

Diversity: There are many strong opinions expressed by members of the community, and most have validation for their opinions. I like to hear this, even if I don't agree.

Empathy: I remember being in a demonstration when I was younger. I was in the "marching band," and the police were ordered to remove us from the street. Suddenly I was face to face with someone who wasn't that much older than me, and he started hitting me. He wouldn't answer my questions about why he was hitting me, or direct me to move to place where I wouldn't get hit. He didn't look at me. In that moment I saw what can happen when a person cuts himself off from another. He was able to hit me for playing a drum.

Tradition: Because it is part of our tradition to listen to multiple viewpoints. Because it demonstrates respect for another person as made in God's image. Because a civil discussion may lead to common ground and a different level of respect.

Belonging: I find that careful, mindful listening helps prevent me from jumping to conclusions and to better see things from the other person's point of view.

Expression: The more we hear other points of view, whether we agree or not, the stronger we can become.

Willingness to Listen: We all need to be able to talk and to listen. To look at things from a different angle. If people are not willing to listen, anger builds and boils over.

Jewish values: It is a Jewish value. It deepens relationships when people are open and honest with one another.

Hearing/Being heard: I believe everyone has the right to be heard. I believe true dialogue is the beginning of understanding, compromise and resolution.

Respect for voices: It is integral to who I am that I believe everyone should be respected. Everyone has a voice. It's part of being Jewish - to be moral, to be civil.

1. To respect each other and uphold Jewish values by carefully listening, hearing each other out, and seeking to understand each other's perspective.

Listen: My father's teaching was always, "Listening to the other person's perspective, especially if it is opposed to what you think. There is never one way of accomplishing a goal. The Jewish community is small; we need to stand together, even in our differences."

Understanding: When people disagree and listen to conflicting viewpoints there is an opportunity for growth and change. That the only individuals I can share my thoughts with comfortably in this community are people who stand in the same place as I do; this is limiting to the entire community.

Voice: I'm old. I could forget it and not be a part of it. It is basic that we have to speak out.

Tolerance: As someone who moved to this community recently, I knew that I would have to find my way among many different people, to hear all points of view and be able to balance on both feet. But some of what I have heard recently put my teeth on edge.

Being Heard: By listening to others, we, too, can be heard.

Equality. After marrying an Israeli, her family members accepted me even though I wasn't a Jew at the time. I didn't speak Hebrew and they didn't speak English, so there was a language barrier. When it was explained to her grandparents who I was, her grandfather came up to me and gave me a big kiss on the cheek.

Spirituality: To have a strong Jewish community, all must feel welcome, even embraced. The answers for young people today are more diverse than they were in the past.

Differences: I am interested in the number and differing views towards the Jewish people and Israel and how this affects my children. I am worried that current politics is leaving future generations dissatisfied and disconnected. We need to let our younger generation see that we/they may view the actions of her government in different ways.

Connection: In my work life I feel isolation because I'm an artist. I have to go inside myself, inside my own head to create things. Working in a studio is a solitary occupation, so I crave connection. I still remember the first time I went to Israel. At the moment we were landing—we weren't even in the country yet, we were still on the plane—I felt this incredible feeling that “this is my place to belong.” It was almost a feeling of levitation. I forged a sense of identity with the Jewish people. That's the kind of connection I want with my Jewish community here.

Democracy: When I was young, the phrase “my country, right or wrong” was sometimes spoken. My parents and my generation rejected the implication--that one must support anything you're your government does even if it is grossly wrong. To really love Israel is to be free to support policies that will help it to survive as a democracy and a homeland of the Jewish people and express concern when the government seems to act against those interests.

Hearing/Being Heard: It is difficult for me to be a part of a community that does not value my point of view and is not really open to allowing space or respect for discussion. If the community wants someone like me to be an integral part, it must find ways to value all points of view. Not *accept* them, just have an open, civil venue to learn about the spectrum of opinions in our community.

Respect: My husband's father's entire family was wiped out in various Polish villages during WWII. During, and before, that time, the Jewish people were viewed by many other people as less than human; over time it became acceptable to treat Jews as if they were trash to be swept away. Out of that terrible experience comes a conviction that never again must this happen to any people. We need to learn to respect all people no matter how much we may disagree with them.

2. To create a safe, inclusive environment in which members, without being pejoratively labeled, vilified or excluded, can freely and respectfully express their viewpoints.

Equality: I feel my voice cannot be heard within the synagogue or religion in general especially being from a younger generation. Just as my family faces dysfunction and disagreement, so I see the same in Judaism and the synagogue.

Tradition: Judaism is a tradition that teaches us to disagree well. Talmudic discussion and debate is central to our spiritual lives, as long as it is done so with respect for multiple narratives and views.

Tradition: One of the things that I like best about the Jewish community is its tradition of conflict within community. There is a tradition of loud disagreement about politics and religion, but there is also a tradition that you're still Jewish and you're still part of the community, even if you believe the wrong thing or nothing. I'm worried that we've drifted so far from our traditions.

