

## Israel and Palestine

While it's going to be very hard to find a website, an instagram account, a news article, anything that might portray the Israel-Palestine conflict without bias, it's so important that we educate ourselves on the crisis, despite how difficult it may be. The conflict that we are witnessing through social media and news outlets are the result of years of tensions between the two countries, dating back to before the state of Israel was founded. To try and encompass the sheer amounts of pain and suffering that Palestine has endured over the course of the past two weeks, for hundreds of years, would be fruitless. It's layers upon layers of years of conflict and it's so much more complicated than just religious differences, or claims to land.

I'll try my best to outline the events of the past month, beginning in April with the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood. Dozens of Palestinian families were threatened with expulsion from the neighbourhood as a result of the growing tensions there. In fact, the Israel Supreme Court had been deciding whether to hold up the eviction in a ruling on the 10th May 2021, of 58 people *including* children, and a further 7 by the 1st of August. While it has been delayed by the attorney general of Israel Avichai Mandelblit. By May 6, 2 Palestinians have been killed in clashes with the Israel Defense Forces as a result of rising tensions in West Bank and East Jerusalem, and perhaps is the cause of major events in Israel coinciding with the end of Ramadan.

Over the course of May 7th-10th, large numbers of Israeli Police deployed on the Temple Mount, as 70,000 worshippers attended the final Friday prayers, of

Ramadan at Al-Aqsa Mosque, palestinian crows threw rocks, the police fired stun grenades, and by the May 8th, 80 people had been injured. Over 300 hundred Palestinians were wounded as Israeli police attacked the compound, while Palestinians tried to retaliate with rocks and heavy objects, the police were more heavily armed with tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades ahead of Jerusalem Day. May 11th saw Hanadi Tower in Gaza collapsed by an Israeli airstrike, and it contained offices of Hamas (Israeli Resistance Movement) and resulted in the retaliation of 137 rockets at Tel Aviv. In response there were several airstrikes on the Gaza Strip. 232 overnight arrests - including children aged as young as 13 and 14 had been made by the Israeli Police. Attacks on the Gaza strip continued through the next day, killing hundreds of personnel as well as 20 Hamas leaders assassinated. The al-Jallaa building that had been housing journalists was hit with 4 missiles.

The Israel Defense Forces begin "phase II" of an operation to destroy underground tunnel networks in Gaza, dropping almost a hundred bombs from fighter jets and resulting in dozens more civilian casualties on May 16. As of the 17th of May, over 212 Palestinians have been killed and over 1400 injured. The only covid-19 testing lab in Gaza (on the strip) has been hit by an Israeli airstrike, destroying the only testing facility available in the city.

Egyptian aid was announced on May 18 saying that they will put \$500 million in efforts to rebuild Gaza after having been completely destroyed. A missile strike by Hamas kills 2 foreign workers from Thailand and injures at least 7 others. Israeli Arabs and Palestinians held a general strike on the Gaza strip and West

Bank, with Employers threatening to fire Arab workers who participated in the strike. Some workers were unlawfully dismissed, without a hearing as per Israeli law.

On May 20th, Israel and Hamas agreed to implement a ceasefire, beginning at 2 am local time, with both sides claiming victory. Despite the ceasefire, violent clashes erupted at Al-Aqsa mosque during the Friday prayers, and Israeli forces responded with rubber bullets and stun grenades. Whilst Israel reports that it had been responding to “riots”, journalists within the mosque reported that they and worshippers had been targeted and threatened. At the time of writing this, the known casualties stand at 248 civilians, of those 66 children, killed on the Gaza strip and over 1,900 injured. 116 civilians killed per the UN, 26 Palestinians killed and 500+ Palestinians injured. 20-225 Militants killed - the lower estimate per Hamas and the higher estimate per Israel. There are over 72,000 Palestinians displaced from their homes. In East Jerusalem, around 1,000 Palestinians were injured and 23 arrested. There have also been 12 deaths in Israel.

