



A Face. A Memory. A Day

P a n i m . Y o m . Z i k a r o n

Facilitator Guide





Introduction

A Face. A Memory. A Day (Panim. Yom. Zikaron) is an artistic venture that commemorates the lives of fallen soldiers and victims of terror through animated short films.

Fragments of memory, small moments from the lives of the fallen that friends and relatives have chosen to share come to life on screen and offer a light touch of eternity. At the core of the project is the belief that these films can provide deeper meaning, personal and national, to Yom HaZikaron, with their focus on glimpses of life rather than moments of death.

Well-known and aspiring animators have captured memories of encounters and grace in the lives of the fallen. The project includes more than 40 films that constitute a virtual collection of Israeli national memory.

The films and educational guides are available on the website in Hebrew as well as in English, and a select number in the [Spanish](#) and Russian translation.

Guides

To commemorate Yom HaZikaron (Israel's Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terror) in a more meaningful way, Beit Avi Chai has created a diverse set of interactive educational curriculums for its *A Face. A Memory. A Day* animated film project.

Each curriculum includes descriptive overviews, activities, questions, and topics for discussion. Each curriculum is also purposely designed to be adapted in different educational settings for different age groups, with tools for educators and Jewish professionals.

We have no doubt that you will find this project as meaningful as we do. Should you have questions or thoughts that you would like to share, we welcome you to write to us at: remember.edu@avichai.org.il.

Encounter

Activity Guide for the Animated Short Films “Strings” and “Night Watch”

Facilitator Introduction:

Sometimes it is all about the place. Other times it is all about the people. Often it is all about the timing. We find ourselves in an encounter with someone. We might not really know the person, but something about the interaction feels special. The moment lingers. We find it hard to forget. We connect deeply with someone else, and the meeting leaves an impression that offers us a new perspective and even allows us to transcend our own reality and grow.

This Activity Guide invites us to connect with two individuals about whom we know only a little – Yaron Blum and Arie Aloni.

Yaron was a soldier who was killed in a terror attack in 1995, aged 20. Arie was an infantry soldier who was killed in action during the Yom Kippur War in 1973 at the age of 21.

Both Yaron and Arie made a lasting impression on other people through a brief encounter. One of those encounters involved deep conversation, the other was a moment of shared interest and activity. After Yaron and Arie's deaths, the memories of these encounters took on a new significance.

Goals:

- * Share the stories of Yaron Blum and Arie Aloni and the single points in time when they made a lasting impression on someone else
- * Explore how an encounter with another person can become a meaningful and memorable moment
- * Embrace the new relationships and the opportunities for growth that life presents us with

Activity Length:

The suggested length is 55 min. For a shorter activity, please modify.

Note to Facilitator:

- *The comments in blue boxes are simply points for the facilitator to consider; they are not intended to be used as scripted answers, nor are they intended to limit or stifle a conversation that veers in a different direction. These questions are purposefully broad and are designed to facilitate thoughtful discussion among the students. The comments can be used to aid the facilitator's preparation as a springboard for further thought, or they can be replaced by other observations.*
- When participants share observations or conclusions about the films, encourage them to support their conclusions by pointing to the specific details from the videos they have watched.
- Due to the sensitive nature of the material, please familiarize yourself fully with the lesson plan to ensure that the questions and activities are appropriate for the circumstances of the participants. The Activity Guide contains some options and variations to suit different needs; please adapt the questions and activities to the sensitivities of your participants.
- Consider setting up a "Parking Lot" for ideas and observations that the students share, but that won't be addressed in the course of the activity. Students can be invited to explore these items through writing or art and share them with the class at a later date.



Part I

Animated Short Film *"Strings"*

(15 min)

Facilitator: This activity is part of the Beit Avi Chai project "A Face. A Memory. A Day." The project uses animated short films to commemorate fallen IDF soldiers and victims of terror in a way that brings a part of them back to life. The different animation techniques and artistic styles allow us to connect with the lives, stories and values of the fallen. The short films are intended to help us reflect upon these people's lives and their loss and consider how they can inspire us today. Today we are going to watch two films about two different soldiers.

