Tania Israel's Continuing Education Programs

Chasm and Connection: A Therapist's Guide to Navigating Turbulent Times

In politically divisive times, therapists may encounter considerable client distress about division even as they grapple with discord in their own personal and professional contexts. How can mental health professionals support clients, manage their own responses to ideological differences, and perhaps even heal interpersonal and societal ruptures? Drawing on psychological science and skills, Dr. Israel offers vision and strategies to help therapists rise to the challenge of this moment. The program will leave you informed, optimistic, and empowered to take action.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

- Recognize the impact of political division in professional and personal contexts
- Identify cognitive biases that contribute to political discord
- Correct skewed perceptions associated with ideological positions
- Apply psychological skills to healing interpersonal and societal division

Realizing the Promise of Higher Education in a Divided World

These are troubled times on college campuses with political attacks on higher education, in the lead up to a contentious presidential election, and ongoing reverberations of the Israel-Gaza war. Distress and discord tax faculty, staff, and administrators and impede students' ability to achieve educational and developmental goals. How can colleges achieve the promise of higher education while facing these challenges? Is it possible that current strife offers an opportunity to promote inquiry, support wellness, prepare students to be engaged citizens, and address historical injustices? Grounded in evidence, experience, and a lifetime in higher education, Dr. Israel offers vision and strategies to help colleges embrace the potential of this moment.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

- Recognize the role of higher education in addressing historical injustices
- Identify strategies that reduce harm to vulnerable populations while embracing inquiry, wellness, and engagement
- Articulate the importance of cultivating curiosity and connection

Facing the Fracture: Navigating Division with Insight, Skill, and Resilience

With polarization in the U.S. at a record high, politics, values, and identities divide us. Barraged with media images of ignorant, extreme, and hostile Americans, we are fearful, angry, and increasingly disconnected. Amidst stress and conflict, how can we maintain our sense of wellbeing and heal ruptures? In this program, Dr. Israel will offer guidance and practical solutions to help attendees build their capacity to operate effectively in their personal and professional roles. Insight about causes and consequences of polarization will offer a foundation for building dialogue skills and strategies for resilience. This informative and engaging workshop will prepare attendees for the challenges of this moment and beyond.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

- Correct cognitive biases that contribute to division
- Apply strategies for healthy news consumption
- Recall approaches for effective communication across ideological differences
- Cultivate curiosity and resilience

Managing Ideological Differences in the Workplace

As political polarization in the U.S. reaches a record high, divisiveness and stress are impacting workplace culture, productivity, and health. How can managers and employees respond to political conflict and navigate challenging conversations? Dr. Israel can offer solutions. Grounded in evidence, experience, and skills, she will share practical, evidence-based strategies to help bridge the political divide. Her approach to building understanding will leave attendees informed, optimistic, and empowered to take action.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

- Identify ways in which political polarization affects workplace culture, productivity, and health.
- Recognize biases associated with political differences.
- Implement effective strategies for communicating across political disagreement.
- Develop strategies to mitigate the negative impact of political polarization on the workplace.

Bridging Political Differences in Our Roles as Mental Health Professionals — Implications for Ethics, Diversity, and Inclusion

As mental health professionals, we encounter many types of individual differences. Ethical and professional guidance is available regarding racial, cultural, sexual, and other types of diversity, however, we have little direction for navigating differences in political positions and values. How do we work across political difference in ways that are consistent with our ethical obligations, professional principles, and personal values? Drawing on psychological science and skills, Dr. Israel will offer ethical, evidence-based approaches for bridging political differences.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

- Identify ethical issues associated with bias and prejudice toward people with political differences
- Recognize cognitive bias associated with political differences
- Apply psychological skills to bridging political differences

Navigating Political Division: A Roadmap for Educators

These are challenging times. Schools are on the frontline of the culture wars with contested ground from history to pronouns. Educators struggle to cultivate welcoming learning environments amid competing pressures from anti-DEI forces and social justice advocates. Distress and discord tax the emotional resources of students and staff. Leaders field demands related to policy and public statements. This program will offer perspectives and strategies to help educational professionals navigate the trials of political division. Dr. Israel's approach will leave you informed, optimistic, and empowered to take action.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

1. Recognize and correct their own ideological biases.
2. Cultivate curiosity and connection among students.
3. Promote safety and resilience in learning environments.