The scenes that witnessed over the past 2 weeks and day, up to the “ceasefire” declared by both sides are nothing short of horrific. But it will continue, as long as there are such significant differences between the two countries, as long as there are people who support the killing happening in Palestine. If there continues to be no real call to action from the UN, from both sides to set down arms. If Israel doesn't put down arms to negotiate a real peace. There are so many different catalysts and layers to the conflict and as far away as it may seem, it's happening right in front of our eyes. It's something

that we are being exposed to as a result of the media and we have to listen. There are platforms that we have we can use to spread awareness, we can have conversations with each other to educate ourselves. There's no “right” way to approach the topic, other than just talking about it. But we have to be wary, too. In the current situation it's become easy to start posting anti-semitic things under the intention of being pro-Palestine. It's a *horrible*, but delicate situation, one that we need to approach with caution and the right knowledge behind it.

**R. D'souza**

## History of Israel-Palestine

A legend says that the Israel-Palestine conflict has been going on for centuries and that it's all about ancient religious hatred. However, while religion is one of the causes, it is far from being the main. The conflict is mostly about two groups of people claiming the same land.

In the 19th century Palestine did not yet formally exist as a state and instead was divided into regions of the Ottomon Empire which had very few Jewish inhabitants. Nevertheless this altered when the Ottomon Empire was defeated during WWI and Britain took control over the area now known as Palestine. At that time the inhabitants were mostly Arabs, Sunni Muslims and only about 3% of the population were Jewish, there was also a considerable amount of the Christian minority. This population of people became known as the Palestinians.

By the 1800, most of the Jews in Palestine had tertiary jobs such as religious teachers and merchants while most of the population left were farmers and settlers. As the 19th century advanced many of the Jewish people began to look to Palestine as the place for a possible Jewish homeland which was mainly due to the rise of nationalism in Europe. The Jewish people claimed it was their ancestral home while the Arabs claimed that it was their land and so refused to back down and move.

The arrival of the 1920s and 40s , only increased the number of Jews in Palestine, who fled Europe as a consequence of the Holocaust in World War II which led to the death of an estimated six million people. A decision by the UN was taken for Palestine to be split into two states separating the Jews and Arabs however this was rejected and so never carried out hence in 1948 Britain left and Israel was created, this increased the tension between the two groups causing conflict between them. Other Arab countries such as Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria joined and so by the time the war ended in 1949, an estimated 700,000 Palestinians had fled or been expelled from Israel and had become refugees in neighbouring countries. By now, Israel had control over 75% of what had been Palestine wherefore the Palestinians were left with 25 % . As well as West Bank which was controlled by Jordan and the Gaza strip, controlled by Egypt.

Further wars and fighting took place until in 1967, even West Bank and Gaza were controlled by Israel, where most of the Palestine refugees were settled. However, Israel soon pulled out of Gaza which became the home of many Palestinians and as for Israel, it began to build

settlements in it's areas and it became home to over 600,000 Jews.

As for now, tensions are higher than they've ever been before and the fighting erupts again between the two groups but this time the Israeli police attack the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem on April 13 , which was the first night of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. They disconnected speakers broadcasting the prayers. The Israeli police then raided the mosque on May 7 which left 200 people injured . This was viewed as a huge insult for Muslims, as it happened on a holy muslim site and during one of the holiest nights.

Moreover , over the past few weeks a decision by the Israeli Supreme Court was made to displace six arab families from a consented neighbourhood in the district of East Jerusalem called Sheikh Jarrah. This is further outlined in The New York Times reports where it states “protestors have gathered nightly in Sheikh Jarrah... clashing with riot police and far-right Israeli groups” over what they consider to be an attempt to “remove thousands of Palestinians from strategic areas of East Jerusalem.” Jewish settlers however are arguing that the Palestinians are “squatters” in the area and Aryeh King, deputy mayor of Jerusalem said “If you are the owner of the property and somebody is squatting on your property, wouldn't you have the right to take him out from your property.”

Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank say that they're suffering from Israeli actions and restrictions while Israel says it is only an act of self-defence from Palestinians' violent actions. The main problems are Palestinian refugees need somewhere to go, whether Israel will

continue to have territory over the West Bank, whether they should split Jerusalem in half, and the problem causing the most issue, is the possibility of having Palestine as a state alongside Israel.

This conflict between Israel and Palestine isn't said to end anytime soon however many people are acting on this conflict by either going on protests, informing others about it in the media and through many newspaper articles and so on. For any future peace deal both sides will have to make an agreement to resolve their problems.

**C. Beaini**

## An Opinion on Israel-Palestine

The current conflict in Israel-Palestine has been intense. What I, and presumably the majority of other Marylebone students have observed has all been through social media and British news sources, with a rare mention of a friend of a friend's family member who has been witness to the horrors going on in Israel-Palestine.

