



JEWISH STUDENTS & FACULTY UNIVERSITY RESOURCE GUIDE

ENSURING JEWISH
INCLUSION & SAFETY

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OUR APPROACH

Nurturing Understanding

The word *shema* comes from the Hebrew word “to hear,” and it’s this concept that guides everything we do. Listening with curiosity and compassion is at the center of our relational engagement approach.

We are a team with diverse identities who have invested our lives in uplifting vulnerable communities. Our goal is to help others understand or community’s diverse stories, identities, and lived experiences.



Antisemitism is a systemic bigotry impacting all of us

No person, group, movement, or political party is immune to anti-Jewish ideas. We are all socialized into them and we all must do the work as allies to unpack and disrupt this conspiratorial bigotry, including in mainstream society and Israel & Palestine discourse. Regardless of intent, these ideas demonize and isolate the collective Jewish community, undermining our safety and inclusion.

Anti-Jewish ideas and reductive binary narratives are enabling anti-Jewish harm to go unnoticed & unchecked. We all have a responsibility to address this.

We also recognize how antisemitism intersects with and fuels other forms of bigotry including white supremacy, and how anti-Jewish conspiracy theories erode democratic, pluralistic societies

A paradigm shift in this critical moment

We need new ways to engage peers who don't wish to harm the Jewish people, but may accidentally perpetuate anti-Jewish ideas. We do this by creating space for curious, empathetic exploration grounded in relationships and nuance. We know when we transcend binaries, demonstrate allyship, and call out all dehumanizing language, all of us, including Palestinians, Muslims & Arabs, are more safe



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Jewish students & faculty

RESOURCE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, anti-Jewish sentiment has risen globally. We are once again seeing many in society scapegoat Jews for social issues and demonize the Jewish community as uniquely evil. Regardless of intent, in the aftermath of October 7th, we've seen a surge of anti-Jewish language and behavior. Consequently, binary and dehumanizing ideas about Jews that undermine collective Jewish safety and inclusion are being mainstreamed.

ENGAGING EFFECTIVELY

This resource is designed to **guide Jewish students & faculty** on how to effectively engage school administrators, campus partners, and your respective peers on the anti-Jewish harm that is being mainstreamed in order to **effect systemic change** across campus institutions.



THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE

POINTS OF CLARITY

01 We are **not** claiming that the narrative below is inherently anti-Jewish or that those who hold this narrative are antisemites.

02 We **reject** all efforts to discredit or erase Palestinians' lived experiences.

03 Our **goal** is to help others unpack how **some of the language in these narratives**, regardless of one's intent, can **perpetuate anti-Jewish biases that undermine Jewish inclusion and safety**.



THE HARMFUL NARRATIVE

UNDERMINING JEWISH INCLUSION AND SAFETY

One narrative, rooted in binary frames and the historic trope that Jews are the prime example of evil and the world's wrongs, is causing harm today. This is the claims that the idea of Jewish national self-determination (Zionism) is **uniquely evil, unforgivable**, and worse than every other form of nationalism. The result of this is that any individual who supports Jewish self-determination in some portion of our ancestral homeland is characterized as evil and demonic, regardless of their political positions or criticisms. One example of this language is claiming that "all Zionists are Nazis"

