



Shabbat Table Talk

Remembering 10.27.18

A Conversation Starter Guide

A Shabbat to Remember and Reflect

In Jewish tradition it is common to intentionally hold both joy and sorrow together. Amidst a joyous wedding celebration, a glass is broken to recall the healing our world needs.

Tonight, we will hold both happiness as we celebrate Shabbat and heartache as we reflect on the tragedy the American Jewish community experienced last year, and all those who have been affected by hate since.

What Happened on 10.27.18, What It Means to Us

On October 27, 2018, the U.S. experienced the deadliest anti-Semitic attack in its history. A white supremacist killed 11 congregants and wounded several others at three Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania congregations, Congregation Dor Hadash, New Light Congregation and Tree of Life * Or L'Simcha Congregation. Afterward, the shooter allegedly told police that he wanted to kill Jews, and in his online social media posts, including on the platform Gab, he reportedly condemned Jews for bringing immigrants into the country.



We remember the 11 people whose lives were taken that day:

Joyce Fienberg
Richard Gottfried
Rose Mallinger
Jerry Rabinowitz
Cecil Rosenthal
David Rosenthal

Bernice Simon
Sylvan Simon
Daniel Stein
Melvin Wax
Irving Younger

May their memories be a blessing.

In the year since the tragic attack, communities around the world have suffered acts of hate including:

- March 2019 | **Christchurch, New Zealand:** 51 people were murdered, and another 50 were injured by a white supremacist in two mosques during Jum'ah, the traditional Muslim Friday prayer.
- April 2019 | **Poway, California:** A white supremacist murdered one person and injured three others at the Chabad of Poway synagogue during Shabbat morning services.
- August 2019 | **El Paso, Texas:** A white supremacist murdered 22 people and injured over 20 others shopping at a Walmart in a community with a large Hispanic and Latinx population.

Reports of anti-Semitism in our communities are all too common today, and in 2018, **ADL recorded** 1,879 anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S., including 39 physical assaults on Jewish individuals — a 105% increase over 2017. Anti-Semitism is not only about demeaning and attacking the Jewish community, as individuals who harbor hateful beliefs about Jewish people often hold hateful beliefs about other marginalized communities. In 2018, **there were 50 extremist related murders in the United States**, 78% of which were carried out by white supremacists. Many communities including Jews, people of color, Muslims and immigrants, feel increasingly fearful and threatened by racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and nativism.

Optional: Before moving on to the next section, turn to the back page and read the poem 'Tree of Life' by Monica Brown silently or out loud.

Where Are We Now?

Below are some guiding questions to help facilitate a conversation of our experiences since the shooting. As you begin, remember that we all process feelings differently. Tonight, show an abundance of empathy for everyone engaging in this discussion with you, and for yourself.

A Time to Reflect

- Do you remember when you found out about the shooting? How did you feel at the time?
- To what extent have you noticed an increase in anti-Semitism and other forms of bias, hate and oppression in your community and our country? Please share more.

A Time to Act

Reflect on this quote and share your thoughts:

- “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? And **if not now, when?**” – Hillel, Ethics of the Fathers, 1:14.
- How are the acts of protecting ourselves and standing up for and protecting others connected?
- How can we take action in our community now to fight anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination and hate?

Where Are We Headed? Ideas for Action

We all have a role to play in the fight against hate. Here are three ways you can honor the 11 lives lost and take small steps to create a big impact in your community:

- **Get Involved:** Work to ensure equity and create stronger communities by volunteering or donating to organizations whose missions you feel passionate about.
- **Speak Up:** Your voice counts – share your thoughts with your local and state elected officials.
- **Stand Together:** Stand up to incidents of bias and bullying you see in your community, and continue to be part of conversations to learn about others with different perspectives than your own.

For more ways to honor those lost and join the fight against hate, check out ADL's 11 Actions for 11 Lives.

Brainstorm ways you can make a difference in your own community.

Commit to one action and share with the person next to you.

For more information and to get involved, visit www.adl.org.

Can We Talk? Tips for Tough Conversations

1. Listen actively

Active listening is listening in order to understand. This means that while someone is speaking, you are not interrupting, or silently constructing your response or rebuttal. For even deeper active listening, ask follow-up questions.

2. Communicate to be understood

The flip side of active listening is speaking clearly in order to be understood. This means speaking from your own point of view and not saying everything you think all at once. It also means being open and committed to hearing the different perspectives of those with whom you are speaking.

3. Agree to disagree

In the end, sometimes we just absolutely do not agree and we need to say that. Agreeing to disagree is a civil, respectful and honest way to acknowledge your disagreements and invites the potential for picking up the discussion at a later date.

Tree of Life

By Monica Brown



Tree of Life
Tree of Wisdom
Tree of Light

We bear witness

The profane tremor
of eleven dead
taken
on a sacred day,
in a sacred space.

Joyce Fienberg
Richard Gottfried
Rose Mallinger
Jerry Rabinowitz
Cecil Rosenthal
David Rosenthal
Bernice Simon
Sylvan Simon
Daniel Stein
Melvin Wax
Irving Younger

Tree of Life
Tree of Wisdom
Tree of Light

We bear witness

Foulness steps out into the light
reflected
and
refracted
by malevolent
sons
A clarion call.
A bell and a warning.

We bear witness

Bark thickens
Roots sink deep into the earth
Leaves seek sunlight
May their memories be for blessing
May their lives inspire love

Tree of Life
Tree of Wisdom
Tree of Light

We bear witness

We bend our branches
towards compassion
justice
Tikkun Olam
A healing of the world

Tree of Life
Tree of Wisdom
Tree of Light

We bear witness

Monica Brown is an award-winning author inspired by her Peruvian and Jewish heritage to bring diverse stories to children. She resides in Arizona with her family.