I would try to summarise the situation but I believe that that would be in vain. It is utterly complicated and confusing and there are so many layers to it, so for me to attempt to condense about 100 years of distrust and conflict would be futile. Instead, one should educate yourself about the topic from on the ground independent journalists or reading summaries from VARIOUS news outlets as none are free from bias.

The word intense comes to mind when on the subject of the conflict as there is no clear guidance about how to approach the topic and common sense does not seem to cover the many layers and the historical subject. Wariness is needed to know how to talk without sounding anti-Semitic or pro-Israel. Of course the murders and the nearly-civil-war scene is completely unacceptable but on social media it does not seem uncommon for anti-Semitic tropes being used under the name 'pro Palestine'. A testament of the abuse of the 'pro Palestine' movement is that of in St Johns Wood (a Jewish populated area of London) where profanities and abuse were shouted from people in cars bearing the Palestinian flag. This is an extreme example of the rise in antisemitism in the current climate and hatred being spread under the false pretence of something incredibly important. On social media lots of people have fallen victim to attempting to raise awareness of the situation by reposting summaries or statistics or opinions and have accidentally been reposting covertly anti-Semitic things, this is not good and benefits no one.

**T. Brown**

## Questioning

Since last week I have seen people all over social media reposting infographics, videos and tweets about what is currently happening in Israel-Palestine. It ranges from the language that people should use to talk about the conflict to videos of buildings on fire. Illustrations with the purpose of educating and simplifying the context of the conflict. Celebrities replying

to their fans' questions about their opinions with a lot of emojis and exclamation marks explaining they need to learn more. Similarly I feel and perhaps others do too that they ought to have an opinion on this issue. Not just have it, but declare it.

I have been questioning my response to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Should I be reposting these infographics? Yes, I should because Palestinian voices need to be heard. Yes, I should because it starts a conversation. Yes, I should because staying silent will not change anything. No, I shouldn't because it is too reductive and can never accurately portray what it's like. No, I shouldn't because is my opinion valid if it's just me reposting someone else's content. No, I shouldn't because some of the infographics include explanations which are rooted in antisemitism and I don't want to stand for that. Is it better to silently observe or post something which I am not sure I have an informed view on. Is it worse to post something which will have little actual effect so I feel good about myself and escape criticism.

These are the sort of questions I have been facing.

What I have noticed is that the reposting does have an impact. It has had an impact in schools. People are getting involved. The conflict doesn't seem distant. It's not happening somewhere far from me but right on my social media. Am I thinking about it for the right reasons? Does it matter whether someone's activism is performative or not? Does it stop people from dwelling deeper and actually doing their own research? Or does it create momentum for change to take place? Is it silly for me to worry whether I should

repost an infographic or not when people are dying or is that the exact reason why I should worry? Will I ever know enough ?

The social media conflict is almost an alternative universe, at least for me. I get to see thousands of videos of Palestinians, many petitions raising money and tweets condemning the Israeli government. However the reality of the situation is that Palestinians don't have as much power as the Israeli government. They don't have a voice in the media or a place where their stories are heard without interruption. They don't have a country or a seat in the UN, an army or sufficient weapons. Is the information overload making me lose interest, empathy and the ability to listen? Or is the information making me gain interest, empathy and the ability to listen?

All this agonizing has not made me decide what's the right course of action for my "social media" response. But it has made me learn more. Listen more. Read more. Talk more. Perhaps it has been of good use. Maybe the answer will come once I know more or maybe it won't but I will still know more than I did just by asking.

**C. Joffe**

## Palestinian Poem

Gaza is encircled by death  
but the death surrounded  
it with love.  
Gaza surrounded by injustice  
but hope encircled it  
with peace.  
Gaza lives without peace  
but resistance exists Our presence  
is our future.  
Gaza, habibti keep standing  
by flowers hugging the Moon  
and life forever.  
Gaza tells the story of the Palestinian  
phoenix when it conquers death.  
Gaza death, blood and carnage love and  
scream in the silence.  
Gaza be revolution and dream hurricane  
and mermaid of angels in the world.  
Gaza make a child smile after everything  
around die and stay life  
Gaza will never die and will never kneel,  
will keep up hope and future from the sky.