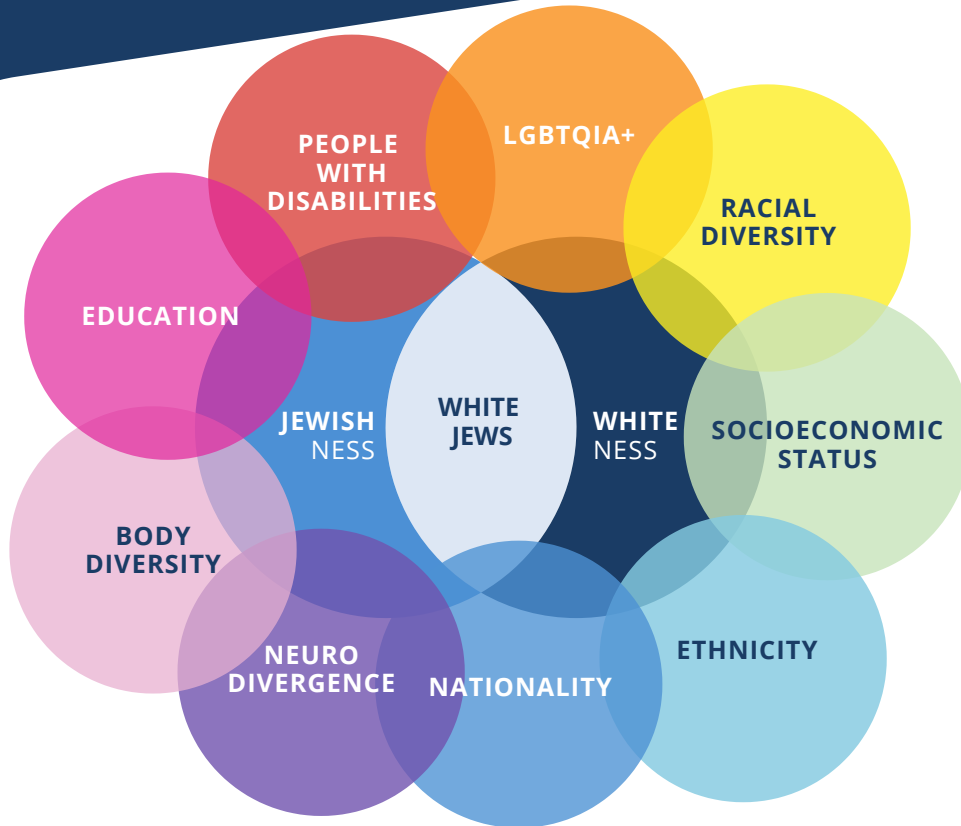
This story, even if unintentionally, makes nurturing compassion for Jews very difficult.

At its worst, this perspective has led some to **celebrate the attack on October 7** and call for more global violence against Jews. In some cases, those that call to "decolonize Palestine by any means necessary" are calling for violence against all Israelis and those "complicit," **including Zionists or Jews around the world.**

They see this violence as justified resistance to white colonial oppression, and they see **anyone who supports Jewish statehood as evil**. Any challenge to this view is treated as an attack on the rights of Indigenous communities.

The work is in understanding how some of the language in this narrative, regardless of one's intent, can lead to isolation & violence, undermining Jewish inclusion & safety.

JEWISHNESS & WHITENESS



Why many Jews are racialized as white

Many of us have European ancestry, are racialized as white, and have made choices to **gain the safety and privileges associated with whiteness**. This level of access is the exception to the rule, though, for the Jewish world today and historically.

Conflating Whiteness & Jewishness

The problematic assumption that all Jews are white is often compounded by the belief that **whiteness and Jewishness are inseparable**. This leads many people to **misunderstand the collective risks that Jews face**, while also **erasing the global existence of Jews of Color**

Accelerating antisemitism

For many, whiteness is associated with power and oppression, and ancient, deeply ingrained anti-Jewish ideas cast Jews as too powerful & untrustworthy. **Flattening our identity into whiteness therefore accelerates antisemitism** by enabling inaccurate narratives to easily spread. This narrative leads to the **demonization, exclusion, and isolation** of most Jews



HOW THESE IDEAS ARE SHOWING UP ON CAMPUS

Its important to view these individual ideas as part of a **single connected story undermining Jewish inclusion and safety**, not disconnected phrases

Globalize the intifada

"Intifada" means "shake off" in Arabic & is often used to describe social uprisings. Those social uprisings could be and have been non-violent.

Many Jews associate "intifada" with the **Second Intifada**— a period of violent attacks against civilians in Israel. So while we cannot know someone's intent, it is understandable that many Jews hear this as a glorification of those terrorist attacks and a call for the replication of violence.



