



# 2013 PARTICIPANT EVALUATION SURVEY FINDINGS

The following are the findings of a survey filled out by Heart to Heart 2013 participants, approximately three months after their return home from the Canadian portion of the program. The survey was conducted in both Arabic and Hebrew, and the following findings have been translated into English from these original versions. The survey had a 70% response rate.

The aim of this evaluation is to pinpoint both the successes and weaknesses of the program, in order to better inform programming needs for Heart to Heart 2014.

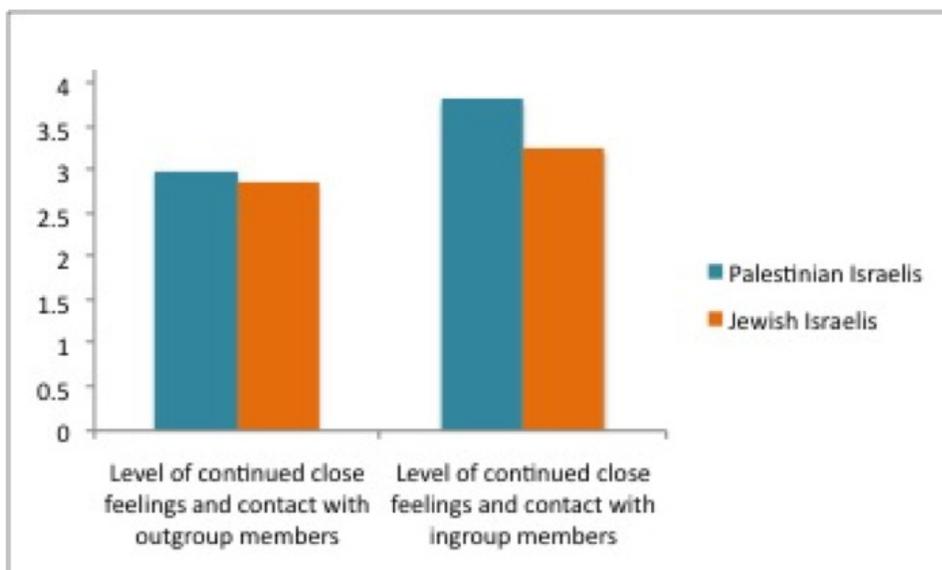
**On average, participants found that Heart to Heart was an overall positive experience, rating their experience 3.9 out of 4.**

On average, participants found that the part of the program that was held at Givat Haviva in Israel, in preparation for the trip to Canada was a useful and good experience, rating their experience 3.5 out of 4.

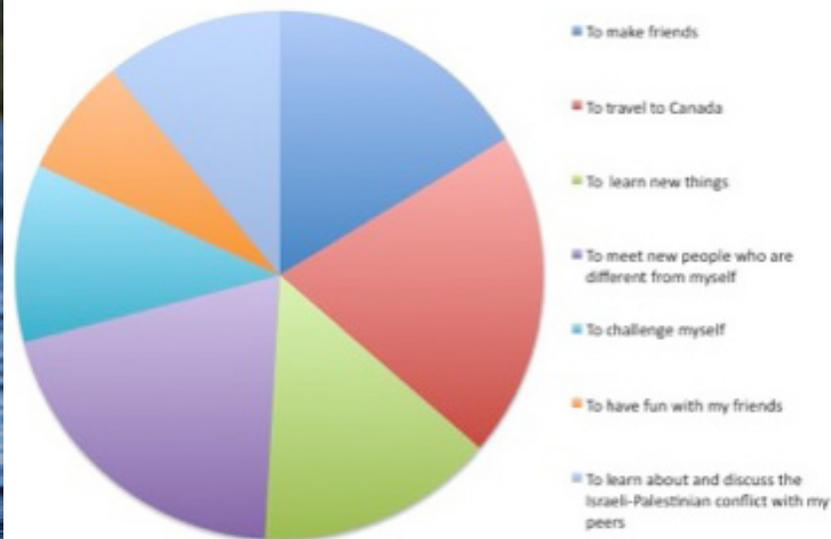
However, there was a significant difference between the Jewish and Palestinian Israeli participants in their evaluation of this portion of the program. Palestinian Israeli participants found this portion of the program to be 100% effective, while Jewish Israeli participants found it to be 78% effective.

On average, participants rated their experiences with the portion of the program held in Canada as 3.8 out of 4, with no significant difference between Jewish Israeli and Palestinian Israeli participants.

At the time of the survey, approximately three months after the participants returned home from the program, they still identified as a close group, with slight differences in feelings of closeness towards and contact between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Israelis.



## Initial Reasons for Attending the Program



**86% of participants agreed that they learned new things about themselves through their experiences in Heart to Heart, and 93% of participants agreed that they learned new things about the members of the group who did not share their ethnicity.**

64% of participants agreed that their ideas about the outgroup have changed as a result of their experiences in Heart to Heart, with an average of a 65% rate of change.

There are several types of explanations cited by participants when asked to explain their response to this question.

Many participants are reluctant to say that their opinions of the outgroup have changed significantly as a result of their participation in Heart to Heart because they feel this would be an admission that they previously held negative or racist views towards the outgroup.

*"I was never racist."*

*"I did not have different opinions than those I have now, however I was able to verify and re-affirm them and be more confident in them."*

Some explanations provided by participants highlight the reality that coming together in such an intense way is extremely challenging and not always a perfect process. Such comments point to key issues that need to be addressed when putting together future Heart to Heart programming.

*"There were some tensions between us."*

*"I thought that we disagreed on a lot of issues and that they didn't respect my religion..."*

However, the majority of participants reflected that participating in Heart to Heart did influence their ideas about the outgroup to some extent.

*"I also thought that they were without honour when it comes to decency in dress and behavior, especially with girls. But I have a better understanding now. I realized that they have their ethics and that their dress code doesn't reflect who they are."*

*"I learned that we can communicate. It is not that they simply refuse to listen or understand us as we think they do."*

When asked what the best parts of the program were, participants' responses fell into three main categories.

**Meeting and gaining insight about peers in the outgroup.**

The best part was...

*"...Traveling to Canada, sharing a room with Jewish girls, getting to know them and explaining my feelings and thoughts to them!"*

*"...That I met Arabs and gained a deep insight into their culture and their world. And that I had fun."*

**The discussions and educational topics broached during the program.**

The best part was...

*"...The topics are important and fascinating and I would be happy to continue discussions."*

*"...The dialogue that started..."*

**Feeling united as a single group.**

The best part was...

*"...That we were one group. We stopped looking at each other through the differences in our language and customs and started relating to each other as brothers."*

*"...Feeling united in Canada."*

Participants gave a wide variety of answers when asked to explain what they learned about the members of the group who did not share their ethnicity.

Palestinian Israelis learned...

*"...that they would like to get know Arab students of their age and other Arabs more generally."*

*"...about their civilization and customs and about the way they understand the Palestinian cause. I also learned about their love for their country, and the importance of listening to the point of view of the other."*

*"...that they are very similar to me and that we share a lot of similar opinions and principles."*

Jewish Israelis learned...

*"...about the differences and gaps but also the similarities of our cultures."*

*"...about Ramadan, about their routine, about their life and their world."*

*"...that the current situation demands and needs coexistence and that we have the future in our hands."*

On average, participants cited a 96% rate of sharing their experiences and the new things they learned through the program with family and friends, with no significant difference between Jewish Israeli and Palestinian Israeli participants.

All participants agree that they intend to continue learning and speaking about the topics broached by Heart to Heart, rating their intention to do so as 3.7 out of 4.