**V. Kastrati**

## Diversity Ambassadors

### Update from the diversity ambassadors:

We recently had a meeting on the topic of Asian hate, where we discussed how the issue has existed for a long time, but has not been recognised. We also talked about how its prevalence is made known primarily through social media, and that

this should widen to all forms of communication in society, including education. Action points from this meeting included writing a list of word choices, what can be very oppressive, and making a start at PSHE presentations.

## Asian-hate

Across the world, there has been increased awareness of the issue of Asian hate, from personal stories to live footage. This may sound and seem like a new concern to some, however, Asian hate has existed for a very long time.

Asian hate is the mistreatment of Asians because of their ethnicity. It must be stressed that Asians include not only East Asians, but South-East Asians, who are usually not regarded or included when using this term.

Something incredibly concerning about the way Asian hate was raised is that social media was the primary means of communication. Asian hate is rarely, if not never, spoken about in the media, and this lack of representation makes the issue seem less significant, which simply emphasises the need for action to be done to rectify and move forward.

The first news concerning Asian hate was in America, where people of the Asian community, particularly the elderly, were being physically and violently assaulted because of their ethnicity. There has also been a harmful association with East Asians and the pandemic, which has amplified the hate experienced by many, particularly those of Chinese heritage.

There are subtle racist remarks that have been normalised in society. ‘Do you eat cats and dogs?’ Slanting eyes to seem Asian. Categorising everyone who is South-East Asian is Pakistani. Assuming that all Asians are siblings. These common phrases are in fact extremely hurtful, making those subjected feel oppressed. But because these comments have been so normalised in society, they are still thrown about carelessly, unaware of the outward prejudice it poses. Many of us have found that we have always known about Asian hate, but it has been so normalised since we were very young that we never recognised it.

So, what can be done about this issue? Starting with you, the reader, going on social media and educating yourself on Asian-hate is the first step. Instagram handles we recommend looking at:  
[@angryasianfeminist](#)

[@hateisavirus](#)  
[@dearasianyouth](#)  
[@dearasianyouthlondon](#)

Next, talking to your friends about this issue. Making sure it’s known and that we should be fighting it in everything we do.

**G. Leung**

*‘Asian Hate. So normalised. So prevalent. But it has hurt so many. Due to the pandemic, many Asians have experienced subtle racism, but also faced traumatic experiences: An Asian boy beat up, an Asian girl spat on by a white Australian, many Asian elderly stabbed and killed while many stood by. Asians cannot be silenced when it comes to race. It has been there from the start, but not many have spoken about it.*

*To be an ally, many should educate themselves first. Read books, understand Asian hate and listen to your fellow Asian friends. Never stop striving for a society where it can always improve.’ - C. Chan*

## **Mental Health** **Ambassadors**

Hi everyone, we hope you have had a nice weekend. Last week’s theme of the week was Kindness so we are going to be talking about being kind to yourself. Sometimes this can be harder than being kind to others. This article is on the topic of Self-acceptance. It is a huge part of being kind to yourself.

**- Z. and M. Soni**

### **What is self-acceptance?**

Self-acceptance is exactly what its name suggests; the state of complete acceptance of yourself. To truly accept yourself means embracing who you are, without any

conditions or exceptions. This definition emphasises the importance of accepting everything about yourself. It isn't enough to simply embrace the positive aspects about yourself; to practice true self-acceptance, you must also embrace what in your eyes seem to be the less desirable and negative aspects of yourself.

If you're thinking that accepting all the negative aspects of yourself sounds difficult...you're not wrong! It is not easy to accept the things that we desperately want to change about ourselves; may it be a physical quality or a personality trait. However, counterintuitively it is only by truly accepting ourselves that we can even begin the process of meaningful self-improvement.

The concept of self-acceptance can also be described as the awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses and the realistic appraisal of one's talents and capabilities. It can include feeling worthy regardless of past behaviors and choices. So the first step to self acceptance is self awareness- to acknowledge your strengths as well as what you consider to be your "weaknesses".

When it comes to discussing mental health, self-esteem and self-acceptance are important topics. **So what is the difference between the two different concepts?**

Self-esteem is about how we compare ourselves to others and the way we interact with the world. Even though we should work on trying not to compare ourselves, sometimes we tend to do it unintentionally. It is natural and a part of being human. Unlike how self-esteem can change, self-acceptance is a constant. It is seen as more liberating than self-esteem

because it reduces the need to compare ourselves to others. On the other hand, what makes the two similar is that they can both be improved and worked on.