Decolonization by any means necessary

There are many different and even nonviolent contexts in which we can understand decolonization. This specific phrase has been explicitly used by some as a **justification for the violence of October 7th** or a call for violence against Jews. In this framework, **Israelis are colonists and all Zionists are complicit**, meaning they are **legitimate targets of anti-colonial resistance** around the world.

Many Jews experience this phrase as both a **threat to collective Jewish safety** and a means of erasing Jewish connection to their ancestral homeland.



FROM THE
RIVER TO
THE SEA
PALESTINE
WILL BE
FREE



From the River to the Sea

Slogans are inherently vague, and this is no exception. Some use it to call for equality or a binational state to protect both peoples. Others, like Hamas, use this same phrase to call for the destruction of the state of Israel through **mass violence against Israeli civilians and Jews**.

As a result, this slogan has the effect of **undermining Jewish psychological safety** and, when taken to its most extreme, is heard by Jews and others as a call for violence.

Zionism is racism & colonialism

It is not inherently harmful to criticize Israeli governmental policy. This phrase frames the idea of Jewish self-determination as an inherently racist extension of white European colonial crimes. This **erases whole aspects of Jewish history, identity, and ancestral connection to the land**.

This can be used to justify boycotting or even harming Jews, undermining Jewish safety and inclusion.



What this sounds like

AND WHAT JEWS HEAR

“Zionism is racism and colonialism”

“Jewish self-determination (Zionism) is inherently evil”



“Free Palestine from the river to the sea”

“We need a global movement to dismantle the Jewish state”



“Many Jews are complicit and must be boycotted & isolated in society”

“Globalize the intifada”



“Violence is justified to accomplish these goals”

“Decolonize the land”

JEWISH INCLUSION AND BELONGING

UNDERMINING COLLECTIVE JEWISH SAFETY

Collective Jewish safety is undermined

- when **Jews are dehumanized and demonized**, cleaving Jews from many/most other groups in a society
- and when **problematic and binary slogans** about Jews are mainstreamed

Because antisemitism is intertwined with other bigotries, and Jews have diverse identities, we also know that **combatting all forms of hate is necessary to ensure Jewish inclusion and collective safety**

DISRUPTING ANTI-JEWISH HARM

Recognize when language encourages **exclusion** or **violence** against the Jewish Community.



UNDERSTANDING JEWISH IDENTITY & ANTISEMITISM

01

WHO ARE THE JEWISH PEOPLE?



what people **assume**

Most people **think of** Jews as a **white, religious community**.

who we **are**

- **Jews identify as a people or nation**, now and long before there was a religion called Judaism.
- Many Jews do not consider themselves to be religious.
- Jewish people are **multi-racial and multi-ethnic**, with diaspora communities **all over the world**.
- Jews **originate from the Land of Israel**, but were expelled and turned into a largely diasporic people as a result.

02

WHY THIS PERCEPTION?

Erasure of a complex identity

Despite the prevailing social constructs around race and identity, Jews are often and primarily categorized by non-Jews as a religious group, erasing the complexity of our identity. This ignores how the Jewish diaspora has been shaped by a history of expulsions and persecution, leading to the dispersion of Jewish communities across nations worldwide.

Safety through assimilation

In the U.S., many Jewish immigrants actively sought safety through assimilation into whiteness (changing names, adapting cultural practices, etc.). Images of Jews in media & popular culture are typically centered around white Jews. This centering of one Jewish narrative erases the complexity, beauty, and diversity of our global peoplehood.

UNDERSTANDING JEWISH IDENTITY & ANTISEMITISM

03

WHAT IS CONTEMPORARY ANTISEMITISM?

MOST THINK
ANTISEMITISM
IS ABOUT
RELIGION



BUT
ANTISEMITISM
IS ABOUT
PEOPLE

Jews are typically attacked for **who we are**, not how we pray.

