

# WAR IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN LANGUAGE FAILS...

MARGARET ATWOOD

**ENOUGH.**  
IT WONT STOP UNTIL WE TALK.

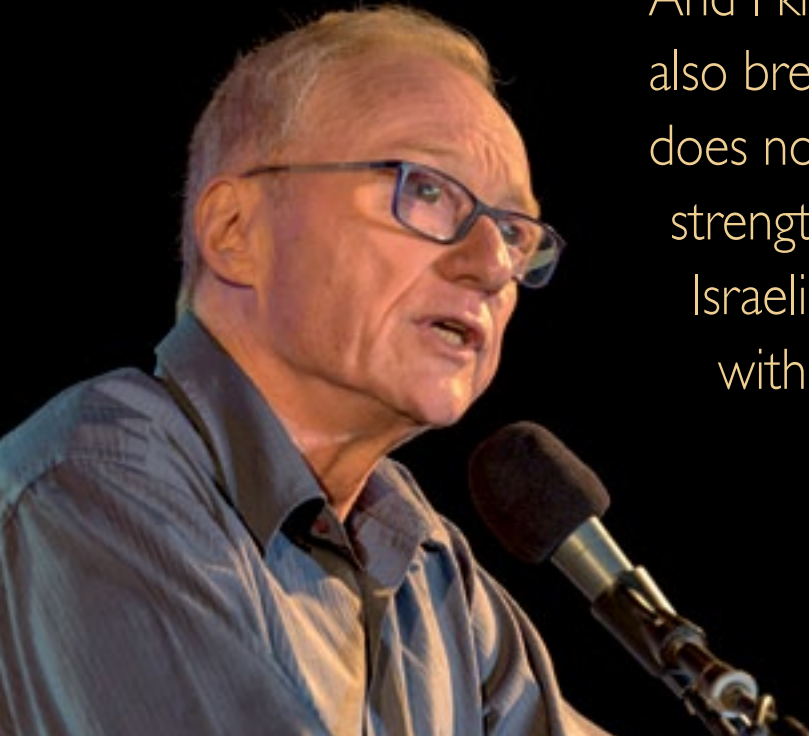
Enough  
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**Parents Circle - Families Forum**



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# Parents Circle Families Forum Annual Report 2018



“ And I know that within the pain there is also breath, creation, doing good. That grief does not isolate but also connects and strengthens. Here, even old enemies — Israelis and Palestinians — can connect with each other out of grief, and even because of it. ”

David Grossman,  
Author and bereaved  
Israeli father

Bereaved Palestinian and Israeli Families for Peace and Reconciliation

We understand how important it is to continue to work with the graduates from our **Parallel Narrative program** as now we have more than a thousand alumni who are aligned to our message and want to go out into the public as activists. We ran five unique courses to learn Hebrew and Arabic. What made these courses special was that the participants worked together on both languages and it gave them an opportunity to speak to each other and practice. Nearly one hundred Palestinians and Israelis benefited.



**A-Twani** is a village in the southern hills of Hebron. It is situated under a very aggressive settlement which has poisoned their sheep, destroyed their olive trees and harassed their children. The Parents Circle – Families Forum met with them to find out their needs. We had an extraordinary day where the alumni from the parallel narrative and the members of the PCFF came from all parts of Palestine and Israel for a day of solidarity. The adults took part in dialogue meetings and the women's meeting was particularly important in understanding the needs of the community. The children had the most fun, they were transformed into Spiderman, butterflies and whatever they wanted by make up and love. The highlight of the day was a mural which the children made under the guidance of our wonderful friends from "Artolution". The mural is dominated by two sheep and the children will see them every morning when they go to school.



## Halas -Enough

This was a gathering of our alumni in Tel Aviv. It was a miracle to see the Palestinians arriving on two buses as the day before there had been a very violent incident in the West Bank. Just to see the Israelis and Palestinians meet would have warmed the hardest of hearts. The panel on Human Rights and the speech by the European Ambassador were the highlights of the morning. All the participants then went outside with their white umbrellas and were joined by the general public in a resounding scream: "ENOUGH DEATH" "ENOUGH VIOLENCE" "ENOUGH OCCUPATION"

