

Viewing Israel from Another Perspective

If you can see Israel in the eyes of someone whose views are diametrically opposed to yours, then the likelihood of common understanding is much greater.

In conjunction with NFTY's 13 principles, this program is designed to allow participants to self-examine their viewpoint on the Jewish people and the State of Israel. While various opinions across the world prevent instantaneous peace between nations, with a greater understanding of each other, we can work together to repair the world - Tikkun Olam.

To begin, the program leader would read a series of official mission statements from various activist organizations - both Palestinian and Jewish (i.e. Al-Awda, StandwithUs, AIPAC, Al-Haq, etc.). As these are read off, participants would use the floor to create a sliding scale based on whether or not they agree with the mission of the organization. If participants wholly agree, then they would stand on the far side of the room, whereas if they disagree, they would stand on the other side. This allows the program and group leaders to gain an understanding of participants' collective opinions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a whole.

In three separate rotations, participants would watch a video found on social media that pushes an agenda about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict - one would be from a Palestinian point of view, one from a Jewish/Israeli point of view, and the other from an American point of view. Group leaders would then lead a discussion on the biases of each of the videos, and ask participants how each video made them feel. The purpose of this is to examine the underlying biases expressed in a variety of online sources, as well as to understand how these biases can make a person feel.

Lastly, the region would come together for a final video of a Jerusalem Youth Choir introduction and performance. The Jerusalem Youth Choir is a chorus for high schoolers of all backgrounds and faiths - Jewish, Arab, and Christian alike - who live in East and West Jerusalem. Once a week, these students come together to sing, as well as engage in active dialogue about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Each meeting is broken up into an hour of singing, followed by an hour of dialogue and then another hour of singing. It is designed this way because no matter how heated things get in dialogue, students have to come together to sing after. An organization like this is a really powerful way to demonstrate that despite our differences, we can come together to create something beautiful if we listen to each other.

*Program and group leaders would have multiple training calls prior to leading this program, working with both the PVP and RCVP to ensure that everyone feels confident and comfortable to lead a program of this nature.