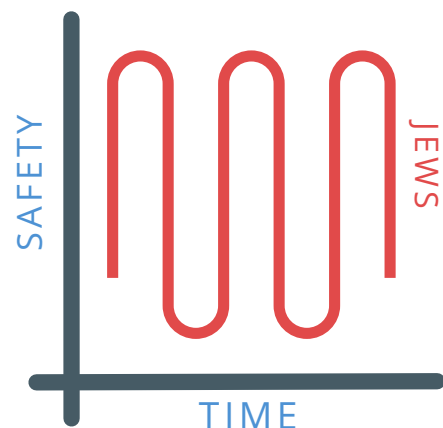
**CONTEMPORARY ANTISEMITISM IS TYPICALLY
ANTI-JEW, NOT ANTI-JUDAISM**

04

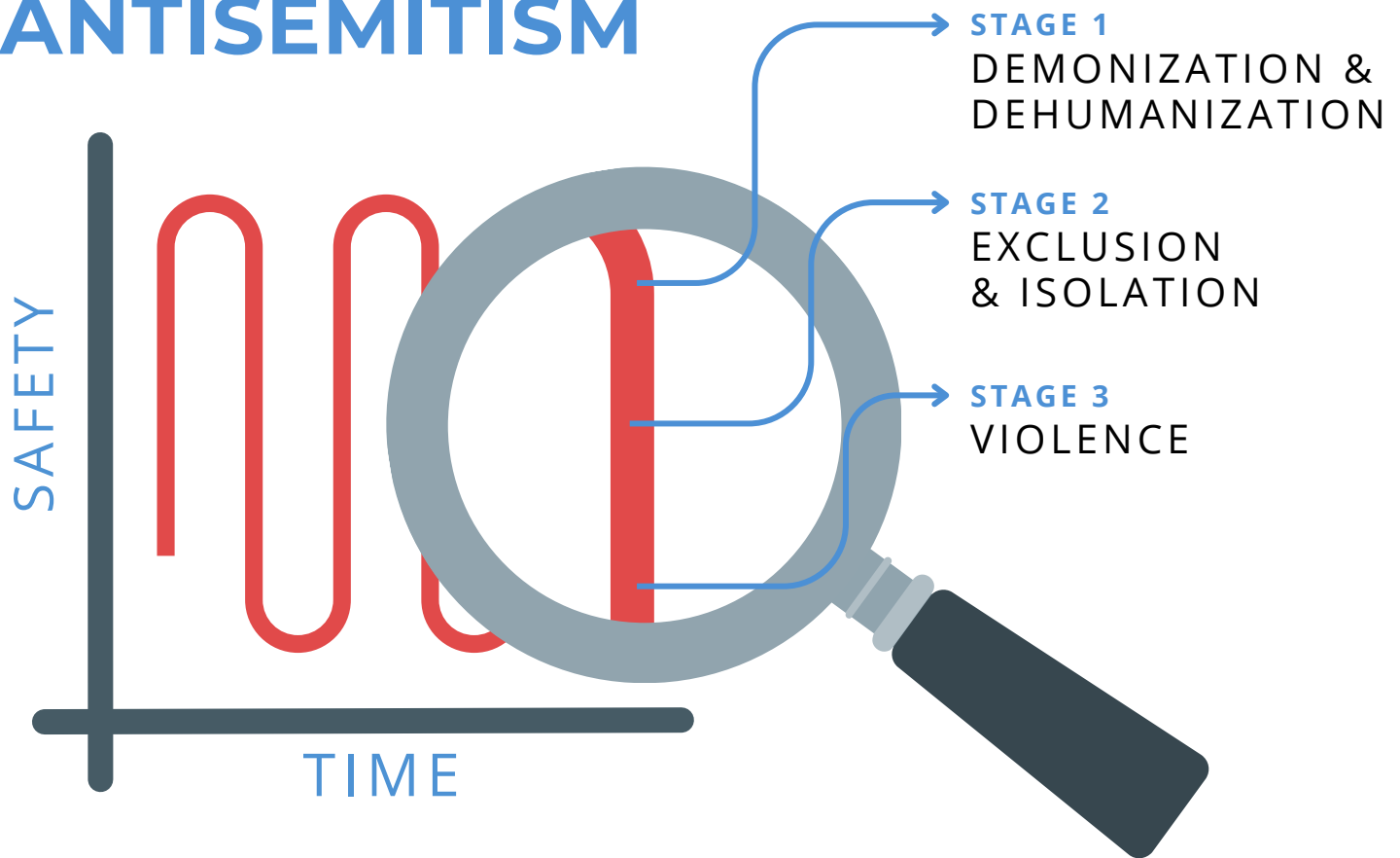
HOW DOES ANTISEMITISM WORK?

