

# Circling toward the **TRUTH** on how we feel about **ANTISEMITISM** *Activity*



This can be used as a classroom lesson, an activity run by a youth group leader or community educator, or by parents. This activity can be run for an hour to suit any group or learning environment. Times are to be used as a suggestion.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To initiate discussion among teens on important issues surrounding antisemitism in an open and dynamic way.
- To encourage the ability to discuss uncomfortable subjects while staying calm and rational.
- To understand the effects of Jew hatred on a teenagers' identity.

## **RESOURCES FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION/BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**

[Anti Zionism is the New Antisemitism](#)

[Antisemitism: The Oldest Hatred Gone Viral](#)

[Countering the Ripple Effect of Hate](#)

## **SUPPLIES NEEDED**

- Printed copies of the discussion questions - 1 for each group of 20
- Paper and pens for action item building activity

## **GETTING STARTED/INTRODUCTION**

The rise of open expressions of antisemitism in the world are making teenagers increasingly open targets for slurs and even physical attacks against that erupt from the demonizing of Jews and all things Jewish or Israel related. The first step to facing these challenges is having a conversation among ourselves - understanding the facts, recognizing how we are susceptible to the pain and confusion it causes, and interested in understanding what we can do.

We are going to learn some skills to help us open up the discussions that should be taking place, but may not be happening as we live our busy lives. We may feel nervous to speak openly, we may not want to be considered “paranoid” for calling out antisemitism when we see it, and we may not want to become the center of attention as a Jew for doing so. This activity will hopefully help us feel better, stronger, more confident and capable of standing up against hate and ignorance.

## CIRCLING THE TRUTH ACTIVITY

Break the participants up into groups of 20. Have the groups sit in concentric circles, 10 facing outward surrounded by 10 facing inward. Read aloud the introduction paragraph and show the [slideshow](#).

Run the concentric circles discussions. Call to action discussion and ideas.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

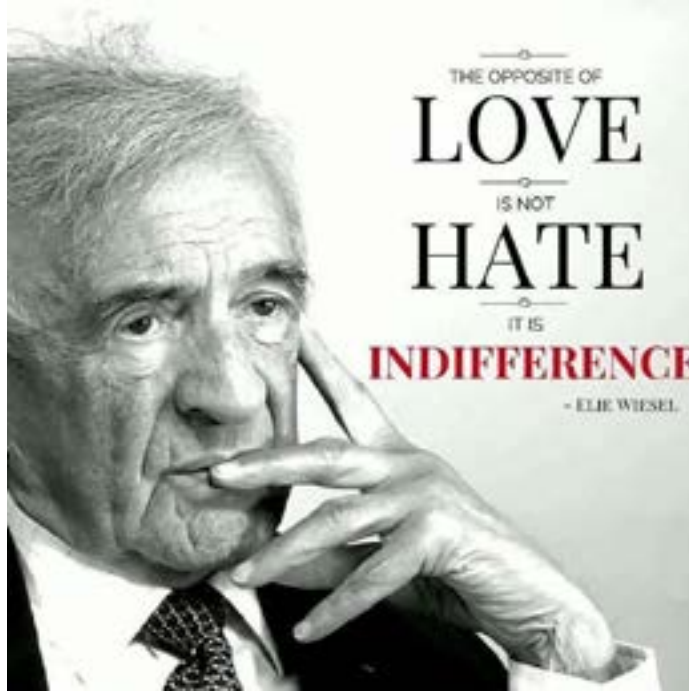
- Is there a consensus on the definition of antisemitism?
- Do we all recognize antisemitism as Jew-hatred, a unique form of the generic “racism” association that ignores its uniqueness?
- Do we understand WHY it is unique?
- Can we recognize subtle elements of anti-Jewish sentiment?
- Can we find a way to live in the current generations whose societies are becoming increasingly indifferent, condescending or demonizing toward who and what is a Jew, Zion, Israel.
- There are so many Jews out there - young and old - who are just looking to live their lives peacefully. Why bother talking about it? You’re exaggerating, you’re paranoid,
- Have you ever chosen silence in the face of an experience of antisemitism or other forms of racism?
- Is silence ever a wise response to extreme situations?
- Not everyone feels confident to be a public advocate - not for Israel, not for Jewish rights. How can we still use our voices and not be silent in the face of growing hatred?
- If one has a very strong Jewish pride, can not engaging publicly on combative issues still be considered the equivalent of being “silent”?

## WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

What can we do with what we have learned today? How do we put our thoughts and knowledge into action? Did you learn something new today about antisemitism? How do you feel discussing antisemitism now? Do you feel more able to discuss it in a more rational manner and brainstorm logical effective ways to combat it? Who would you share this activity with to encourage their use of it? What did you learn from someone else that you did not already know? How can you use positive messaging to influence public opinion? How can being a [Virtual Citizen of Israel](#) contribute to fighting the growing wave of antisemitism? What call to action would you like to create to inspire others to engage with these issues more proactively?

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This is perhaps an overwhelming and emotionally charged topic that we all face as Jews especially as antisemitism has increased dramatically in the past few years in society, in all social situations, and has become socially acceptable. How we challenge this is to stand up for [Jewish rights](#) and as Elie Wiesel so wisely said, *"The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest."*



## NEXT STEPS

What is your call to action?

- Become a [Virtual Citizen of Israel](#)
- [Share ideas](#), create a [campaign](#)!
- Talk to friends, family, those around about antisemitism. Share what you have learned with them and put your learning into action when you see something or someone antisemitic, whether in person or on social media.

## ABOUT THE ISRAEL FOREVER FOUNDATION - YOUR HOME FOR ISRAEL ENGAGEMENT

The Israel Forever Foundation develops and promotes experiential learning resources that celebrate and strengthen the personal connection to Israel as an integral part of Jewish life and identity.

**We hope you have enjoyed using this resource. Please take a minute to fill out our [evaluation form](#) and help us be as effective as possible in providing the resources and tools you need to make the personal Israel connection come to life, whatever the age, wherever you are in the world.**