The World Should Be More Like Our Synagogue

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In the synagogue we greet each other with hugs and kisses, we wish each other a day of peace, and rest. On the streets we feel accosted by unwanted touches, we say hi how are you and don't wait for the answer.

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In the synagogue we sing together, each to our own ability, a beautiful cacophony of voices, which is by definition never out of tune. On the streets we would never burst out in song, we sing only in our cars, with the windows rolled up tight, we stop agasp should one glance in our direction as we bellow out a tune.

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In the synagogue we are all students, parents and children learn together. Driven not by passing some test at the end, but learning for the sake of learning, Torah l'shma, so that we might better ourselves and the world around us.

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In the synagogue simply being in the presence of one another gives us comfort and reassurance. The most crowded synagogue sanctuary never feels too crowded. In movie theaters we fight silently over arm rests and seat backs, on airplanes we horde peanuts and wait impatiently for our complementary beverage. In synagogues we break challah bread for one another, we pass the kiddish cups from old to young, we share prayerbooks, and scooch our toochus down a space so that families can sit together.

Indeed the synagogue reflects the world as it can and should be, our challenge, therefore, our mitzvah, our sacred commandment is to open the doors of this synagogue, to pave the streets with the joy and community we have created here. To open wide the doors, to show

more love, more understanding, more acceptance of people's differences and difficulties.

The world should be more like our synagogue, a mikdash kodesh a holy place, where the very best ideas and ideals are celebrated, where people join together to accomplish seemingly impossible tasks.

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