JEWISH SAFETY CAN CHANGE RAPIDLY

- **Antisemitism is a cyclical systemic bigotry.** Meaning the safety of the Jewish community can change rapidly in a very short period of time
- There are many examples of Jews living safely and thriving in a society, only for this status to shift rapidly, leading to systemic violence and even expulsions.
- **Throughout Jewish history, skin color & status have not guaranteed safety in any society.**



STOPPING THE CYCLE OF ANTISEMITISM



ANTISEMITISM CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE

Because antisemitism is so adaptable, elements of all three of these stages come from the far left and far right. White supremacists may demonize Jews as a non-white group that is trying to replace the white population while the far left may demonize Jews by treating them as exemplary of white supremacy

OUR GOAL IN COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM

Whether from the right or the left, these examples undermine individual and collective Jewish safety while also destabilizing the environment of pluralism & inclusion that serve as the bedrock of our educational institutions

Allyship with the Jewish people means working to stop this cycle

WHO WE SHOULD ENGAGE (AND WHO WE SHOULDN'T)

Effectively leveraging our time, energy and communication

1 USING BINARIES?

If this person is using a binary framework that allows for empathy with Palestinians but **prevents them from empathizing with the Jewish people's trauma, and individual and collective rights**, and you should not engage.

2 INADVERTENT HARM?

If someone has empathy for both Jews & Palestinians but **leverages anti-Jewish ideas** in support of Palestinian justice, we should continue the conversation in order to address these harms.

3 FOCUSED CRITICISM?

If the person is limiting their criticism to Israeli political leaders or real government actions that harm Palestinians and **is not expressing ideas that undermine Jewish inclusion and safety**, share your genuine empathy for Palestinian suffering.



Don't engage.
Wrong audience

Address the Issue

Empathize & move on

Engagement Priorities

Be strategic with time
& maximize impact

WITH ADMINISTRATORS

ACTIONS

- Share our **tailored antisemitism resource** with administrators, DEI professionals, student life staff, or any other staff responsible for fostering an inclusive environment on campus.
- Ask them to meet and discuss the ideas outlined in the guide.
- Work with them to implement the changes our community needs.

REMEMBER

Addressing these challenges must be understood as a **long-term process**. Our goal is to ensure that administrators **prioritize** these **systemic changes**.

WITH PEERS

ACTIONS

- Working with your Jewish peers, and leveraging our audience framework and conversation guide above, identify a list of people to engage with one on one
- Focus on helping them understand the specific harmful narrative outlined above
- You can share our guide for your peers with them to help them better understand
- Ask people to help our community address this concern with the university

REMEMBER

We're not necessarily trying to convince people who vehemently agree with the false and harmful narrative outlined in this guide. Our goal is to help the broader community understand how that story not only **undermines Jewish inclusion and safety**, but also how **antisemitism is connected to other bigotries** and serves as a fundamental threat to our democracy and movements for justice.

METHODS FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Conversation Goals

Story of Them

Story of Self

Story of the Jewish People

Explaining Antisemitism

Clarify & Verify

Address Hard
Questions

FOLLOW THE ENGAGEMENT FUNNEL

The funnel is about building trust & empathy. The goal is to build relationships and establish trust by the sharing of our personal narratives through **Story of Them** & **Story of Self**. **Story of the Jewish People** and **Explaining Antisemitism** humanizes Jews and our concerns by fixing an often inaccurate perception of Jewish identity and antisemitism, including experiences on school grounds today.

