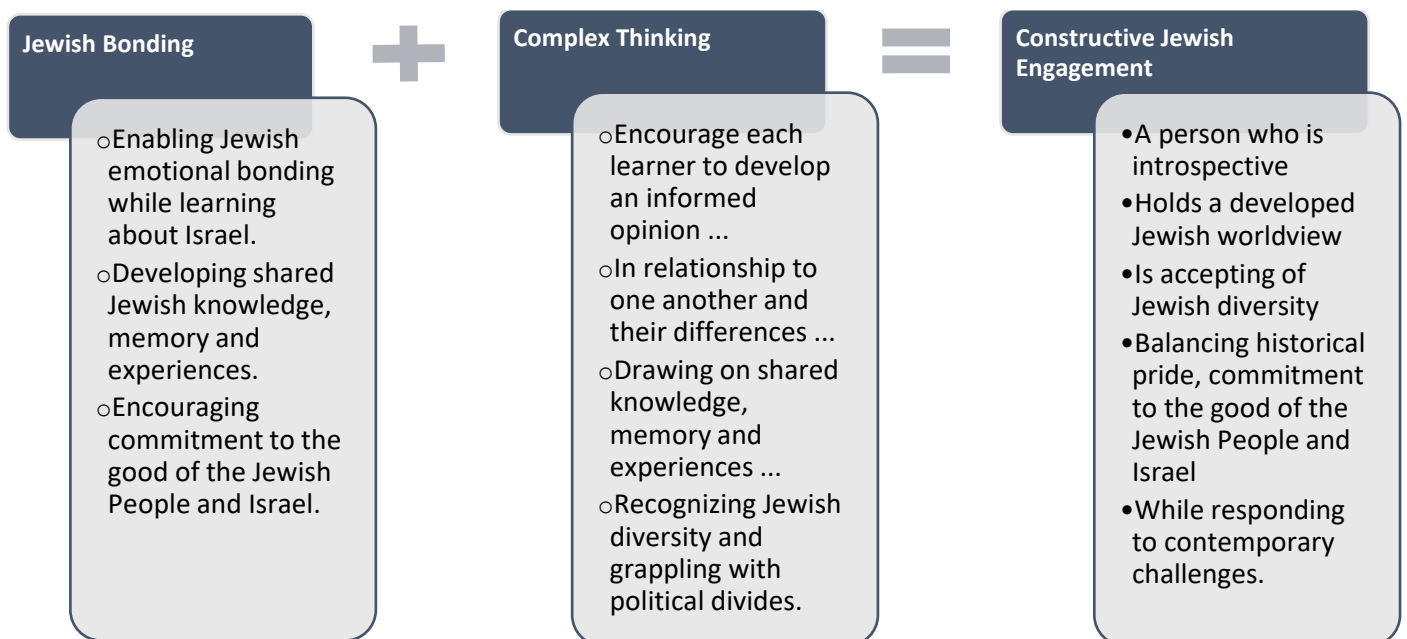
## Three educational strategies are currently utilized by Jewish educators



## Beyond Solidarity or Criticism → Integrative Jewish Education

An exclusive focus on *Solidarity* or *Criticism* leaves educators unprepared for responding to crisis. On the other hand, while valuable for fostering open dialogue and critical thinking, *Complexity* alone does not cultivate a deep emotional commitment to the Jewish People and Israel. **The essential goal of Jewish education is to inspire both a thoughtful understanding of diverse perspectives and a heartfelt commitment to Jewish community and the good of the global Jewish People. Therefore, we propose an integrative approach prioritizing Jewish emotional bonding driven by complex thinking.**

## How does an integrative approach to Israel in Jewish Education work?



**Jewish emotional bonding** focuses on feelings of connection and commitment to one's Jewish community and the historical and global Jewish People. Bonding experiences are rooted in shared history, knowledge, rituals, and community life, which contribute to a sense of belonging and pride.

<b>Key Elements</b>	<p><b>Shared History and Rituals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrating Jewish and Israeli national holidays, singing ancient songs or prayers evoking the Jewish connection to Israel and modern Israeli music, or studying traditional and contemporary texts of which the Jewish relationship to Israel is central.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transcendent Moments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivating Peoplehood consciousness, rooted in belonging to a global and historic people through ceremonies, story telling shared reflections, or life cycle events into which Israel is weaved that evoke a collective experience and deep emotional connection.</li> </ul> <p><b>Supportive Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivating spaces where students feel seen, understood, and connected through shared Jewish experiences in which Israeli is present.</li> </ul>	<b>Example Practices</b>	<p><b>Ceremonies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collective Jewish experiences, such as Yom HaZikaron (Memorial Day) or Yom HaAtzmaut (Independence Day).</li> </ul> <p><b>Social Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support communities in Israel or local Jewish communities in need in the wake of October 7th reinforcing students' sense of collective responsibility and tikkun olam.</li> </ul> <p><b>Small Group Discussions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners share personal connections to Israel bonding through shared and personal Jewish stories and their experiences with Israel.</li> </ul> <p><b>Story Telling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearing personal stories connected to Israel's founding or major events deepening students' personal sense of history and belonging with their families, the Jewish community and Israel.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaborative Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating murals or songs that represent their connection to Israel enabling learners to express and celebrate their collective Jewish identity and bond with Israel.</li> </ul>
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**Complex thinking** drives Jewish emotional bonding by engaging students in reflective engagement on Israel, acknowledging diverse perspectives and fostering open dialogue on challenging issues.

<b>Key Elements</b>	<p><b>Engagement with Multiple Narratives:</b> Encouraging students to formulate their personal stance while considering diverse Jewish, Israeli, and Palestinian narratives.</p> <p><b>Media Literacy and Contextual Knowledge:</b> Teaching students to assess media portrayals of Israel and its context.</p> <p><b>Dialogue and Empathy:</b> Promoting respectful discussion about Israel, even when opinions differ, to foster understanding.</p>	<b>Example Practices</b>	<p><b>Role-Play Exercises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners adopt different viewpoints on key issues related to Israel encouraging understanding of diverse perspectives within and outside the Jewish community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Media Workshops</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing how post-October 7<sup>th</sup> related topics touching on Israel and antisemitism are covered in the media promoting critical thinking about sources and biases, diverging narratives and one's personal position.</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel Discussions and Debate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearing and debating diverse viewpoints on Israel related topics, students engage directly with one another and the speakers, developing their understanding of other's opinion's while developing their own.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflective Journaling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore evolving thoughts and questions on Israel, reflecting on one's relationship with Israel, and personal beliefs and assumptions.</li> </ul>
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**Acquiring knowledge while engaging in complex thinking drives Jewish emotional bonding.**

Emotional Knowledge	Peoplehood Knowledge	Historical Knowledge	Contextual Knowledge	Political and Moral Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostering the ability to listen and consider others opinions. Gaining knowledge of other's opinions, developing empathy and connection while deepening understanding of one's Jewish personal story.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning about the diversity of the global and historical Jewish People with a focus on their expression in ancient and modern Israel and the diversity of Israeli Jewish society. Am I part of this ancient and ongoing story?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placing issues of concern to the Jewish People in historical context. For example, exploring the Zionist claim that a Jewish homeland is an essential response to anti-Semitism. Was the claim correct then, is it correct now?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing understanding of contemporary issues and media literacy related to Israel and other Jewish concerns, fostering critical analysis and informed perspectives that feed discussion and debate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging learners in ethical discussions about Israel's policies and global role. Engabling them to exploring in conversation with others the interplay of values, responsibilities, and geopolitical realities.</li> </ul>