



My community is me



Name: **Anna M**

Gender: **Female**

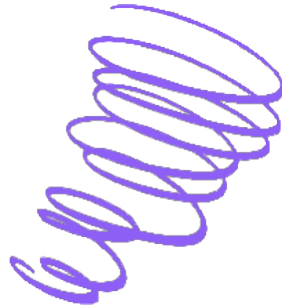
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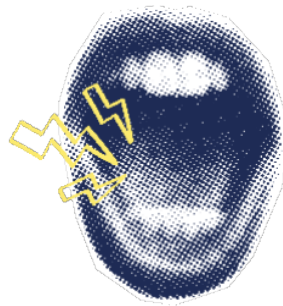
My Jewish journey began in the small town of Szeged, where my father, a rabbi, profoundly shaped my early life. Growing up in a home where Jewish traditions were not just observed but cherished, I was immersed in religious customs from a young age. Celebrating holidays and living by the Jewish calendar felt as natural to me as the air I breathed.



My Jewish journey began in the small town of Szeged, where my father, a rabbi, profoundly shaped my early life. Growing up in a home where Jewish traditions were not just observed but cherished, I was immersed in religious customs from a young age. Celebrating holidays and marking everyday moments according to the Jewish calendar felt as natural to me as the air I breathed. This upbringing instilled in me a deep sense of identity, but as I grew older, I realized that my understanding of what it means to be Jewish had only just begun. I came to see that religious rituals and customs were only one part of a much richer tapestry of belonging, community, and shared history.



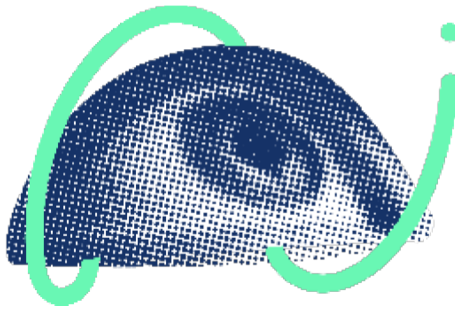
In Szeged, a place where the broader Jewish world seemed distant, I often felt a sense of isolation. My family was rooted deeply in tradition, but there was a longing in me for something more—a connection to a larger community that shared my values and heritage. This longing began to be fulfilled when I discovered Jewish summer camps. These camps were more than just a place to learn; they were vibrant communities that brought Jewish life to the forefront. For the first time, I experienced the profound sense of belonging that comes from being part of something greater than oneself. I found my tribe, my first kvutzah—a close-knit group that quickly became my second family. The bonds we formed were built on shared values, mutual support, and the joy of living our Jewish identities together. These experiences awakened in me a deeper appreciation for what it means to be Jewish and sparked a lifelong commitment to exploring and nurturing my identity.



As I became more involved in Jewish communal life, I began to see that being Jewish is about more than just following traditions—it's about learning, growing, and building a community that reflects our values. The more I engaged with these aspects, the more they became central to my life. Every community event, every camp experience brought me closer to understanding that my Jewish identity is not just a personal story but a shared narrative that connects me with others. It's a story of resilience, of hope, and of a commitment to something greater than oneself.

This realization led me into the world of informal education, where I found a way to live out these values. Unlike traditional education, which can often feel disconnected from personal experience, informal education is deeply rooted in the lives and stories of those involved. It's a form of learning that fosters genuine connections, where we learn not just from books but from each other's journeys—our challenges, triumphs, and everyday lives. This approach to education resonated with me on a profound level. It taught me that learning is most powerful when it's intertwined with real relationships and shared experiences. Through informal education, I've come to understand the true essence of community—how it nurtures individual growth and brings people together in a meaningful way.

At just 15 years old, I took on the role of madricha with a sense of purpose that went far beyond mere responsibility. This role was a calling—a way to give back to the community that had welcomed me with such warmth and openness. I poured my heart and creativity into teaching young children, hoping to ignite in them the same passion and sense of belonging that I had discovered. Being a madricha was about more than leading; it was about helping to shape the next generation's connection to our shared Jewish heritage. Each camp, each community event deepened my understanding of the importance of youth leadership in preserving and growing our community. The responsibility of nurturing the Jewish identity in younger generations was one I took to heart, and it filled me with immense joy and a sense of fulfillment.



When I moved to Budapest, a new chapter of my life began—one that was filled with profound change and growth. The vibrancy of the city and the richness of its Jewish community opened my eyes to new possibilities. In Budapest, I joined Hashomer Hatzair, continued my work as a madricha, and became involved with JCC Budapest and Szarvas Camp. These organizations became the heart of my life, providing opportunities for deeper connections, both with others and with my own values. The diversity and dynamism of Jewish life in Budapest inspired me and reinforced my belief that my true calling was in community work—a place where I could live out my values every day.

Through Hashomer Hatzair, I had the privilege of exploring the world and learning about different cultures at international seminars. These experiences broadened my perspective and deepened my understanding of my global Jewish identity. In 2020, I was honored to be part of the effort to rebuild Hashomer Hatzair in Hungary. What started with just five madrichim and a handful of children grew into a thriving community, driven by our shared commitment, strategic vision, and collective effort. Today, we proudly support over 20 madrichim and more than 60 chanichim. This transformation is a testament to the power of community and the incredible impact we can have when we work together, guided by our shared values.

Working within the community has deeply shaped who I am. The process of learning, growing, and supporting each other has been fundamental to my journey. It's taught me the true meaning of belonging and has shown me the transformative power of a supportive community. The young people I've worked with and the colleagues I've collaborated with have become more than just friends—they are my chosen family. Together, we share a commitment to our Jewish future, bound by shared values and a deep sense of connection.



Now, as I step into my role as a Jewish professional, I am filled with a renewed sense of purpose and determination. As a fundraising manager for JCC Budapest and Hashomer Hatzair, I am committed to expanding our community and securing the resources needed to ensure our continued growth. My mission is to make sure that future generations, including my five-year-old sister, have access to the opportunities that have shaped my life. I want her to experience the same sense of belonging, growth, and connection that I have, and to have even better opportunities than I did.

The skills I've developed—strategic thinking, fundraising, and community building—are essential in my role and have empowered me to make a meaningful impact on our community's development. But beyond these professional skills, my experiences have reinforced in me the value of tikkun olam, the responsibility to repair the world. This principle guides all my efforts, inspiring me to support future generations and build a strong, supportive community that will thrive for years to come.

I am deeply grateful for the experiences, challenges, and joys that have shaped my journey. The people I've met along the way are not just friends—they are my chosen family. My journey is one of love, growth, and connection, grounded in the values that have guided me every step of the way. As I look to the future, I am excited to continue this journey, working tirelessly to expand and strengthen our community, ensuring that it remains a place of belonging and growth for generations to come.