PRACTICE EMPATHY

Demonstrate genuine empathy for Palestinians and their experiences. Name & honor the real harm Palestinians are experiencing in this conflict.

CLARIFY & VERIFY

Don't assume the intentions of others.

What does someone mean when they say, "Zionism," for example?" How we respond to a particular criticism will depend on answers to these and similar questions.

REMEMBER THE GOAL

Your goal is to **slow the spread of harmful ideas**, not win a debate.

ACTIVE OUTREACH GUIDING QUESTIONS

Using the funnel



01 Story of them

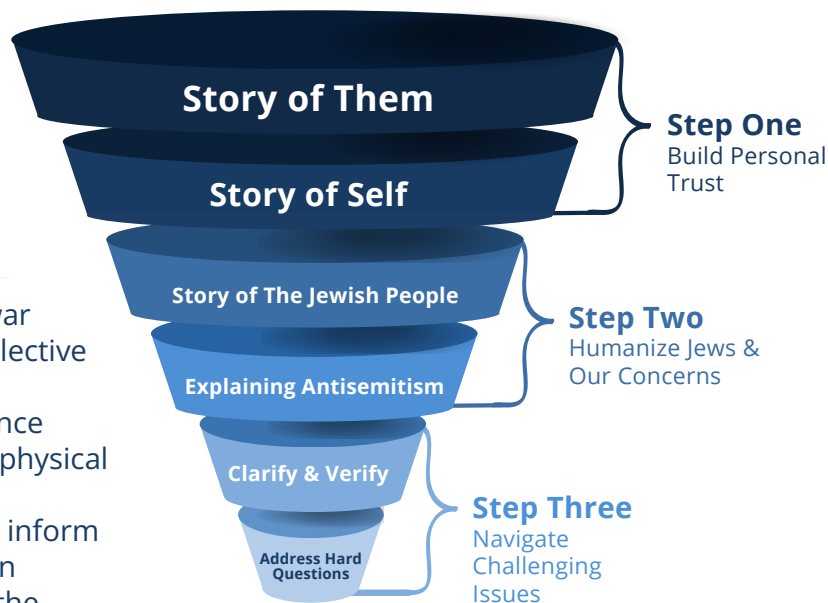
- How are you doing right now?
- How has 10/7 and the ensuing war personally impacted you?
- Are you personally connected to anyone in Israel or Gaza?
- How do you feel about the campus environment over the past year?

02 Story of self

- How has October 7 and the ensuing war personally impacted you?
- Do you feel campus has been welcoming to and protective of Jewish students and faculty?
- Have you personally experienced antisemitism since the war's outbreak?
- Have you had any experiences that made you feel alone or isolated, or that you couldn't show up fully as a Jewish person

ACTIVE OUTREACH GUIDING QUESTIONS

Using the funnel



03 Story of the Jewish People

- How have the events of 10/7 & the war activated the Jewish community's collective trauma?
- How does a history of systemic violence impact our sense of psychological & physical safety?
- How does our history of persecution inform our connection to and strong belief in Israel's existence as a homeland for the Jewish people?

Emphasize how labeling Jews as “white” erases the diversity of the Jewish people, particularly non-Ashkenazi Jews of color, and overlooks the fact that a majority of Israelis are descendants of Jews from the Middle East and North Africa.

Explain how referring to Jews/Israelis as colonizers or Israel as a “colonial” entity erases the Jewish peoples’ ancestral connection to the land and demonizes and dehumanizes Israelis and Jews who support them.

