

Gaza Shorts

These shorts are designed for discussion-provoking facebook posts, or short discussions with at the start of team or committee meetings.

1. TO BE a free people in our land.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/israel-peace-conference/1.601993>

This piece by David Grossman talks about the discourse in a society that fears for its existence. Existential fear, according to Grossman, prevents a society and its government from taking the necessary steps that – in Grossman’s eyes – will bring peace.

“This worldview is pushing the Jewish public of Israel to our most vulnerable and wounded places as a people. The very essence of “Israeliness,” which always had a forward-looking gaze and held constant ferment and constant promise, has been steadily dwindling in recent years, and is being absorbed back into the channels of trauma and pain of Jewish history and memory.

You can feel it now, in 2014, within very many of us “new” Israelis, an anxiety over the fate of the Jewish people, that sense of persecution, of victimhood, of feeling the existential foreignness of the Jews among all the other nations.”

Makom wonders:

- In the article Grossman encourages us to find hope despite this complex situation. Where do you find hope?
- Do you believe the Jewish People will ever be able just “to be”? Or is anxiety ever part of our identity?

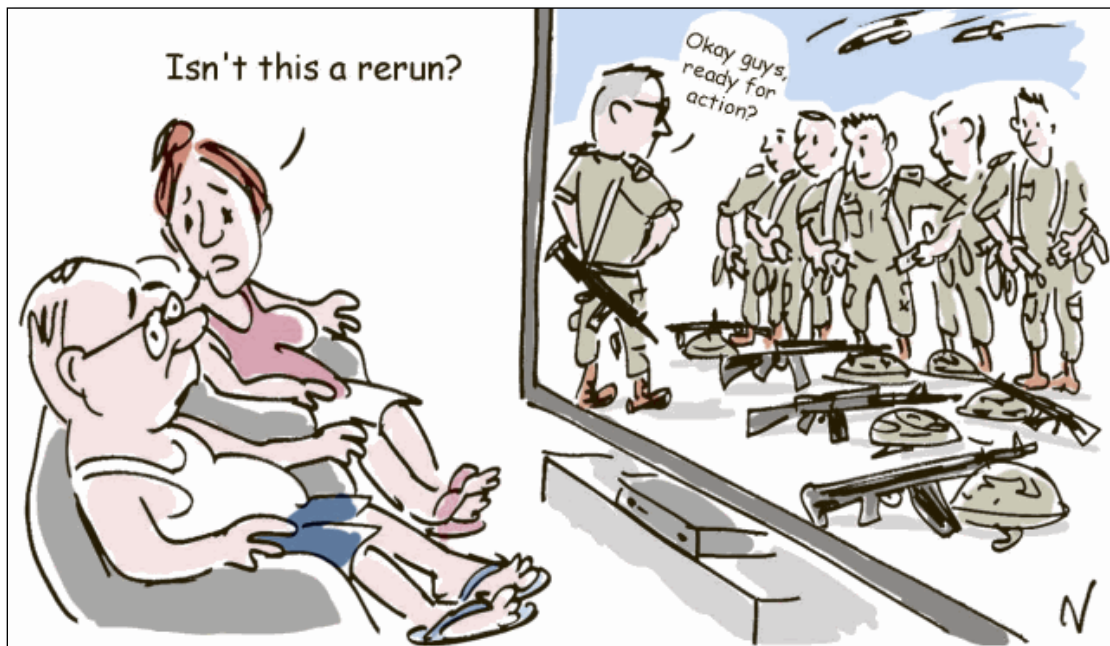
2. The Parts of Me

In a recent gathering with cartoonist and author Shay Charka, he drew his responses to the latest violence in the region. “Part of me,” he explained, “wants to respond Biblically, like a vengeful destroyer. Part of me responds like the shtetl Jew, fearing for the future and praying for redemption. And a third part of me is the Talmudist, weighing up alternative narratives, trying to find wisdom.”

- Do any of Shay Charka’s “parts” resonate with you?
- Do you have any other voices inside you?



3. Re-run



<http://www.haaretz.com/daily-cartoon/1.603901>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10152101252526901&set=vb.189615266900&type=2&theater>

Have we been here before?

- Do you feel that there is something cyclical to the latest conflict in Gaza? Or does it feel like something new?
- Do you think that feeling “we’ve been here before” is likely to lead to more passivity and detachment? Or might it lead to frustration and action?

4. Selfies and Support



<http://imgur.com/gallery/FpZCYJS>

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1465375110377812/?ref=br_tf.

Facebook groups with “selfies from the shelters” have been cropping up. These groups have turned into more than photo galleries, offering support and solidarity to their members.

- How do we deal with “troubled times”, fear, and uncertainty?
- In the past few weeks mass prayers and demonstrations (of support and in protest) have been a key forum for people to deal with these times. Why do you think this is the case? Does this public form suit you?

5. One of our own

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=690f-2Ng9ZE>

Take a listen/look to this song by The Backyard.

1. Do you think that the huge differences between all the types listed in the song strengthen a feeling of Peoplehood, or break it into unfixable pieces?
2. Instead of marking someone as “different” because of their actions, the song chooses to define everyone in the song as “one of our own”. Do you think that belonging to a particular group requires any responsibility to it? Do you feel any obligation to act in a particular way for the Jewish People, at this time?
3. Do you believe that the current situation creates more or less solidarity within the Jewish People in Israel and in the world?