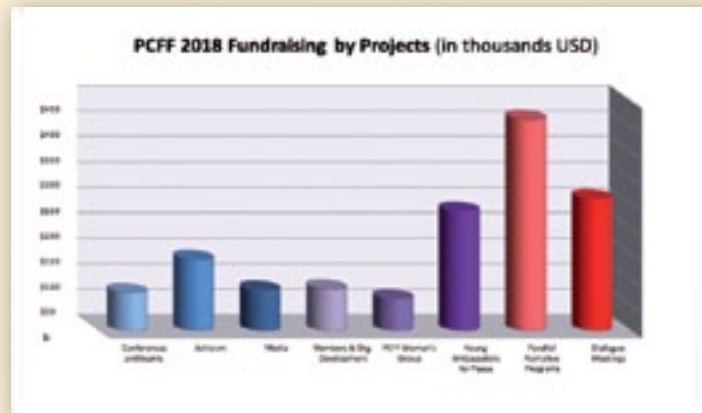


The PCFF Financial Statements reveal good performance and a healthy fiscal culture, in conjunction with a vision-oriented approach to programing. Parents Circle – Families Forum is grateful to its supporters that allow us to respond to the overwhelmingly growing challenges of the every-day realities in Israel and in Palestine.

## Our Supporters in 2018\*

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\*Gifts of \$5,000 and above



## All things considered

the violence from both sides, the political upheavals, and the news that 30% of our budget from USAID would be cut, we at the Parents Circle – Families Forum did not give into these dark times and in fact became even more determined and spurred on to use our message of non-violence and reconciliation, to make a difference in 2018. We cannot remember a year so packed with activities, so meaningful in many ways. Here are a few highlights to illustrate the unique work of a group of bereaved people who take their pain and use it for change.





**Education** for adults and youth is always at the forefront of our activities. These are difficult times and the political climate is not always amenable to our message. Not all of the schools are cooperating, but we continue to talk in classrooms on a daily basis and the pilot program we started last year with teachers is having a real impact. Teachers now have a better knowledge of how to work with the students before and after our dialogue meetings.



**The women** in the Parents Circle had an incredible learning experience over 2018. For the first time, the Palestinian women ran a week-end workshop. This happened after a three month training and led to an even more intensive workshop which is ongoing. What was so encouraging, many young women attended. Some 50 women from both sides have been learning, experiencing and

understanding the meaning of reconciliation. It has solidified their relationship and they are eager to take their knowledge out into the world. There is also a new cadre of women from both sides who conduct dialogue groups both in Israel and Palestine. Some are also facilitating the Parallel Narrative program which ensures a strong female voice in peace-building.

**The Joint Memorial Ceremony** of 2018 will be one that we will never forget. It took a High Court decision for the Israeli government to allow a hundred Palestinians to attend at the last minute. What a sense of satisfaction to know that we could get such a decision. There was a lot of publicity around the court case which encouraged some 8,000 people to be there. David Grossman was an extraordinary guest speaker; there was not a dry eye in the audience.

The Israeli-Palestinian Memorial Day Ceremony, comes to remind us that war is not an act of fate but one of human choice. On this particularly difficult day, Israelis and Palestinians acknowledge the pain and the aspirations of those living on the “other side” and strive to prevent the next wave of violence.



Bereaved PCFF **Members** have become a vital resource in both the Palestinian and Israeli public. Given the potential for extreme views, our members, who have a moral authority on both sides, prove to be most effective promoters of peace and reconciliation. PCFF wishes to augment the activities that strengthen the organization's core – its long-term vision and its infrastructure for operations. In 2018, our staff conducted interviews and an initial needs assessment with over 300 members, in order to understand the processes and barriers to activism. PCFF co-directors, assisted by active veteran members, reached out to bereaved Palestinians and Israelis who are not yet members and invited them to meet and hear of the work on the ground and plan for future joint actions.





**Young Ambassadors for Peace** is our innovative program to create the next generation of leaders who will continue with the work of non-violence and reconciliation. One cannot take for granted the extraordinary work the Parents Circle has done with breaved young adults between 18 and 30. Taking into consideration all the violent events, the moving of the American Embassy to Jerusalem and the demonstrations on the Gaza border, some staff members spent nights convincing the participants to come to the workshops during the violence. The Palestinians and Israelis from the group created a wonderful photograph exhibition "Change 4 Hope" which is also being used in schools as a tool to illustrate reconciliation.



2018 had the tastiest **Summer Camp** ever, 30 young Palestinians and Israelis learned how to make some gourmet dishes. Their teachers were Palestinian and Israeli chefs, who have graduated from the Paul Bocuse School in France. Apart from the culinary experience, these youngsters went through some very difficult sharing sessions which helped them to understand the "other" and to experience their humanity. The parents were invited to a taste of the food and of the change in their children on the last day of the camp.

**For donations, please check our websites:**

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**U.S.:** [www.parentscirclefriends.org](http://www.parentscirclefriends.org)

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