Our first animated film is about Yaron Blum, a soldier who was killed in 1995, aged 20, in a suicide bombing at a bus stop at a main junction in Beit Lid along with 21 other soldiers and 1 civilian.

Yaron was born in Jerusalem in 1974, the oldest of three children. He loved computers and programming, music and science fiction and was a good student. He was known to be quiet, but an excellent friend. Yaron's service in the IDF had him working in the Armory in a combat service support role – a role he did not enjoy particularly, even though he successfully used some of his tech skills to computerize the inventory. He enrolled in the Open University during his army service and was hoping to study in the Hebrew University.

The film we are about to watch focuses on a single event, a musical jam session that Yaron took part in with a couple of friends.

We are going to watch the film twice. The first time is for you to get a first impression and consider how the film makes you feel. The second time will be guided by specific questions and observations.”



Show the short film *“Strings”* (Length: 1 mins 59 seconds)

After screening the film, ask the students what they observed and how they felt in response. This can be done in small groups or all together.

Before we watch the film a second time, pay attention to the following details:

- ? What happens when Yaron passes the plug to his friend?
- ? At what point is Yaron portrayed playing in a forest?
- ? How does the traffic light fit with what the narrator says?
- ? Can you chart the friends' communication in words, visual cues, and physical interactions?
- ? In which direction do the birds fly?”

These questions can be shown on the screen or written on the board in advance.



Show the movie a second time.

Review the students' answers to the questions.

There is some more information about Yaron's life on the [project's website](#).

Facilitator: The film shows a music session with Yaron, Eitan and Dudu. Eitan was not a close friend and Dudu only met Yaron once, at the session shown in the film. They only had the chance for that one meeting because the following day Yaron was killed in a terror attack.

The film opens with some birds sitting on a wire while another flock of birds flies past in the sky. When the film ends, Yaron plucks the strings and a lot of birds fly upwards while a small number remain on the wire.

❓ Why do some birds fly away while others remain still?

At one point in the film we zoom in on the keyboard player and notice the birds through the window behind him. The birds seem to fly out of his head and into the next window where Yaron is playing the guitar. It is as if the birds enter Yaron's head, so that when he closes his eyes he imagines himself in the forest.

❓ What does the direction of the birds' flight symbolize?

There is a lot of attention given to the instruments as well as the warm-up routine before the three characters in the film begin to play. We hear Yaron's guitar even before the film shows the three of them playing together. Their music is synchronized.

❓ Why do you think the film's creators chose to depict this one moment of soldiers playing together?

As the three of them sit in the car, exchanging a smile in the rear view mirror, the narrator says, "I think about how we could have talked some more."

Key Discussion Questions:

- ❓ What do you imagine might have happened to their relationship if Yaron had not been killed the next day?
- ❓ To what extent did Yaron's death heighten the significance of the encounter?

Part 2

Animated Short Film "Night Watch"

(15 min)

Facilitator: We are going to watch the second film now. This one is about a soldier who was killed at an IDF outpost on the Suez Canal by Egyptian forces during the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

Arie Aloni was born on Kibbutz Dan but spent his high school years in Beer Sheva and Jerusalem. Arie loved writing poetry, reading, and hiking. He served in the IDF infantry. After his death, Arie was awarded a distinguished service medal for bravery: he helped other wounded soldiers under Egyptian fire despite having been injured in the head.

The film we are about to watch focuses on a moment Arie shared with another soldier as they spent the night together on guard duty. The soldiers did not know each other and were not serving in the same unit.



Show the film "Night Watch" (Length: 2 mins 18 seconds)

After screening the film, ask the students what things stood out for them and if they saw any connection between the two films?

*Tell participants that they will watch the film twice, **get into pairs and together try to pay attention to the following things:***

- ❓ What sources of light do we see during the course of the film?
- ❓ How does the cigarette smoke move?
- ❓ Whose image is reflected in the coffee cup?
- ❓ What are the different positions that Arie and Ehud are shown in?
- ❓ In what way is the opening shot of the guard tower different from the closing shot?

These questions can be shown on the screen or written on the board in advance.



Show the film a second time.

Review the students' answers to the questions.

There is some more information about Arie's life on the [project's website](#).