If You're Not Listening, You're Not Paying Attention: Dialogue as a Tool for Social Justice Advocacy

"If you're not outraged, you're not paying attention" is a rallying cry in social justice circles. Indeed, there is plenty to be outraged about, however, outrage has its limitations, and prolonged outrage takes a toll on health. Science points to listening as an effective tool for collaboration, persuasion, and organizing. In this presentation, Dr. Israel harnesses psychological theory and research to offer a blueprint for dialogue-based social justice advocacy.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

1. Identify benefits and limitations of outrage for advancing social justice.
2. Correct misperceptions they hold of political partisans.
3. Recognize ineffective strategies for communicating across political disagreement.
4. Describe ways of advancing social justice through dialogue.

Healing Tribal Division: The Problem and Promise of Group Dynamics in a Polarized Society

Political Polarization is exacerbated by in-group/out-group dynamics that lead us to feel protective of our people and threatened by others. As political identities interact with our cognitive biases, we fear, mistrust, and distance ourselves from people whose views, values, and votes do not align with our own. This presentation will unpack the roots of polarization and reveal how understanding group dynamics can help to heal these tribal divisions.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

- Describe the evolutionary basis for in-group/out-group dynamics
- Provide three examples of political tribalism
- Recognize three cognitive biases associated with political differences
- Distinguish between ideological and affective polarization
- Identify three ways in which group dynamics can be harnessed to heal political conflict

Beyond Your Bubble: Skills and Strategies for Dialogue Across Political Differences

Workshop (2 hours)

It can be difficult to bridge the political divide. How do we talk with people who hold political views that are different from our own? Is there a path forward, out of conflict, toward understanding and healing? In this interactive workshop, Dr. Tania Israel will prepare attendees to engage in dialogue by helping them to build skills for listening, managing emotions, developing accurate perceptions of others, and sharing their views. This program uses an active-learning format and can be delivered in person or via Zoom, with demonstrations, mini-lectures, polls, discussion, and role plays. People of all political persuasions can benefit from this program.

Learning objectives. By the end of this program, attendees will be able to:

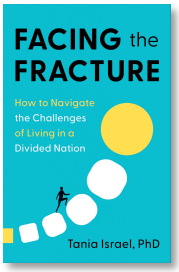
- Recognize key concepts and patterns related to political division
- Identify cognitive biases that contribute to division
- Demonstrate active listening skills
- Recall strategies for managing emotions

Please submit any requests, including tailored content, virtual presentations, or reduced rate programming, through Dr. Israel's speaker inquiry form. Information about upcoming public appearances is available on this website. Learn more about Dr. Israel's work on dialogue across political differences here. View her speaker reel here.

About Tania Israel

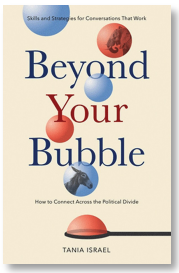
Tania Israel is a Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her expertise is grounded in 25 years of research on LGBTQ psychology, decades of leadership in professional and community settings, and two award-winning books about navigating political division (*Facing the Fracture: How to Navigate the Challenges of Living in a Divided Nation* and *Beyond Your Bubble: How to Connect Across the Political Divide*). As a public speaker, Dr. Israel has been received enthusiastically by professional conferences, corporations, campuses, community organizations, and congregations. She has shared her expertise with top media outlets, such as the *TODAY* show, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *NPR*, as well as on her podcast, *Ready to Be Strong*. Her strengths as a scholar and storyteller are evident in her TEDx talks: *Bisexuality and Beyond*, *How to Win a Political Argument*, *What Halibut Fajitas Taught Me About Bridging the Political Divide*. She has received honors from Congress, the California State Legislature, and the American Psychological Association.

Resources for Navigating Ideological Differences



A valuable resource that demonstrates how individuals can cope with the political divide, showing readers how to reduce toxic input from media, manage polarizing feelings, and engage effectively with others.

"This book is a master class for every American exhausted by toxic division and looking for a way out. Dr. Israel offers a refreshingly even-handed look at the challenge and empowers us with practical tools that quickly build resilience, strength, confidence, and hope." ~ PEARCE GODWIN, founder of Listen First Project

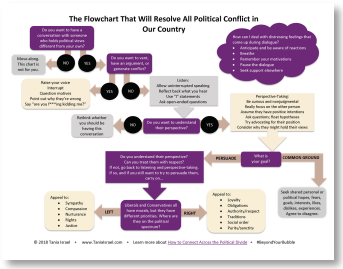


This practical, politically neutral book offers concrete skills for holding meaningful conversations that cut across today's intense political divide, showing readers how to connect to the people in their lives.

It is important to have realistic expectations for those who hold radically different views... discusses strategies for connecting across the political divide. ~ The New York Times

The Flowchart That Will Resolve All Political Conflict in Our Country

I created the flowchart to help people make intentional decisions about whether they want to engage in dialogue and, if so, how to do so effectively. It's available for download at taniaisrael.com.



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