

Happy New Years!

2019: Our three years milestone

B8 of Hope's activities in 2018

1. Presentations, Screenings and Panels in Switzerland and Israel

After the successful screenings of *Disturbing the Peace* in 2017 (which were in the presence of the film director and producers Stephen Apkon and Marcina Hale as well as two Israeli and Palestinian protagonists and activists from *Combatants for Peace* Chen Alon and Sulaiman Khatib), we organized additional screenings in the first quarter of 2018 at Ecole Moser and Institut Florimont, both in Geneva.

[Watch Disturbing the Peace trailer](#)

If you are interested in organizing a private screening for either of these amazing documentaries, please contact us by email at info@B8ofhope.org. Screenings can be combined with Skype calls with protagonists/activists of the concerned organization.

Throughout 2018, members of B8 of Hope were also invited to speak about their work on supporting peace initiatives in Israel-Palestine at the Ecole Internationale La Châtaigneraie campus and the Institut Le Rosey. The goal was to emphasize the role of civil society in conflict resolution and the positive impact ordinary citizens can have in paving the path for solution. We hope to extend this experience to other schools, including public schools in 2019.

In addition to speaking in these wonderful Swiss schools, the University of Tel-Aviv opened its doors to B8 of Hope. In early November 2018, our chairwoman and co-founder Mehra Rimer was invited to speak at the University of Tel-Aviv at the first edition of a conference about innovation in conflict resolution and mediation, organized by Professor Alon Tal and his team.

[Highlights of Mehra Rimer's talk](#)

Karama is a piece of land located near the Gush Etsion junction, in the Palestinian Authority Territories (Area C), near the village of Beit Ummar. The land belongs to the Abu Awwad Family. It has been turned into an incubator for dialogue and non-violence.

A place that gives a space to Palestinian and Israelis to listen to each other's narrative instead of being stuck in their own. Karama is an oasis of peace where Palestinians and Israelis are invited to see the humanity in the other, it is about mutual recognition and

respect. Israelis and Palestinians rarely met as equals but at Karama they are able to do so.

Throughout 2018, B8 of Hope has helped improving the infrastructures of Karama.

Combatants for Peace

Combatants for Peace are ex-Israeli military and former Palestinian fighters, putting aside their weapons to show “there is another way” and standing together as a bi-national community which is based on non-violence.

This year, B8 of Hope focused on their Alternative Memorial Ceremony organized in collaboration with the Parents Circle – Families Forum, a group of bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families that work together for reconciliation.

The Alternative Memorial ceremony took place in April at Ha-Yarkon Park in Tel-Aviv and we contributed to the costs of this powerful event. Despite many administrative and political obstacles, the ceremony was a huge success. Some 6,800 Israelis and Palestinians on both sides of the political divide came together to mourn and acknowledge each other’s grief for loved ones killed in the conflict at this unique joint ceremony, where they called for an end to the violence.

Israeli author David Grossman, whose son Uri was killed in the 2006 Lebanon War was one of the main speakers at the event.

“There is lots of noise around our ceremony” he said, “but we don’t forget this is most of all about memorializing, and beyond the noise behind us there is deep silence around us, the silence of the void of losing our loved ones. My family lost Uri, a young, sweet, smart and funny man. Almost 12 years later it is still hard for me to talk about him publicly. The death of a loved one is the death of a private world, with own special language and its own secrets and will never be again.”

Referring tacitly to the criticism directed to Israelis and Palestinians for choosing to grieve together, he said: “No one can instruct someone else how to grieve ; there is strong feeling that connects us, a pain only we know... Please respect our way,” he said. “It deserves respect.”

He closed his speech by concluding that : “Home is a place whose boundaries are clear and accepted and a person feels relaxed inside of it, a place where one has a future.” “And we Israelis, even after 70 years, we are still not there. Israel at 70 may be a fortress, but it’s still not a home. The solution to the great complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be summed up this way: if the Palestinians don’t have a home then Israelis won’t have a home either.”