Facilitator: The film is based on an event described in the book by Ehud Banai – one of Israel's most famous musicians. The text and words we hear in the film are taken directly from Banai's account of his encounter with Arie and what he remembers Arie talking about.

The film opens at night with the guard tower outlined in the beam of light. We see a moth buzzing around the light which is then reflected in Arie's eyes before cutting to the bright flame of the cigarette lighter.

? What does the light symbolize throughout the movie?

As the soldiers' cigarette smoke drifts upwards in a spiral, we see the two of them standing together on the edge looking out over the water. They go from sitting face to face to being back to back on the boat. Their positions in space change throughout the night and their guard duty.

? How does the dynamism of the film reflect Arie and Ehud's relationship?

In one key exchange Arie describes the continental drift along the Great Rift Valley. He describes how slow the process is – a millimeter every million years.

? What do you think Arie meant when he said, "I'm actually glad to know that nothing stays put"? (1:04)

Arie is thinking about change and movement in life. There they were, stuck at an army base, waiting all night outdoors on guard duty, with little freedom. Arie might have been trying to find some hope and optimism. However slow things are, however long the army service or an all-night guard duty seems to last, things are changing.

? Why do you think they are talking about what they are talking about?

Arie opened a significant, almost spiritual, conversation about life and meaning and our place in the universe – continental drift, the passage of time, life's journeys, destinations and stops along the way.

? Would you like to have been involved in the conversation? What would you have said?

Part 3

Small Group Discussion and Reading

(20 mins)

Facilitator: Sometimes we also find ourselves having amazing conversations like those between Arie Aloni and Ehud Banai. We might also experience one-off encounters with people that we barely know, like Yaron Blum and his musician friends, Ehud and Dudu. We are going to think now about what made these encounters so significant and memorable.

Discussion Questions

- ① Why does it matter that both films showed people who did not know each other well?
- ① If you could choose to experience one of the two different encounters we saw, which would be more meaningful for you and why?

Facilitator: Have you ever been asked who you would like to have a deep and meaningful conversation with? Often, when we get asked this sort of questions we mention significant relationships, historical figures or celebrities.

- ① What if you had to choose someone in your life who you barely know? Who would you choose to talk to?

See [Appendix 1](#) for a quote from an article called "Talking to Strangers." Read the quotation and ask the group what they think.

- * Describe a time when you connected with strangers or people you barely knew. Under what circumstances did it happen?
- * How do you know when a momentary encounter becomes meaningful and memorable?
- * Neither Yaron nor Arie's encounters were planned in advance. What are the moments in life that would allow you to experience this kind of interaction?

Conclusion

(5 min)

Facilitator: This activity gave us an insight into the lives of Yaron Blum and Arie Aloni and the people who met them in a specific moment in time.

The aim of the “A Face. A Memory. A Day.” project is to commemorate Israel’s fallen soldiers and victims of terror in a unique way.

We learned about the impact that one single encounter with Yaron and Arie had on other people. Yaron played in a music jam session the day before he was killed in a terror attack and Arie spent the night talking at length with a random soldier on guard duty.

Both experiences made a lasting impression on other people who preserved the memory of the moment years later. Without them intending for anything important to happen Yaron and Arie offered other people an opportunity to grow and be impacted by the deep and real connection they created.

This activity allowed us to reflect on the people we encounter over the course of our own lives and to think how we can embrace the opportunity to transform our encounters into meaningful and memorable moments.



Appendix I

Quotation from the Article “Talking to Strangers”

“Most conversations will only be just a few minutes of polite chit-chat. And yes, you might get ignored. But it only takes a short time to make a lasting impact on someone’s life. We are in the middle of a loneliness crisis, made worse by the pandemic. Our world feels more divided with each passing day, yet conversations with strangers have helped me see that we are far more alike than what news reports would have us believe. We all experience love, grief, relationship struggles, work struggles, obstacles, and all parents just want what’s best for their kids, regardless of circumstance. Assuming the appropriate comfort level and general pandemic rules, the holiday season is a great time to start a conversation with a stranger. You never know where it might lead.”

Source: Opinion Piece by Paula Davis from forbes.com - **Talking To Strangers: The Importance Of Getting To Know People You Don’t Know**