## **Why is self-acceptance important?**

Self- acceptance is key because it is the first step towards self-improvement. You need to accept yourself before working on your weaknesses.

It plays a role in building a strong relationship with yourself. Self-acceptance can lead to being confident in yourself. This means it is easier to believe you can achieve your goals. It will also be necessary in order to prevent you from projecting any of your insecurities onto the people that surround you.

It is essential for your mental and emotional well-being and helps you learn to appreciate everything that makes you unique and who you are. Accepting yourself will help you be aware of your emotions and feelings, may they be negative or positive.

The beauty of self-acceptance is that it encourages us to step out of our comfort zone in order to find new experiences. This is because it can become easier when we remove the pressure we put on ourselves to be successful at everything we do; there is not much at stake.

## **How can one work on their self-acceptance?**

It is important to keep in mind that self-acceptance cannot be achieved with a

quick fix solution. If it was easy, we would all truly accept ourselves. The older and more mature you get in life, the easier it can be to achieve self-acceptance.

Everyone's progress in accepting themselves is different and it is never too late to start working on your self acceptance but why wait and not start now? The following are some suggestions on how you could practice self-acceptance:

## **1. Identify your strengths**

These are the things you either enjoy doing or are good at. Be aware of your positives. Regularly practising and developing what you enjoy and are good at will help you with your confidence.

## **2. Face your fears**

To protect our self-esteem, we often do what we know we are likely to succeed in and leave those that will expose our perceived weaknesses. This can restrict personal growth. Consciously do the things you know you have been putting off.

## **3. Embrace what you believe makes you unique**

Ask yourself how these differences may benefit you in the future and how they add value to your life.

## **4. Let go of the things you can't change**

There isn't much point focusing on the things you cannot change. Instead, focus on your positives and focus on developing and cultivating them.

## **5. Celebrate your accomplishments**

Make a list of everything you've accomplished so far and keep adding to it when you can. It doesn't matter at all how small or big these are. Keep it somewhere you can see it regularly and constantly be reminded of these accomplishments. Be proud of yourself and reward yourself!

## **6. Find support**

Accept and acknowledge when you are struggling or need some help. Talk about your feelings with any trusted adult or even a friend.

## **7. Have a safe environment**

Surround yourself with people who accept you. A contradicting atmosphere can hinder your personal growth and development.

Thank you for reading this week's edition. We hope you found it helpful. Best of luck to anyone who has any upcoming exams or assessments, be proud of all the work you have done. Have a lovely week!

Later this week we will be announcing the winners of the Mental Health Awareness Week Art Competition.

On the next page, we have added some information on where to seek help and support on Mental Health, as well as some links to resources you might find interesting. Please also have a look at

this week's 'Feel Good Challenges' below.

- [Headspace on stress](#) - there are loads of other Headspace meditations on Youtube to explore if you don't have Netflix
- [Guided meditation to build resilience](#)
- [Resilience exercises you can facilitate](#)
- **Ted Talks** - there are so many to choose from
- Anna Freud website: suggestions for self-care strategies:  
<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>
- Youngmind: general information about all related to Mental Health  
<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

## Where to find support:

**Talk to a trusted adult:** Your **tutor** is always a good place to start. We also have counsellors, your Head of Year, your Director & Deputy Director of Sixth Form, Father Jack. If you need some support, you can talk to any member of staff.

**Self Care:** Check out the ideas on the **Anna Freud** website.  
<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

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## **THE FEEL GOOD CHALLENGES OF THE WEEK!**

Pick one to do or try and do all three to be a feel good master! This week they are all on the theme of self-acceptance and being kind to yourself.



Make a note of at least 5 things you like about yourself. Think about how you could potentially embrace them. This list could also include things you are proud of yourself for.



Try to write a letter to your past self. Think and write about how you

have improved... Have you changed?



Do

something you consider to be out of your comfort zone. Maybe there is something you have been wanting to do but have been putting it off.

Please feel free to contact the Mental Health Ambassadors using the email below if there are issues you want to learn more about, if you would like to join the Mental Health Ambassadors Team or if you have an idea for a Feel Good Challenge. Thank you! :)



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