



Resources for Talking about Israel in this Time of Crisis

Resources for talking with junior high and high school students

Triggers for a Conversation about Dialogue:

In the last few days a few authors have expressed their opinions that this is not the time for religious or political arguments.

Please share the following articles with your students.
Then, read these famous verses from Ecclesiastes.

- Rabbi E. Noach Shapiro, also a trained social worker, writes suggesting that this is not the time for political discourse. <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/dear-jews-dont-write-that-2nd-paragraph/>
- Jerusalem poet Alden Solovy writes about his experience this week as a supporter of Women of the Wall, and the surprising words of someone who would not tolerate hate among members of the Jewish community. <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/wow-kotel-first-yeshiva-bocher-shuts-down-a-rant/>
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and poem by Yehuda Amichai (see attached text sheet)

Ask:

1. Do you agree with the idea of Rabbi Shapiro, that there is an appropriate time for productive dialogue but that now is not that time?
2. Do you agree with the "*yeshiva bocher*" in Mr. Solovy's article, that there are times when we should put aside our religious differences?
3. Ecclesiastes suggests that there is a time for everything under the heavens. What do you think it is time for in Israel right now? (If it helps, you can choose from the list given in Ecclesiastes.)
4. Yehuda Amichai's poem suggests, unlike Ecclesiastes, that we often experience opposing emotions at the same time. In your own life, do you feel as though you can feel love and hate -or other opposing emotions- at the same time or at different times? Do you think it is possible to feel opposing emotions or hold opposing values on political matters, such as the current situation in Israel?

Words of Hope and Healing and Thought Questions:

The Jerusalem Season of Culture is a diverse group of artists, producers and curators who share the stories of Jerusalem every summer through various media in multiple locations. Their goal is: "world peace, the end of the conflict, a union of the hunter and the hunted, and dancing in the streets." The text and video in the following link were published at the end of the summer of 2014, another difficult period in the Holy Land. Their words still contain a message of hope <http://www.jerusalemseason.com/en/content/blogpost/we-are-here-complete-text>



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Ask:

1. In this piece, the writers use the phrase "*Ani Cahn* -I am here (in this place)." In the Torah, when someone wants to denote that they are fully present, they answer "*hineni*- here I am (present, ready)." Is there a difference between being physically and emotionally or spiritually in a place?
 2. Why do you think the writers chose the words they did?
 3. What do you think when you see/hear these words being spoken in English, Hebrew, and Arabic? Does it make the message more or less powerful for you?
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The following link contains a number of prayers for strength and healing. The first two prayers might be used in any situation requiring faith and hope.

<http://www.reformjudaism.org/practice/prayers-blessings/prayers-strength-and-healing>

Ask:

1. Why do we ask for strength instead of solutions?
2. What might you pray for at a time of turmoil?

Thinking about Israeli Children during a Time of Unrest

- The following article appeared in the Israeli newspaper, Ha'aretz, on October 14, 2015. It is about difficult decisions Israeli parents make to both keep them physically safe and to keep their lives as normal as possible. <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/routine-emergencies>
- This short film is from the summer of 2014. It depicts children singing a song about running to bomb shelters and the relief they feel when they are able to return to class. It was written by a teacher and therapist who recognized the stress that looming danger was having on children. www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LG2Qkcn7iM

After reading this article and watching the video you might ask:

1. Do you think parents should let their children go to school/after-school activities? What would you want your parents to do?
2. Do you think that the song is soothing or alarming?
3. What can you draw, write, or perform to help children who are feeling scared or unsafe?



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Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

<p>There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:</p> <p>a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.</p>	<p>א לכל, זמן; ועת לכל-חפץ, תחת השמים.</p> <p>ב עת ללדת, ועת למות; עת לטעת, ועת לעקור נטוע.</p> <p>ג עת להרוג, ועת לרפוא, עת לפרוץ, ועת לבנות.</p> <p>ד עת לבכות, ועת לשחוק, עת ספוד, ועת רקוד.</p> <p>ה עת להשליך אבנים, ועת קנוס אבנים; עת לחבוק, ועת לרחק מחבק.</p> <p>ו עת לבקש, ועת לאבד, עת לשמור, ועת להשליך.</p> <p>ז עת לקרוע, ועת לתפור, עת לחשות, ועת לדבר.</p> <p>ח עת לאהב, ועת לשנא, עת מלחמה, ועת שלום.</p>
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A Man Doesn't Have Time in His Life By Yehuda Amichai

Reprinted from: <http://allpoetry.com/A-Man-Doesn't-Have-Time-In-His-Life>

A man doesn't have time in his life
to have time for everything.
He doesn't have seasons enough to have
a season for every purpose. Ecclesiastes
Was wrong about that.

A man needs to love and to hate at the same
moment,
to laugh and cry with the same eyes,
with the same hands to throw stones and to
gather them,
to make love in war and war in love.
And to hate and forgive and remember and
forget,
to arrange and confuse, to eat and to digest
what history
takes years and years to do.

A man doesn't have time.
When he loses he seeks, when he finds
he forgets, when he forgets he loves, when he
loves
he begins to forget.

And his soul is seasoned, his soul
is very professional.
Only his body remains forever
an amateur. It tries and it misses,
gets muddled, doesn't learn a thing,
drunk and blind in its pleasures
and its pains.

He will die as figs die in autumn,
Shriveled and full of himself and sweet,
the leaves growing dry on the ground,
the bare branches pointing to the place
where there's time for everything.

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