

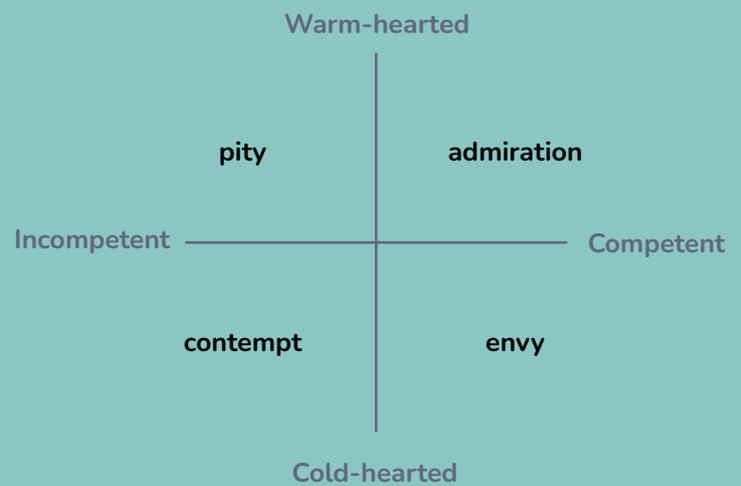
What do we know about the nature of antisemitic prejudice?

In social psychology, it has been accepted in recent decades that prejudices against different groups differ from one another and that these differences are related to how we perceive each group along various dimensions. One of the dimensions of prejudice, according to which we categorize different groups, is what is known as **perceived warmth**, or how likable, friendly, and sincere we consider the members of a given group to be. The other dimension is **perceived competence**, i.e., how intelligent, competent, and ambitious we consider the members of the group to be, which is related to how much we respect the group¹.

A **coordinate system** can be drawn along the two dimensions. The different groups can be placed at any point on the coordinate system, as appropriate.

Both domestic¹ and international² research show that Jews are typically rated highly on the perceived competence scale, i.e., they are seen as competent (in the Hungarian sample, they were rated almost as competent as doctors). At the same time, they receive lower “scores” on the perceived warmth scale, meaning that Jews are perceived as colder.

High perceived competence combined with low perceived warmth can evoke envy and a sense of cultural or economic threat toward the given group². Perhaps this can be linked to the high acceptance rate of antisemitic conspiracy theories, which also refer to the perceived high competence of Jews.



(Reference: Szekeres, 2020¹)

What is the methodology of Haver based on?

There are various initiatives aimed at countering prejudice, with the goal of increasing acceptance of the group in question, preventing or reducing prejudice, and even reducing conflict between two groups. These are collectively referred to as **prejudice reduction or preventive interventions**.

The methodology of Haver belongs primarily to the group of **contact-based prejudice reduction or prevention initiatives**, known as intervention initiatives³. According to the contact-based hypothesis, prejudice between groups can be reduced through interpersonal interactions that take place under the right circumstances⁴. These circumstances include, among other things, when the groups have equal status, when the encounter takes place in a cooperative manner, and when it takes place in an appropriate, supportive environment.



This is the form of intervention that has perhaps been most frequently studied in terms of its effectiveness and for which Hungarian research results are also available⁵. One Hungarian study, the “Living Library” program, examined the impact of attitudes toward LGBT and Roma people⁶, while another explored the impact of encounters between Roma and non-Roma university students on the forming of attitudes. **The results of both studies showed that contact-based intervention had a positive effect on the development of attitudes towards the groups.** At the same time, they also showed that this type of intervention can have the most positive effect in the dimension of perceived warmth, i.e., it can increase likability for the given group.

Based on the above, social psychologist Hanna Szekeres also concludes that in interventions aimed at reducing or preventing prejudice against Jews, the **emphasis should be placed on increasing likability** rather than perceived competence. It

can be concluded that contact-based intervention is a good tool for this, as it has been scientifically proven that this type of initiative is primarily capable of shifting attitudes in a positive direction in this dimension.

Through **peer education**, we strive to make school groups feel as equal as possible to the Haver volunteers and to create an environment and atmosphere during the session that is appropriate for the conversation to flow as freely as possible (e.g., we arrange chairs in a circle, they can eat and drink, go to the bathroom, we encourage them to express their opinions, there are no right or wrong answers, etc.). With these, we aim to meet the conditions that further increase the effectiveness of contact-based intervention, although recent research has already proven that the method works even without these conditions⁷. Research also shows that contact-based prejudice reduction and preventive interventions are most effective in **elementary and high school groups**⁸, which is why Haver focuses primarily on this age group.

In addition to contact-based intervention being the basis of our methodology, Haver also uses several other intervention approaches. For example, we use the tool of **counter-stereotypical intervention**, which essentially involves presenting participants with information about Jewish people that contradicts stereotypes. This methodology has also been proven to be effective in preventing or reducing the development of prejudices.

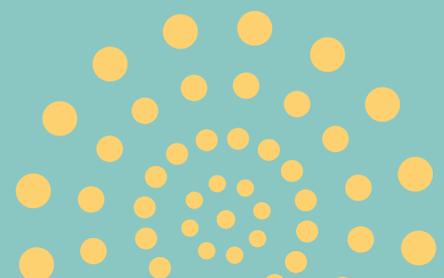
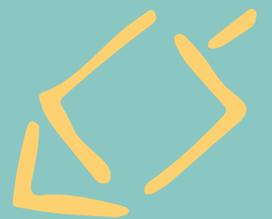
This summary is based on the work of social psychologist Dr. Hanna Szekeres, who reviewed the text prior to publication. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her contribution.

Jewish identity, Jewish identities

Jewish identity is a concept of particular importance to Haver. On the one hand, this is because our sessions, especially our Identities sessions, focus primarily on this topic. On the other hand, it is because we would like to help our volunteers get closer to their own Jewish identity, both through the sessions they hold and through our community programs.

Therefore, we believe it is important to define how we view Jewish identity. We agree most with definitions that interpret **all kinds of identity construction as a process that takes place consciously or subconsciously, but continuously, in the life of every human being**. Some of these interpretations view Jewish identity as a kind of fluid identity, which is contextualized and continuously nuanced and shaped in different situations and stages of life⁹. In this sense, it is not a fixed identity¹⁰. An individual's Jewish identity and other identities influence and affect each other. This approach, which interprets the development of Jewish identity as a non-linear process, poses a challenge for organizations engaged in Jewish education, as it means that there is no single "recipe" for approaching the question of Jewish identity, since the composition of this unique construct is different for everyone. Another problem is that once Jewish youth leave the formal and non-formal Jewish educational system, they have far fewer opportunities to express and rethink their identity⁹.

We believe that Haver offers Jewish young adults a **community** in which they can explore and develop their Jewish identity, both through various community events and joint learning opportunities, as well as through our specific sessions. During the sessions, conversations with students give them the opportunity to express their Jewish identity in their own personal way, which requires continuous introspection and self-reflection, thereby enabling the shaping of their identity. According to certain studies, a defined minority identity reduces the likelihood of psychological distress and contributes to **maintaining mental health**¹¹, a finding that has been confirmed by research conducted among Israeli students¹². A study involving American Jews also confirmed that people with a strong sense of belonging to a group have higher self-esteem¹³. We believe that a Haver session held in front of students and the discussion about their own identity that takes place during it can further **strengthen young people's self-esteem and self-confidence**.



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