



### **Press Release: KHN Speaker Addresses the Quest for Peace in Israel**

On Friday, November 8, Israeli peace activist Dr. Roni Porat addressed about 50 members and guests of Kehilat HaNahar, The Little Shul by the River in New Hope, about the difficulties facing Israel as the political left and right are increasingly at odds about the best approach to peace.

In her research work, Dr. Porat focuses on emotions and intergroup relations in societies engaged in conflict and is interested in developing and implementing psychological interventions for promoting conflict resolution. Her talk to the group gathered at KHN, filled with poignant stories about her family's history before and during the Holocaust, focused on the underlying factors that inhibit the peace process among secular and religious Jews in Israel and the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. In particular, she observed that group identity, and any sense of threat to it, is dominant in political stances. The audience was left thinking that bringing peace to Israel with its neighbors, as well as peace within the Jewish community, will take the Wisdom of Solomon.

Dr. Porat, a secular peace activist from Tel Aviv, is currently a postdoctoral research associate at the Woodrow Wilson School and Psychology Department at Princeton University. She returned to academia to gain a deeper psychological understanding of societies engaged in conflict and thus make her activist goals more successful. She will be teaching at Hebrew University when she returns to Israel next year.

**Photo caption:** At Kehilat HaNahar on November 8, (from left to right) Rabbi Diana Miller; Israeli social psychologist Dr. Roni Porat; and KHN member Dr. Betsy Levy Paluck, Psychology Professor at Princeton University, who introduced Dr. Porat.

**Contact:** Gerry Bogatz ([gbogatz@marketingworks.com](mailto:gbogatz@marketingworks.com)), Chair of Communications Committee at KHN.