





YOM HAZIKARON MEMORIAL DAY FOR ISRAEL'S FALLEN SOLDIERS AND VICTIMS OF TERROR

Questions to Consider about Commemoration

*This handout is adapted from Sherri Mandell's book,
The Road to Resilience.*

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The importance of remembering

As Jews, we are taught the importance of remembering. The term “to remember” is mentioned 169 times in the Torah.

Why do you think remembrance is so important to us? What events in Jewish history are we asked to remember?

What do you think would happen if we forget?

Why are so many memories associated with sad events and tragedies? What message do you think we can learn from this?

Embodying memory

One year, at Koby’s yahrtzeit, his friend Shlomo who was then 27 shared a story about Koby’s remarkable sensitivity and insight. Shlomo’s father Tuvia had been disabled and sick for much of Shlomo’s life and died shortly before Koby’s murder. At the shiva, Shlomo told Koby that he had hardly known his father. Koby said, “You know what? You can still get to know him now. Ask your mother about him. Ask others about him. Find out what their memories are. Take what’s good about him and let those qualities live on in you.” Koby was 13 at the time. (from *The Road to Resilience*, by Sherri Mandell)

Think of a Jewish hero who died for being a Jew.

What was their story? When did they live?

What do you admire about him or her?

What can you learn from his/her story?

Which of his or her traits do you want to incorporate in your life?



Memorials

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, who passed away last year, once said, “When people lose somebody, they usually make a memorial that is dead. But a memorial has to be living. When a tree dies, if you can’t make that tree grow, you have to plant another tree.”

What’s the difference between a living and a dead memorial?

How can you make a living memorial to a Jewish hero?

Commemoration

In Hebrew the word for commemoration (hantzacha) contains the word netzach- forever.

What is the relationship between commemorating and something being “forever”?

Israel

In Israel, Yom Hazikaron is one of the saddest days of the year. Stores are closed and many people visit military cemeteries and graves for victims of terror - even people who don’t know anyone who is buried there.

Why do you think that the day has so much power in Israel while in many other countries, Memorial Day is treated as more of a holiday?

In Israel Yom Hazikaron is followed the next day by Yom Haatzmaut, Independence Day. One of the saddest days of the year leads directly into a day of celebration. Some people want to change this. Do you think it’s a good idea to keep the two holidays connected in time? Why or why not?

ABOUT THE KOPY MANDELL FOUNDATION



KOPY MANDELL & YOSEF ISHRAN

The Koby Mandell Foundation helps bereaved mothers, fathers, widows, orphans and siblings to rebuild their lives and create meaning out of suffering.

Rabbi Seth and Sherri Mandell established the Koby Mandell Foundation in 2001 after their 13 year old son Koby Mandell and his friend Yosef Ishran were brutally murdered by terrorists near their home in Israel.

Their personal loss led the Mandells to envision a system of support programs that they hoped would make a real difference in the lives of people who had lost parents, children or siblings through terrorism.

The Mandells took their vision to professional therapists and grief counselors for refinement. The Koby Mandell Foundation soon developed a three-tiered model of support including informal therapeutic programming, recreation/ relaxation programming, and community building /social integration programming.

Today, The Koby Mandell Foundation is the largest provider of emotional support services for the thousands of bereaved Israelis who have lost an immediate family member to terror via multi-faceted therapeutic programs.

These unique programs are focused on teaching the tools necessary for victims of trauma to translate their pain and suffering into positive personal growth, deeper interpersonal relationships, and active community leadership. Most programs are provided free of charge, combining formal, informal, and recreational therapeutic techniques that foster an environment of healing and emotional support.