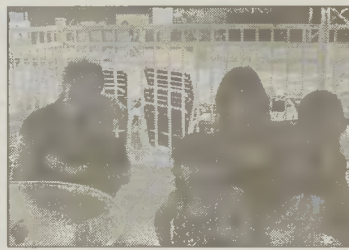


# Newcomers are Welcomed to Charlotte

The JCC and the Jewish Federation have co-hosted a series of events for newcomers. More than 100 new families have joined the JCC and the newcomers' "schmooze" gives people an opportunity to get to know each other and current residents and members, many of whom have been "newcomers" at one time as well.

This summer the "Schmooze by the Pool" was a big success.

Upcoming Newcomers' Schmooze events are:



Tina Iglesias and children Tyler and Louis; Tina Rogovin and children Sophia and Hayley.

**Sunday, October 3, 10:30 AM, Camp Mindy, Special Program: Dr. Jane Marcus will lead a discussion on "Making a Successful Transition for You and Your Family."**

**Wednesday, October 6, 9:15 AM, JCC, Jaffa Lounge.**

**Wednesday, October 20, 9:15 AM, JCC Jaffa Lounge.**

For more information call Marnie Moskowitz at 704-944-6764 or Marcia Lampert at 704-944-6731. ✪

**Wednesday, September 22, 9:15 AM, JCC, Jaffa Lounge.**

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## Compassionate Listening

(Continued from page 15)

October 10-18 event. The project has been successfully offered in 2002 and 2003 in Germany.

"Why? This story is more than 50 years old. Because if that story finds light," energy worker Lynda Boozer, of Charlotte, one of the seven-member support team sug-

gests, "then change is possible on the planet. This story holds the archetypal darkest truth."

The Compassionate Listening Project began in 1990 and has done the bulk of its healing and peace-building work in the Middle East. Israelis and Palestinians have participated in many reconciliation projects. Some of these are documented in the video, "The Children of Abraham."

This is not easy work. The support team for the 30 or so participants includes several therapists, a psychiatrist and others trained in the art of Compassionate Listening. Yet explaining the process to others is a challenge, because the process itself is not "word" dependent. "There is a place for dialogue, but dialogue is a place of the head," facilitator Cohen explains. "We try and move back into the heart."

"Dialogue is intellectual discussion. Compassionate Listening is about moving the energy from the head to the heart," she continued. It is also not something to be confused with therapeutic "active listening," a technique that includes verbally mirroring back your partner's comments before moving ahead in discussion.

Compassionate Listening is about intention; it is about the willingness to be open to hear; Compassionate Listening is about building trust, Boozer offered. "It's really an art form. There are techniques, but they deepen your capacity to be an artist. ... We use expressive art, much more than journaling. And we use a lot of ritual. We want to get it out of the words."

The energy work offered by Boozer is a tool, along with massage and other relaxation bodywork, helping people transcend their "body fear." When she worked with a group last year in Israel, an Israeli woman told her in distress that she felt her head and her heart were ready to connect and move forward with her Palestinian listening partner, but her body seized up in terror at the (initial) physical proximity. Boozer was able to help her physically relax and release the muscle memories of fear.

Another of Boozer's experiences was witnessing a German in last year's group struggle with the recent knowledge that his father had been charged with Nazi war

crimes. The intense and wide-ranging feelings plaguing this man were profoundly altered by his participation in the project. The German participants are often witnesses of the atrocities, or children of soldiers.

"Watching the depth of the German struggle, their angst, the stripping of their goodness - they've worn that their whole lives," Boozer said. "To own it [their personal and national history] yet to dismantle the shame and the guilt, is part of the process. To find the essential goodness of the Germans and the essential trust of the Jews - this is part of the work. "Being with Germans and Jews in Bergen-Belson can't be anything less than potent," she continued.

"I got involved in this work as a German, because I want my country back," Mark Dronsfield, a facilitator of the upcoming American project as well as past projects in Germany, said. "I have realized that in order to get my country back fully I need the Jewish people back in my country. So the goal is to make it safe enough and welcoming enough for a million Jewish people to happily live in Germany. This project is a big step towards that. It gave me back my faith in humanity."

"The World War II story lives in Israel. Jews want this piece of their story understood by Palestinians," Boozer continued. To this end a Palestinian/Israeli group went together to Auschwitz, "with no agenda. Just to be present to the story of another."

"Compassionate Listening can bring large change," Director Leah Green says. "If it starts with just one person and it grows, that is how peace begins. It is eyeball to eyeball."

"With Compassionate Listening we don't come with answers, we don't come with solutions, we come to build connections. This is so counter to our culture of doing, of having a goal. And this culture is good, but it must be set aside during this bridge building. Then ask, 'what does my heart long to do in action?'" The nature of Compassionate Listening work fills Boozer with "delight, wonder and awe. And these things just make popcorn out of your heart."

For more information about the October Baltimore/Washington project please call Andrea Cohen at 206-523-6018 or Brian Berman at 360-297-3358. ✪

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