

Becoming An Inclusive Community – Community Workshop #3: Community Culture  
Live Chat from Workshop

- 00:50:33 Sabiha Chunawala: Hello Rabbi Aron! Great to see you.
- 00:52:13 Amy: what happened? i missed what she said
- 00:52:25 Nika Sabouri: <https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/10/21/vandalism-at-los-gatos-azerbaijan-center-investigated-as-hate-crime/>
- 00:52:43 Amy: thanks Nika.
- 00:52:53 Nika Sabouri: You're welcome!
- 00:54:28 Amy: where's the 3rd panelist?
- 00:55:03 Rabbi Melanie Aron: At the last minute he wasn't able to join us.
- 01:01:54 Sabiha Chunawala: We moved to our street around the same time as other neighbors so there was an immediate draw to know each other and meet up for block parties and other get togethers. I loved how our children grew up together playing in our street.
- 01:01:55 David MacGregor-Scholes: As a business owner the Town events have helped us connect with the community
- 01:01:56 Amy: Most of my neighbors and I always say hello and chat with each other
- 01:02:04 .: Town events such as the Parade, the Farmer's Market, wine walk and Music in the Park make me feel welcome.
- 01:02:13 Collette Lynner: I moved to Los Gatos in 1997 and the social scene downtown was fantastic
- 01:02:28 Rabbi Melanie Aron: We enjoyed the Shakespeare in the park and our neighbors across the street who welcomed us
- 01:03:06 Kathy Strahs: everyone on our street knows each other and gets together periodically (pre COVID)
- 01:03:46 Paul Robinson: Way to go Nika!
- 01:03:54 leefagot: Difficult to say what was most welcoming, but we were looking for a high school for our daughter as she was just beginning high school. However, farmers market, driving around neighborhoods and sense of community that was apparent when living in rental unit till we could sell our house in Boston area to purchase home here.
- 01:04:17 Amy: i can't start my video
- 01:04:17 Nika Sabouri: Thank you Principal Robinson!
- 01:04:21 Paul Robinson: Could the host allow my video?

01:04:34 Amy: cause the host stopped it

01:05:25 Don Capobres: My video has been disabled.

01:05:45 Folake Phillips: Mine as well.

01:07:22 Maria Ristow: I love the Thanksgiving Ecumenical service.

01:07:41 Maria Ristow: Best truly community event of the year for me.

01:11:21 Sabiha Chunawala: Thank you for sharing your story, Rabbi Aron.

01:14:57 Sabiha Chunawala: Thank you so much, Nika! My kids shared the same appalling stories with us and felt no one was listening.

01:15:04 Amy: Thank you Nika!!!!

01:15:28 Paul Robinson: Thanks Nika. Well said.

01:16:47 Folake Phillips: Thank you Nika!

01:38:19 Steve Fainer: Look & Feel

welcoming on first glance, but this Summer, seeing the feelings of minorities with or seeing counter protests

Came for schools and the sense of neighborhood, kids playing outside, walkability, but then i began hearing what my kids were hearing in school, echoing Nika's experience

Felt, looked like, seemed like a very welcoming community, but after four years in high school in the late 90s, the lack of diversity was noticeable and boring...but this community is improving, though I have had to stop people from saying rude words and epithets

Originally hard to meet people, had to move closer to downtown to make connections

Moving from SoCal, drove downtown and as a white person, thought "wow, lotta white people here"

As a working woman, fitting into the culture for moms was hard and continues to be.

01:44:56 Holly Zappala: Breakout Rom 3 Summary: The faith-based community has been a god way to connect with the community. We are willing to be a part of the solution. The past 6 - 7 months have not felt welcoming because of negative attitudes on Nextdoor. East Los Gatos can feel neglected compared to the downtown area. Los Gatos can be not welcoming to people with lower income levels.

There is little racial diversity and when you look different, you stand out. The art and utility boxes in Town show very little diversity. Los Gatos is becoming more diverse and we can use the emotions we are feeling in a positive way to create change.

01:48:58 Lisa Velasco: Breakout room 2 summary: LG feels super friendly, know a lot of people, primarily white. Racism at high school and African American friend of child called the 'N' word daily. LG is known as super racist by those who live in neighboring cities. LG has natural beauty with the hills, parks, bikes. Primarily working class prior to 1989 earthquake. Good community oriented events, feels welcomed. North 40 housing lawsuit because Town not welcoming with its' housing policy. Feels hope to have these conversations.,

01:49:47 Ryan Baker (he/him): Steve's notes above are from breakout room 5

01:49:57 Rabbi Melanie Aron: We also talked about how the town has changed over time in terms of affluence.

02:15:14 Kareem Syed: Breakout room 5 Summary:

02:15:19 Kareem Syed: Despite challenges we are hopeful we can make change

More discussion at Highschool sensitivity education and training

Bring our attention and focus together to make change

Make community events more sensitive to diversity

Start change at elementary school and make sure design strategies to make LG more inclusive.

Kids are inclusive by nature and discrimination is taught should make sure schools are teaching and providing training to keep them inclusive

Affordable housing needs to be addressed in order to become more diverse

Feels like gated community and is a systemic problem

Nextdoor exposed and brought to forefront a lot of the discrimination and hate

Make effort to get to know others from diverse backgrounds in neighborhood

Frustration on need more community to be engaged and involved and need to give more guidance on how to be more engaged

Teachers using more class time to push political agenda and silencing kids with opposing views which leads to radicalization as well

02:16:36 Rabbi Melanie Aron: 1. Housing 2. Events 3. Signage 4 high school

02:18:34 Kathy Strahs: love the signage idea

02:19:10 Amy: I think it takes more than signs. It's actions that matter, not words.

