



A Seat at the Table:

Talking About Antisemitism

Video Reflection Resource & Discussion Guide

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Key Terms

Jew(s)

- Jews are a people or ethnic group with a collective national identity, not solely a religious community.
- Jews have a shared culture, language, history, and religion, but a person can be an atheist and still be Jewish.

Zionism

- Zionism is the movement for Jewish liberation and national self-determination in some portion of their ancestral (indigenous) homeland. For most Jews today it simply means Israel has a right to exist within the community of nation states.

Antisemitism

- Antisemitism is a prejudice or bigotry aimed at Jews including hostility towards Jewish identity and Jewish peoplehood.
- In modern times, antisemitism typically presents itself as a racialized bigotry rather than a religious bigotry – meaning Jews are typically attacked for who they are, not how they pray.
- Antisemitism commonly shows up as conspiracy theories (lies) which blame Jews for the problems of a society, often leading to incitement and violence against Jews.

Did you know?

- While the two largest Jewish communities are in the US and Israel, **Jews live in 111 countries worldwide.**
- There are about **15 million Jews in the world (0.2% of global population)**. There are fewer Jews alive today than before the Holocaust.
- While racial identity is not how people in the Middle East define themselves, more than **half the Jews in Israel** would be defined as **Jews of color**, and about 15-20% of Jews in the US identify as a Jew of color.
- **85% to 95% of Jews on earth support Israel's right to exist** and consider Israel an important part of their Jewish identity (are Zionists).

Key Takeaways

- 1.** Jews are a people or an ethnic group, not solely a religious community. Someone can be an atheist and a Jew.
- 2.** Antisemitism usually presents as anti-Jew or Jew-hate, not anti-Judaism. Most people incorrectly think of antisemitism as a religious bigotry because they think of Jews as a religious community.
- 3.** Looking at Jews and antisemitism through an American lens will lead many to falsely assume Jews are safe since so many are white-presenting in America. However throughout Jewish history, skin color and social status have never ensured safety. This is true in Europe (white-presenting Jews), the Middle East or Asia (brown-presenting Jews), and Africa (black-presenting Jews).

Talking About Antisemitism

Question 1

- In this video we learned about the complexity of Jewish identity, which doesn't fit neatly into common identity frames. Some people think Jews are solely a religious group, but Jewish identity is much broader. How did this video change your understanding of what it means to be Jewish?

Question 2

- In the video we heard reference to the fact that antisemitism is an urgent issue and a reality that is often ignored in the workplace. Why do you think Jews and antisemitism are overlooked in workplace discussions, despite the recent dramatic rise in antisemitism and the violent history of attacks on Jews throughout the world?

Question 3

- It is never acceptable to hold individuals accountable for the actions of a foreign government. In other words, one would never hold Chinese Americans, Polish Americans, Mexican Americans, or Russian Americans accountable for the policies of those foreign governments. Yet, as was mentioned in the video, Jews are often demonized based on their connection to Israel. How can we create an environment where Jewish employees are treated the same as other employees whose identity is also connected to another country?