



JEWISH WELLNESS: A PATH TO WHOLENESS

Move. Nourish. Engage. Three simple words that capture the PJCC's life-enhancing philosophy toward wellness. We move to develop strength, prevent disease, and build physical and emotional resilience. We nourish our bodies with wholesome foods, soothing spa services, and stimulating activities that promote healing and energy. We engage our minds with intellectual and spiritual exploration that results in personal fulfillment, empathy, and understanding.

The culminating result is wellness of body, mind, and spirit.

Jewish tradition and practices hold important tenets about wellness that people of all faiths, backgrounds, and cultures can embrace. Jewish wisdom encourages us to care for our bodies, to eat well, and to exercise regularly. It invites us to engage in activities, like meditation and chanting, which open the heart, cultivate compassion, and promote serenity and calm. It bids us to engage in intellectual and spiritual learning to help guide us on our life's path. Jewish wisdom teachings and practices support us to live flourishing, resourced, integrated resilient lives with a joyful sense of balance and well-being.

Among the Jewish Wellness programs offered at the PJCC, visitors will find *Yoga and Wholeness with a Jewish Twist*, in which participants reflect on selected Jewish teachings through the poses of yoga. On seasonal nature hikes led by noted Jewish environmental educator Deborah Newbrun, hikers learn to appreciate and reflect upon the natural world and the bounty of the earth; and nutritional cooking classes held by *PJCC Wellness Coach Jeannie Solomon* encourage healthy alternatives to popular dishes.

Wellness is also illustrated in our commitment to *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) in which we touch lives and heal hearts. Practices include *The Pink Ribbon Program*, an innovative post-rehabilitation workout protocol for breast cancer survivors. Year-round in the Justice Garden, community volunteers of all ages can be seen harvesting organic produce for a local homeless shelter.

My colleague Julie Emden, Director of Jewish LearningWorks' Embodied Jewish Learning Project, says that the **power** of Jewish Wellness is to nourish, move, and engage in community, "... without leaving our Jewish self behind ... all within a Jewish

context and with Jewish teachings as our guide. We leave with more focus, calm, and with more connection to Judaism, to ourselves, and to each other."

The **beauty** of Jewish Wellness is that its wisdom transcends all faiths and backgrounds, as illustrated by Tom Feledy, a non-Jewish participant of *Yoga and Wholeness with a Jewish Twist* (see page 23).

"Although I'm not Jewish, I found combining the principles of yoga with the teachings of Judaism to be helpful in gaining new insights to this ancient practice," Tom said. "Each class was a wonderful learning adventure and Julie's handouts helped show how concepts discussed applied to human anatomy. I've learned how ancient traditions have the potential to enrich the lives of persons of all religious backgrounds."

And that's the **promise** of Jewish Wellness: that we can all live in wholeness, health, and happiness.

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