

## Summary and Goals of Session 1:

*In the first session, we welcome the group, introduce participants to the sessions, set community agreements, and start to explore the Nakba.*

**Total time:** Approximately 1 hour

### Materials and set-up:

- Whiteboard/chart paper/markers
- Video equipment with Internet connection
- Notebooks/paper/pen
- Designated chart paper/whiteboard space for ongoing group reflections

## I. (10 min) Welcome:

**Facilitator Action:** *Welcome participants to this course, with summary and goals of the Facing the Nakba sessions.*

*Guide introductions, asking participants to share their names, why they are here, and what they hope to get out of the training.*

*Introduce the structure of the course and intended forms of participation, including note-taking, reflection notebooks, materials, etc.*

- *Personal reflection notebooks: a place for each person to write ongoing personal thoughts, questions, comments, and reflections.*
- *Group “notes”: facilitators will maintain an ongoing “notebook” on chart/butcher paper/whiteboard/computer with projector, for ongoing group reflection activities and thoughts or ideas that participants want to share with the group.*

## II. (5-10 min) Community Agreements:

**Facilitator Note:** *Ground rules are set at the beginning of a new group to help set the tone for a space of mutual respect. It’s important to create an inclusive, welcoming atmosphere where community agreements are determined together. These could include ways to deal with conflict, agreeing to disagree, confidentiality, respecting each other’s ideas, and the right to choose not to answer a certain question, among others.*

**Facilitator Action:** Guide the process with questions like: What should be included in our guidelines for how we want to engage with each other in this training? Write suggestions as they are shared. Once the guidelines are written, check with the group to confirm that everyone is able and willing to adhere to the guidelines. The community agreements should remain in a visible place throughout the sessions so participants and facilitators can refer back to them, as needed.

### III. (20 min) Common early understandings around the founding of the State of Israel

#### Materials and Set-up

- Reflection questions written and posted

#### 1. (5 min) Initial Reflections

**Facilitator Action:** Read each of the quotations below and, with each statement, ask for a show of hands from people who heard the statement when they first heard about the establishment of the state of Israel. Participants may want to add other statements to this list as well.

“How many of you heard...”

1. “When the first Jews arrived here, Palestine was empty. A land without a people for a people without a land.”
2. “Arabs came to Palestine to take advantage of the economy the Jewish settlers were developing.”
3. “The Partition Plan was approved in 1947 because the world recognized that a Jewish state had to be established. The Jews accepted the Partition Plan, but the Arabs rejected it, which is why the war broke out. That’s why they, not us, are responsible for its results.”
4. “The Arabs who left their villages in 1947-48 chose to do so at the behest of the Arab armies expecting to return after an Arab victory.”
5. “The 1948 War of Independence was a war for survival. It was a war of the few against the many. Although we won, later events proved that we must continue to live by the sword.”
6. “Jews and Palestinians have both been living on this land from time immemorial. Thus Israel has an equal claim and Palestinians must share the territory.”
7. “The creation of Israel was another example of colonialism.”
8. “World guilt about the Holocaust is why there is an Israel.”

9. "Creation of Israel required the displacement of thousands of Palestinians."
10. "The creation of a national home for the Jewish people is based on international agreement in which Britain was charged with establishing a 'national home for the Jewish people' in Palestine."
11. "Palestinian refugees and their descendants are still in camps because Arab states have insisted it remains that way."

## 2. (15 min) Group Discussion

**Facilitator Action:** Divide participants into groups of four and allow a few minutes of reflection before starting the discussion. Go over the discussion questions posted on the wall/screen. Each participant will have a designated amount of time to share their thoughts on the following questions:

- What was the story you heard when you began hearing a narrative (whenever that was in your life) of what happened in 1948 and the establishment of the State of Israel?
- Who told it to you?
- How did you learn it?
- Had you heard different stories?
- Has this story changed for you? When? Why?

**Facilitator Note:** Decide on a time limit and let participants know how you will use it.

## IV. (10 min) Framing

**Facilitator Note:** The following video refers to a recreational park situated on the site of three Palestinian villages that were occupied and demolished by the Israeli army in June 1967. The 10,000 villagers were expelled and told that anyone remaining would be killed. The video illustrates the ongoing nature of the displacement of Palestinians from their homes. For additional background on the subject, the facilitator may want to watch, and possibly make available to participants, the longer [42 minute video](#), "Memory of the Cactus" and/or for deeper historical context, these two videos, "[Palestine Diary: Part 1](#)" and "[Palestine Diary: Part 2](#)."

**Facilitator Action:** Show Canada Park [video](#), “Traveling on Ruins.” Guide brief discussion about the video by asking a few participants for their thoughts and reactions.

## V. (20 min) Closing

### 1. (15 min) Closing Discussion

**Facilitator Note:** This discussion allows participants to further express their feelings, address their concerns, and share their initial reactions before moving on to the next sessions. Prior to discussion, remind participants of the guidelines agreed upon at the start of the session. You may want to go around in a circle, so that everyone who wants to participate will have the opportunity to share their thoughts.

**Facilitator Action:** Guide discussion and address general feelings, thoughts, fears, reactions, comments about the session, workshop, themes.

### 2. (5 min) Preparation for Next Session

**Facilitator Action:** Ask participants to read the following items in preparation for the next session.

#### Participant Prep for Session 2

- [“The Dispossessed”](#) by Saleem Haddad, Slate Magazine
- [Excerpt from “Strangers in the House: Coming of Age in Occupied Palestine”](#) by Raja Shehadeh