

Educational Department

Zachor: Ways to Remember

Goal: To have participants differentiate between national and personal memorials and to enable them to connect and/or create meaningful ways of remembering victims of the Shoah, Israeli wars and acts of terrorism.

Activity: 1) The group facilitator will begin this activity by lighting a Connections Israel yartzeit candle and say a few words about someone whom he/she is remembering by lighting this candle.

2) Ask the group: Why do we use candles to remember a person? (Be prepared to coach the group by drawing their attention to light and shadows, how in Judaism a soul is compared to a candle, consider some song lyrics i.e. You Light Up My Life; You are the Sunshine of My Life...)

3) Ask the group: What other ways are there to remember a person or group of people? Using a ven diagram (two circles with and overlapping portion to indicate what is common to both groups and what is unique to each), record their answers in order to compare and contrast ways of memorializing individuals and groups. (Keep in mind museums, siren and moment of silence, lowering a flag, ceremonies, special tefillot, tzedaka, visiting a grave, learning or completing a portion of learning in memory of.., dedications etc.)

4) Challenge questions for the group: Can you design a new way of remembering on either a personal or national level? Is it appropriate to remember national tragedies for only one day a year/ is it too much? Can you think of other tragedies that we commemorate annually (the destruction of the Temple; assassination of Gedalia and now of Rabin) and are there others that you feel we should be marking? (Possibilities: Spanish Inquisition; Disengagement from Gush Katif..)

5) Ask each participant to choose the form of remembering that means the most to them and have them explain why. Does the form change based on the person you are remembering? (Might you say a special prayer for a learned loved one or bring everyone together and prepare the special foods that person used to make for a different person?)

Closing Activity: Dim the lights in the room and have the participants light the yartzeit candles. Ask them to arrange the lit candles into a form and explain its significance. (A Magen David for those who died defending us or to recall the yellow stars of the Shoah; a rifle or sword; a sad face etc.

Note: Send us a digital photo and explanation and we will post it on our website!