Woman Wage Peace

An Israeli movement that creates unity among women from all walks of life, from the right to the left of the political spectrum, Jews, Arab Christians and Muslims, secular and religious, all putting aside their differences and marching and lobbying together for a return to diplomatic ways. 40 000 people participated in their march throughout Israel last year.

This year B8 of Hope partly funded :

- a. On-going workshops of WWP throughout the summer
- b. A documentary called Les Guerrières de la Paix (Warriors for Peace) by the brilliant French film director Hanna Assouline about this movement. This inspiring documentary was screened in Switzerland, France, Morocco and Israel and has proved to be a very useful tool that gives visibility to the incredible work of Women Wage Peace. Our series of screening in Geneva in presence of Hanna and two protagonists was a huge success with approximately 600 guests.
- c. The Women Wage Peace International Congress
- d. On November 27th, 2018, Women Wage Peace held their first International Congress, on the subject: "Removing barriers to Middle East peace".
- e. With funds we collected during the screenings of Guerrières de la Paix in Geneva, we were able to partly sponsor WWP Barriers to Peace Hackaton and International congress. A hackaton with younger generations of the land : Young Arabs, Druze, Israelis and Palestinians came together and for 24 hours worked hard in groups to come up with creative solutions for the violence in the Middle East. The three winners of the Hackathon presented their initiatives at the congress. These included:
 - "Unfiltered": a social media app connecting people based on shared interests to converse regardless of borders. The group's vision: "World peace already exists. All we need to do is expose it."
 - "The Ministry of Peace": A governmental institution to ensure that peace is a continuous international process.
 - "Hi(ghe)re me": A network connecting skilled workers and employees around the Middle East, using an economic approach to peace.

2 states, 1 Homeland - A Land for All

2 States, 1 Homeland is a think-tank that includes a diverse group of Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals, lawyers, geographers, and all sort of thinkers (whether conservatives or revolutionaries) who collaborate to think "out of the box" and find a fairer, updated and realistic version of the Two-States Solution : 2 sovereign States, 2 flags, 2

governments, with a freedom of movement in all the land and with several joint institutions within the framework of a confederation.

In 2018, 2 States 1 Homeland – A Land for All have engaged in public activity, using traditional media outreach, social media and public events, to spread their vision and principles. B8 of Hope allocated funds in support of these activities which are giving more visibility to this new vision of a 2 State Solution.

Their three language [website](#) is up and running partly also thanks to us.

Each of these initiatives convey new ideas and they may or may not be political. What B8 of Hope is interested in and focuses on (and what we love about ALL of them), is the humanization and non-violent aspect of their activities.

Acknowledgments

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Intercontinental Hotel in Geneva which has been amazingly supportive of our gala! Without their huge support and help in reducing the costs of the gala, we could not have planned this event. We are expecting approximately 500 guests. Stay tuned for the invitation email in January!

We would like to thank our circles of friends for giving us :

- sponsorship opportunities of our gala through their foundations and/or companies
- raffle and auction lots

And last but not least : a huge thank you to our amazing energetic volunteers who help us in keeping our costs low. We are always seeking sponsorship but the B8 of Hope co-founders also cover fees out of their own pockets so that the funds we raise go to the projects themselves.

The work of our volunteers contribute hugely in keeping our costs limit, whether it is by :

- Helping us with the coordination of our events (screenings or gala)
 - Welcoming guests at our events
 - Driving our activists from and to the airport and sometimes even cooking meals for them!
 - Accommodating activists at their homes
 - Designing and updating of our website, solving of our IT problems!
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- Designing our save the dates and invitations
- Stapling our homemade brochures

The list is so long ! A heartfelt thank you to those extraordinary friends who are giving their time and energy and making us save money ! Thank you Amanda, Anna, Caroline, Laurence, Maria, Marilé, Maura, Nadia and Weyn.