02:19:35 Lisa Velasco: Breakout room 2 - session 2 - A more inclusive LG would be great. Need to have honest conversations and more participation. Zoom has opened participation in Council meetings. Participation is key for change. So much has been focused on keep aesthetics of the Town but this can apply to people too. Generations have lived in LG so difficult to accept change. Schools need to do a better job of teaching diversity in schools, starting in grammar schools. Need to open minds to different perspectives.

02:20:02 Rob Rennie: A key thought in our room is that we need to influence the students in grade school and middle school before attitudes are set in high school.

02:20:05 Collette Lynner: To Amy: I think signs will work because peer pressure works

02:20:14 Rabbi Melanie Aron: The hope that seeing the signs would make people think twice before saying something rude to other people about their inclusion.

02:20:40 Jeff Suzuki: Breakout room 4 Summary :  
There is a sense of hope, faith, and disappointment in the town. Overall, there is an antagonism between community pride where residents want the status quo to be maintained and an introspection that identifies problems. There is an apprehension for any sort of change due to this pride, but there is a sense that community members and younger folks are assembling to get involved and drive change in both official policies and culture. As for acceptable changes, the group focused on housing and noted that increasing housing density, use of ADUs, use of traditionally single family homes to house multiple families, and questioning single family housing overall are all acceptable. The group notes that the culture around housing is currently problematic.

02:22:43 Rob Rennie: Our group also noted the apprehension for change and it is also related to not allowing housing to change that would help drive the change.

02:23:12 David MacGregor-Scholes: The most dangerous attitude is "we've always done it this way..."

02:23:12 Amy: It was to kill a mockingbird we discussed

02:23:54 Lynne Lampros: Breakout room 1 summary: Image doesn't always match reality in Town, which is sad. But these meetings show hope. This room discussed the need for diversity of business and more welcoming inclusive attitudes by the business owner when you go in. The need for more density of housing was discussed. The feeling that people might fear density was articulated and that fear was possibly just due to crowding but also sadly maybe due to the fear that it would bring racial diversity and maybe that is why density isn't wanted. School racism was discussed as very troubling. Signage was discussed as being a good thing - signs by businesses, Town, and Chamber that emphasize inclusivity and welcoming and reinforce that message for people coming in and people who are here.

02:24:29 Holly Zappala: Breakout Room 3 Summary: Schools are a good place to start tackling change. Racial slurs and worry about the school environment are big problems. There are things that give us HOPE: kids our community spearheading change, having the principal attend this workshop, the Town having these Workshops, the Town not shying away from condemning bad behavior, and the schools are working on challenges such as racism, sexual assault, bullying, etc. How can we welcome different types of housing to make our community more affordable for others to live in? There is a fear of "others" moving in - people are reluctant to embrace change. We can work on making Los Gatos more accessible. We can re-connect as a community post-COVID. We can have more cultural celebrations in the schools and in the Town. Diversity is increasing.

02:26:52 Amy: keep zoom after cover!

02:27:55 Collette Lynner: Collette Lynner offers to host a Livingroom conversation

02:27:56 Sabiha Chunawala: Sabiha Chunawala - I'm happy to host a conversation.

02:27:57 Jeff Suzuki: I'd be open to hosting a conversation of sorts!

02:27:59 David MacGregor-Scholes: Would more signage highlighting Town Council meeting times be beneficial? Posters placed around town maybe?

02:28:16 Don Capobres: I'm happy to host a conversation as well.

02:28:35 Maria Ristow: I will host conversations.

02:28:37 Amy: I'm willing to host too

02:28:40 Collette Lynner: Marico, thank you for hosting this wonderful meeting.

02:29:29 Maria Ristow: Thank you all!

02:29:34 Paul Robinson: Thanks for hosting this Marico. LGHS is committed to having the hard conversations.

02:29:34 Sabiha Chunawala: Thank you for having this session!

02:29:49 leefagot: Tonights session is VERY encouraging for positive movement. Thanks everyone

02:30:06 Collette Lynner: I agree, Lee

02:30:09 Alicia Cinema Stereo: Sabiha! you mentioned that you don't know a lot of people here. I don't either. I offer my friendship

02:30:41 Alicia Cinema Stereo: I'm Cinema Stereo on Instagram. Let's hang out! 🌿👉🌿

02:30:41 Rob Rennie: Good Job Marico!

02:31:14 Kathy Strahs: Thank you all!

02:31:40 David MacGregor-Scholes: Vote vote vote!

02:32:07 Ryan Baker (he/him): Mentioned in our group that the loudest people opposing change tend to have the most time to get involved (e.g. retired, not raising children, etc).

02:32:07 ARN ANDREWS: It was a pleasure spending time with Breakout room 1. Thank you.

02:32:13 Alicia Cinema Stereo: I voted today!!! woot! woot!

02:32:21 Jeff Suzuki: ^Same voted as well

02:32:22 Maria Ristow: Thank you leaders and staff!

02:32:27 leefagot: We also need to have these same conversations in our homes, on our streets and with our neighbors down the street. Lets all be part of the solution.

02:32:32 Nika Sabouri: Thank you so much to breakout room 2, it was really great talking to you all

02:32:40 Alicia Cinema Stereo: It's meetings like this that give me hope. So much appreciation for all of you!! 🌿💛🌿

02:32:45 Jeff Suzuki: Salutes to breakout room 4!!!