

My name is Kale Davidoff

00:27:20: - 1:32:13 About a team mission excel, I was a team mission in 2006, it's something that the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit does usually every 2 years with high school students and they take them to Israel and it's really, I mean, I've been to Israel 4 times and they've all been organized trips and as far as I'm concerned there's no better trip than the team mission. I think that the itinerary is always amazing, the people are always amazing and you get to go with Rabbis from your community and it's just a pretty amazing experience. You do things that you don't really get a chance to do on other organized trips so really I had the time of my life, um, I've never had an experience like that, I've never had a trip like that. Each trip to Israel, no matter whether it's organized or not, is a special experience, but team mission, there aren't words to describe it; it's really that amazing.

1:32:20 – 1:45:23 There were 217 I think is the exact number; there were around 200 students who went on the team mission from Detroit and the Detroit area.

1:48:14 – 3:53:06 Well um, we um, when it all started we had just arrived up north, I think we were staying in a kibbutz right out in the Canarat, which is across from Tiberias which is a city in Israel and we had heard about what was happening and we kind of knew how serious it was going to get, um and I don't think any of us were scared, no one was everyone was thinking, well we're far away from the action so to speak and it's not something that we should be worried about and we weren't. I remember me and a few friends were sitting on the beach on the Canarat on a Friday night and we were just watching the sky and there were just these Israeli fighter planes after Israeli fighter plane flying over the Canarat and it wasn't scary, nothing was scary about it. It was almost like I felt protected, like people where doing what they need to do. And then the next day, um, my friend and I were in our room and we heard a really loud boom and, uh, one of our counselors came in, starting pounding on the door telling us we need to go to the dinning room as soon as possible. When we were walking to the dining room we could see across the Canart, Tiberias and there were smoke clouds everywhere and that's when it really hit that was, I mean, you always go to Israel and when you get there you always about these things, bombings and when you get there and you're there you don't feel scared at all, but um, it's different when you see, it really um hit home, so to speak.

3:53:08 – 5:08:18 Selfish as this sounds, I was think what probably a lot of people were thinking and that's that the trip was probably going to be cancelled and we had two and half weeks left of the trip and no one wanted that, I didn't want that. That was my first thought, um, and it wasn't short after, it was probably 20 minutes after they told us that we going home. I've never seen so many people crying at once, it was pretty emotional. It almost felt like we were running away too. I didn't want to leave because I felt like, you know, we had Israeli friends with us and we went back to our homes and they had to stay there and face reality. I kind of wanted to stay there and be with them and go through what Israeli's go through as any every day part of life as this could happen any time. You know living there is the chance that they take and that's how much they love their home.

05:11:05 – 06:07:08 My brother was also in Israel and I called him to make sure he was ok, he probably called me and I called my parents and my parents were probably scared because they've always been telling me that their friend's parents always say there's no reason to be scared when you take a trip to Israel. But it was different, and that was one thing that I knew that I probably had to go home because I knew that my mom was probably really scared. But my brother was also there, so that was really comforting I guess, that he was there with me.

06:23:02 – 07:25:26 My perception of the relationship in Detroit? Like the way I see it? I guess it's the same as everywhere else in the world. There's a lot of tension and there's a lot of arguing and not really people coming together and even in Israel and Detroit, I don't really see a lot of that. I don't really feel like you know, if we're going to solve the problem, it would be good for Arabs and Jews in Israel to get together to solve the problem, but you know, it can start outside of Israel and I think that um I don't really see that happening in the Detroit area. Thank God, it hasn't been violent around here, but I don't know, there's a lot of tension, tension's really the word outside of Israel.

07:34:24 – 8:55:27 I mean not me. I remember when I came home from my trip, the very next day there was a rally at the Sherizetic? And there was a bunch of Jews in Detroit rallying in support of Israel in the war and at the same time there was Arabs in the community who were supporting Arabs in the war in Lebanon and people were standing outside their respective rallies and boycotting them and things like that. I don't really live in an area where there's even a big population of Arab people so I guess I don't see it a lot when I'm out so you know what I mean, there's not a lot of that that I see, but I know it's out there. Maybe that's the problem, maybe it would be better if I lived in a community where it was a little more mixed and not the Jews are here and the Arabs are there.

08:58:12 – 9:28:18 (in response to "do you have any Arab friends") Oh yeah, I do, yeah I have Arab friends. I have no problem with people who are Muslim or Arab. I'm not holding it against them whatever happened or you know, happens. I'm not that kind of person.

9:45:04 – 10:46:08 What does it mean to be Jewish In relation to that experience? You know, what I was saying, being Israeli and being Jewish are two different things and uh, I was saying about how when I was told I had to leave Israel when this war was going on, I felt how, you know, I wanted to feel more a part of Israel and stay there and have to deal with that every day because people who live there, Israeli Jews, have to deal with that every day of the year. It's always on their minds, it's part of their lifestyle. It's unfortunate, but um it really differentiates between: I can just go home when something like that happens, but my Israeli friends have to stay there and deal with it. So that's kind of what I took from it.