Respect/Not Bullying: I am passionate because I can't abide bullying and intimidation. There are enough threats from the outside. I can't abide by it within our community. If your own people silence you, it's what our worst enemies do.

Tolerance: I am a convert. I was raised as a Catholic in a small southern city where Catholics and African Americans were not treated very well. Those conditions have made me more sensitive to other types of intolerance. I remember once when children in the neighborhood came to the door and said that we needed to be saved, and I realized that they were judging us. That feeling has stuck with me ever since.

Support: Israel has too few allies to achieve its goals alone. It is a stronghold of democracy in the Mideast. If Nashville Jews are unable to have a dialogue concerning Israel without feeling that our words will divide us, how will the country on the whole continue to support Israel?

Acceptance: I don't insult people with whom I disagree in this manner, and I am entitled to similar respectful conduct.

Knowledge: Too many people in our community have very little understanding of the need for the State of Israel. This leads to a susceptibility to anti-Israel propaganda, to a rewrite of history, to a lack of support for Israel.

Truth: My great grandparents were in Germany when it all exploded. I have the letters that he sent to my grandfather [describing] his efforts to get to America. The one that lives with me is the one that says he could go through Russia to Japan (Germany was not yet at war with Russia), and from Japan to San Francisco. In the letter he says he won't do that because the travel will take too long. He was eventually murdered. He did not survive because he could not accept the truth of his situation.

Learning: My view with regard to what is best for Israel is in flux. For me to better sort out how I feel, and possibly help others to do the same, I need opportunities to expand my knowledge, from both experts and peers, and opportunities to converse with people who both share my opinions and those who do not. Only through education and dialogue will I be able to become more grounded in my own thinking, and contribute as a voice of reason.

Education: I used to work in Clarksville, and a co-worker once asked me, “are you the ones that believe Jesus has yet to come?” Israel may not survive if the rest of the world doesn't become more educated about Israel.

Education - I'm younger generation; many of my contemporaries haven't grown up with understanding Israel. It would be helpful for me, us – my generation, to have more education that would help us [give] about Israel higher priority. When I have discussions that involve Israel, many in my age group don't know enough to have an intelligent conversation.

3. To educate ourselves and deepen our understanding of modern Israel, its history, current realities and the quest for peace through the critical evaluation of diverse sources.

Truth: I find it extremely challenging to find information about the situation in Israel that is unbiased. Newspapers, nonprofit organizations, and schools—all of them are filtering information in some way. Whoever you ask is going to tell you only the pieces they want you to know to further their cause. It's very challenging to form a solid opinion when the facts are so murky.

Truth: I have had a person come up to me and say something about different organizations that just isn't true. If we educate people, then they can form their own judgments with truth rather than fiction.

Understanding: I do not want our children heading off to college to be blind-sided by campus issues reflecting global realities/conflicts and have our students feel betrayed or that that we have done them a disservice.

Diversity: I think it is so easy for people with strong opinions to gravitate to their respective “sides” without ever exposing themselves to varying perspectives (at least without the filter/veneer of commentary from sympathetic pundits). We would do well to practice patience and do the legwork of shaping our own opinions after the benefit of direct exposure to people and issues.

Correct Narrative: I grew up in a large Jewish community. I took my background very much for granted and didn't have an appreciation for my history. In 2008 I read editorials and heard stories on the radio regarding the unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and anticipated all would get along peacefully. Rather than peace, they got rockets. In spite of these gestures, Israel was still vilified and portrayed as Nazis. I read many newspaper articles, many of them anti-Semitic, and it affected me deeply. I see Israel as a critical ally of our country, the only democracy in the Middle East, surrounded by horrible human rights violators in the Middle East, and *Israel* gets vilified. This is wrong. One of my goals is to be able to respond to these false narratives.

History: The history of the Jewish people is my history.

Security: For the first 8 years of my life I lived in Israel. At the time it was fun, actually. Mother taught us if we were between school and home and bombs went off, “dig a hole and bury your head.” I wondered how we could breathe that way. The feeling of vulnerability was always there.

Survival: Growing up, I knew of the concentration camps. I knew of the gas chambers. As an adult I asked my father-in-law why they didn't do something more quickly to help the people, to stop it. He was from a very affluent family in Poland. They were law-abiding citizens and obeyed. It wasn't their way to pull out a gun. I believe the Jewish people cannot survive without Israel.

Jewish Identity: I'm 80, and my window of time could be closing. I want the Jewish people to go on, to know their history. I have also toured the Holocaust Memorial. I want people to visit it, these are the Holocaust survivors who came to Nashville, have lived in Nashville, have grown and contributed to the Nashville community, like my relatives would have had they lived. Our survival and our future depend on people, not only us, but also our children. Tomorrow I will tour the Nashville Holocaust Memorial with a group of children. I tell them the future is in your hands; our heritage is in your hands. You are an important part of what happens in America today. Our story, our heritage is important. I want it to survive.

Israel: My parents both came from Poland. They left before the Holocaust. My mother was one of 12 and she would receive letters from her family, and as a young child I couldn't fathom how this could happen. The passion that my family members had for Israel and being Jewish was in the air that I breathed. I don't understand why we, as Jews, have been so mistreated. I'm happy that Israel is safe.