04 Explaining Antisemitism

- Jews should not be held responsible for the actions of the Israeli government
- Antisemitism is connected to other bigotries and serves as a fundamental threat to our democracy and movements for justice
- Portraying the state of Israel, the world's only Jewish state, and all who support its existence, as representations of evil feeds into the ancient antisemitic lie that Jews are responsible for, or are the prime example of, all the world's wrongs
- The problematic assumption that all Jews are white erases the existence and history of Jews of Color, and identifies Jewishness and whiteness (associated with power and oppression) as the prime co-evils that must be dismantled, which accelerates antisemitism by enabling false narratives to easily spread
- Jewish safety can and has changed rapidly regardless of skin color and status

Note: reference page 13 & 14 for a guide on explaining Jewish identity & antisemitism

METHODS FOR
EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT FUNNEL

OFFLINE

Two Simple Rules

Take everyone through the funnel

When engaging someone on these issues for the first time, start at the top. In relationships when you've each previously shared your stories, you may still want to remind them

Follow the funnel in every conversation

While you don't need to spend too much time at the top of the funnel with someone you've engaged before, don't assume they remember the key ideas and context

ONLINE

A Little More Complicated

With people you know, move online to offline

Interpersonal dialogue is always better, though a public response is sometimes necessary

Follow the funnel order, wherever you enter

The "Story of the Jewish People" should always precede "Explaining Antisemitism"; etc.

Your goal and audience are always the same

Nurture empathy & slow down the ripple effect

HAVING PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE

and speaking across differences

01 Disagree without debating

- **Name your concerns** about how violence against Jews is normalized when our community is isolated or targeted on campus.
- It is important that we **all advocate for Palestinians**, and that we do so in a way that honors the reality of the conflict and does not **accidentally perpetuate harm** against Jews.

02 Speak to the **impact** of their language and share your concerns

- Share the concerns that Jews have about the **real harm** language can cause.
- Ask them to **understand** the ways in which certain language can be used to **demonize** or **justify harm** to Jews

03 Ask for **nuance & empathy**

- Ask them to **differentiate** the actions of the Israeli government or military from the Israeli people.
- Name that **demonizing** or **attacking Jews** for the actions of the Israeli government is antisemitism and is unacceptable.
- Request that they **condemn antisemitism** and **recognize the harm** caused by the problematic language they use.
- Ask them to **empathize with the Jewish people**. Help them to understand that Jews are going to support both the Israeli and Palestinian people right now.

BEFORE ENGAGING IN 1:1 CONVERSATIONS

HAVE A PLAN

It's important to have a plan before you go into any sensitive conversation, especially in this moment.

In order to successfully use the information provided in the pages of this tool kit, we encourage you to use this checklist - along with the worksheets and conversation guides that follow - to engage in meaningful 1:1 conversations.

01 REFLECT

Use the **Story of Self** and **Story of The Jewish People** worksheets to reflect on the things you want to convey in each conversation.

02 PLAN

Reflect on the conversation guide that best represents the person you're meeting. Take note of things you want to say specifically to that person, based on what you know to be true right now.

03 ENGAGE

When possible, **meet in person**. If not, a virtual face-to-face conversation is best. Use the conversation guide to help you navigate the dialogue.

04 RESTORE

Take time to process your conversation, and replenish your mental and emotional energy.

05 FOLLOW UP

Touch base after the conversation in whatever ways make sense.

OTHER HELPFUL TIPS

01 Show you care

Jewish faculty should check on their Jewish students to let them know you are there for them and you care about their safety, so they feel both safe and seen. Consider offering periodic “office hours” with Jewish students & their families.

02 Provide trusted reporting mechanisms

Students and faculty may be reluctant to report incidents out of fear of backlash, exacerbating the issue, or having their concerns be dismissed. Ask administrators to provide a trusted, confidential, and perhaps anonymous means by which students and faculty can safely report incidents.

03 Use Professional support

If you experienced a hate-related incident, speak to a trauma-informed school counselor or social worker.

04 Leverage affinity spaces

Though not all people process similarly, some Jewish students & faculty may find it preferable and safer to share their emotions with members of their own community. Create a Jewish student, Jewish faculty, or Jewish student-faculty collective that meets periodically to foster community & reinforce mutual support.

05 Organize together

You are not alone and you don’t need to do this work alone. In fact, you will be more impactful doing this intentionally, strategically, and with your peers

06 Learn on your own

Sharpen your own knowledge and conversational skills so you feel better equipped to handle sensitive interactions with your peers.

07 Engage Campus Jewish institutions

Seek guidance or support from trusted campus Jewish institutions.



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