10:55:28 (coverage after incident) No, I mean I obviously I was following up on the actual news, I really wasn't following up on the media coverage, I try to stay away from that, especially CNN. I feel like the way they're telling it is unfair, they're not really

telling the whole story and sometimes the way the news channels report the news, whether they mean to or not, it makes it seem, you know either one way or another either this side's wrong or this side's wrong. I kept up on what was happening, but I tried to say away from the news.

11:42:29 – 12:30:24 (CNN bias in favor of Lebanon) Yeah I did feel that CNN was bias in favor of Lebanon. That's just what I felt. I don't know if CNN, the people at CNN or the journalists at CNN feel that way or were trying to do that, but the way I see it: I try to look at the news in partial way. And if I saw it without knowing anything, I would think, wow the Israelis, what are they doing? Why are they bombing this house? But it's not the whole story, you know? They leave stuff out. And I don't think the average, non Jewish American and really the average Jewish American, any American, I don't think people when they see that, realize the whole story and that's the problem.

13:10:27 – 13:49:20 (coverage of the Israeli side) I think that the media might of contacted, I don't really know much about that actually. They tried to contact the Jewish Federation and I think they asked for parents to be interviewed and I think that some did. I mean, that's an interesting take, that's it's our fault that the coverage isn't as it should be, so to speak. I don't know if that's true, I don't really know.

13:49:29 – (read the Detroit News of Free Press?) Sometimes, I guess I don't read it that much.

14:48:20 – Have I thought about what the Lebanese have to go through? Oh yeah, I've definitely thought about it and it's sad, it's horrible what they have to go through.

15:25:13 – 16:13:20 Just as I wanted to realize how the Israelis spend their every day lives with this stuff going on around them, I hadn't thought about what the Lebanese teenagers have to go through every day. I mean, in a way they live under the same kind of circumstances. There's a chance for violence every day. And uh, it really all comes down to people pointing fingers and that's not the main issue. If there's violence in Lebanon or in Israel, it's not good, it doesn't matter who's doing the violence and um, I feel for any other, I feel for Lebanese teenagers just as much as I would Israeli teenagers.

16:22:28 – 17:05:06 When I'm with friends of mind that are Arab or Muslim, um, we sometimes talk about it, but I think we're almost afraid to talk about it. Because it's, you know, it's a delicate subject and um, that's probably not good, we probably should talk about it. Uh, but again it's something that's uh, a touchy subject and I think that when you have friends and you bring up the subject that you know might create some tension, it's not something that you want to talk about. But it's probably something that we should talk about.

17:31:06 – 18:47:08 Are there opportunities for uh... I think people are always trying to sound like they're trying to make it happen, but I don't think people put their money where their mouth's at, but um if you ask my honest opinion, it anything's going to change, it's got to start with the younger generation. And I think my generation is

probably too late, but, you know, that might sound really pessimistic, but I think that you really have to start with kids and get, you know, Arab and Jewish kids to um, you know, talk about these things when they're younger. And uh, try to figure out, try to notice or try to understand, try to understand each other, try to understand the conflict and, you know, hopefully try to figure out how to solve it, um, I mean, as far as people trying to come together in the Jewish and Arab communities in the Metro-Detroit area, uh, I don't see a lot of it, I don't know if someone's trying to make it happen, but I don't see it.

18:59:15 – 19:53:26 Well I give you an incredibly simple answer. No, I don't think that. It's a really tough situation and, you know, a solution's not in the near future if you ask me. And that's sad. You know I wish things were as easy as saying, you know, let's all get together and uh, live happily, but it's not and like I said, I really honestly think it's got to start somewhere else. I think the generation's today have proven they're not ready for change so someone else has to figure it out.

20:21:00 – 21:53:16 Well um, I mean, like I said, the Katyusha rockets, which were not supposed to reach Tiberias, which was the city that I was a lake across. The sea of Galilee separated us and the city of Tiberias and some of those rockets hit that city. So you could say I was in some danger because you know Katyusha rockets are not, it's not precise, so it could've hit us and not Tiberias. But like I said with the Israeli jets. I saw jets fly overhead at night before that happened and like I was saying I felt protected and you really do feel protected in Israel. Um, I was never, I mean, I was sad when that happened, I wasn't scared. Maybe it's because I'm a naïve teenager, um, maybe it's because I was close to a bomb shelter, but um, I wasn't really afraid that it was going to happen to me, maybe I was just... I don't know, I probably should've been scared. But the question about danger, I was kind of in danger, yeah, I mean we were all in danger, anyone was in danger, I mean you know in that time of war in that area... it's a dangerous place. And unfortunately sometimes in time of peace too.