

We just got through the holiday season, and no, I don't mean the *Yamim Noraim*, the Days of Awe. Rather, January/February is that time of year when many of us breathe a sigh of relief after the December dilemmas of navigating Jewish identity in the midst of majority Christian symbolism everywhere. In December, it often feels like Judaism is defined only in negative terms: we're *not* Christian, the songs on the radio aren't our songs, the holiday isn't our holiday.

If we haven't been careful to provide consistent, positive Jewish experience, by the end of December, Judaism can seem to our children (or maybe secretly to some of us adults) as only a series of deprivations. And why should anyone want to be Jewish if it just means missing out on fun? In a recent offensively titled but thought-provoking piece in *Tablet Magazine*, "[How Boomers Ruined American Judaism](#)," the author points out, "If continuity is what you care about, then be happy and proudly Jewish—or at least try and learn how. Start by loving it yourself... And maybe even start studying something."

Fortunately for anyone who might want to take that charge, this winter holds an abundance of learning opportunities to create meaningful Jewish connections. For those looking to learn (or remember) the basics, we'll be starting a 10-week Introduction to Judaism course this month, as well as a free 5-session crash course for those who would like to learn to read Hebrew. In February, I hope to start a training for anyone interested in learning to lay-lead parts of the Shabbat morning service. And for those who want to wrestle with one of the more daunting topics in contemporary Jewish life, I'll be leading a three-part program on how anti-Semitism plays out in current discourse about Israel. On the Sunday of Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, all are welcome to check out our multi-generational learning event on social justice.

So if December left you feeling like Judaism was more of an absence than a presence, I invite you to shift that narrative by digging into some Jewish learning. I guarantee that no matter how much you think you know, there's always more to learn.