Homeland: As a Jew, it is important for me to have a homeland. Also out of respect for my ancestors and current fellow Jews who have sacrificed and created this Jewish state. It is also important the rest of the world see that Jews are in agreement about the importance of having a homeland.

4. To stand as a united community in our support of Israel as the homeland for the Jewish people.

Support: I think that no matter what people's opinions may be about Israel and how different their politics may be, they can usually find some small piece of common ground (for example, most Jews support a Jewish homeland, regardless of whether or not they support Israel's government, etc.). Progress (in any direction) can only happen if we work together and focus on what we have in common.

Staunch Advocacy: I remember when being Jewish in Nashville meant dealing with anti-Semitism. Jews couldn't be part of the country club. When I went to UT I became politically active to counter the lies told about Jews and Israel there. Israel is a part of me. It's all wrapped up. I'm proud of what Israel has done for the rest of world and medicine, science, proud that they have built a democracy where everyone has a voice, even though it's not exactly like the one we have in America. Some American say some Jews are too religious. But this is all part of Israel. They are inclusive. This is my country. If I choose I can go there tomorrow and become a citizen.

Jewish Heritage: I experienced the loss of most of my European relatives, they were from Hungary, and many lost their lives. Five people survived. I have cousins who live in Europe. I have visited them, now I know them. They converted to Catholicism for safety. They had to give up their Jewish heritage. One cousin has recently taken back her Jewish name. She wants to know her heritage. Another cousin is thinking of doing the same.

Acknowledge Israel: It just seems so basic to me that the other countries in the Middle East have to acknowledge that Israel has a right to exist. Until they do, I can't see how anything can be done. Never again. People (Jews) have been killed for thousands of years. Finally we have a homeland.

Understanding: In 2006 during Israel's second war with Lebanon, I was part of a delegation to the "sister city of the Jewish Federation where I lived at the time. We were aware of the conditions of war in the city, but chose to travel there to bring aid and toys to the children. As we approached city hall, sirens sounded and we sought shelter. We realized we were at risk and hid in a safe place in the city hall building and remained there until the "all clear" sounded. The local Federation's president was on the trip. She was a leader in many groups like Planned Parenthood and other similar organizations. We both realized for the first time, as a result of our visit to the area, what it meant to be in and part of Israel. I had not understood the psychological pressure the people in Israel had been enduring until this trip. I believe it is important [for our leaders to] to understand how Israelis feel and experience life in this environment.

Safe Homeland: It is destructive to the Jewish community when we ostracize, banish, or personally attack individuals whose expression for Israel is different from our own. We spend too much time refereeing ourselves, rather than rallying passionate people to love and support Israel. It is also important that we learn to differ respectfully. Israel is threatened. Israel's existence in safety is the central priority of world Jewry.

Family: I hate conflict.

Peace: I dislike Jews fighting among themselves.

Consensus: There have always been strong and differing opinions about the way Israel needs to handle itself. Strong opinions are part of our culture. Get 10 Jews together and you will have 11 opinions. As a student, that's the way the rabbi taught us. We were taught to argue and disagree, and it often reaches the level of anger. That's a normal part of the process. Jewish culture is a culture of debate and dialogue, so I'm not upset that people disagree so vehemently. But it has reached the point that people are being ugly with each other. That's not in our tradition. That's not the way it's supposed to be. We should agree to disagree and to respect each other, not to have animosity on a personal level.

5. That the leadership of all Jewish communal institutions will actively take responsibility to support the implementation of these goals.

Jewish Peoplehood: My Rabbi has taught me that we are too small a people to be a divided people. If we are indeed a "Peoplehood" as taught to us by Misha Galperin, then we have to strive to find the way to be united even with our differences. Are we so contentious and "stiff-necked" a people that we can't resolve our internal differences?

Love: So much of the world is against the Jews. While this sounds simplistic, just look at our holidays...from the Egyptians at Passover to Haman at Purim and Antiochus at Chanukah and on to the Holocaust and even today...we have foes in every age and around the world. Even some laws in America become anti-Semitic, i.e., the new state law allowing prayer by teachers; this excludes those of other religions and in the end, hurts Jewish school children. We simply have to learn to love ourselves, and to love each other, and our leaders need to support our rights to live as Jews (and this includes accepting all people who call themselves Jewish and choose to live as Jews, whether they fit our ideal or not).

Relationship: Rather than ignore that we have opposing views because of difficulty confronting members of our small community, our leaders should set up forums for expressing our values, perceptions, emotions, ideas, and motivations. Left unattended these feelings will fester and become more volatile.

Consensus: While we recognize that there are many shades of being Jewish as there are colors, to the outside world we are a single color. That is, we are Jewish and are presumably all the same. Jews should embrace our differences, but recognize we have more in common at the end of the day than we do that is different. For our community to splinter, draw lines in the sand, and otherwise build walls between us is to undermine and threaten our success and longevity as a people. This is harmful to all Jews, no matter what "shade".