



What is our Legacy?

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What is our legacy?

1. Welcome

Before we begin, we need to agree on a few things:

In order for our conversation to be as rich as it can be, we need everyone to feel safe to really share and really listen. Therefore, what is said in this conversation stays in this conversation, and may not be repeated outside it.

Our aim is to create a space where we can understand others and understand ourselves, not to give advice or to argue ideas of objective truth. With that in mind, in this conversation we will agree to speak in the first-person, about our own truth.

We will be mindful of when we step into the conversation, and when we step back to make room for others to speak.

We will assume good faith in one another.

We will open ourselves to listen and learn from one another.

We won't rush to fill the silence.

2. Ask and Share

We are here in response to the question, "What is our legacy?" This question contains many other questions: To whom does "our" refer? What constitutes a legacy? To what extent do we control the footprint we leave on the world?

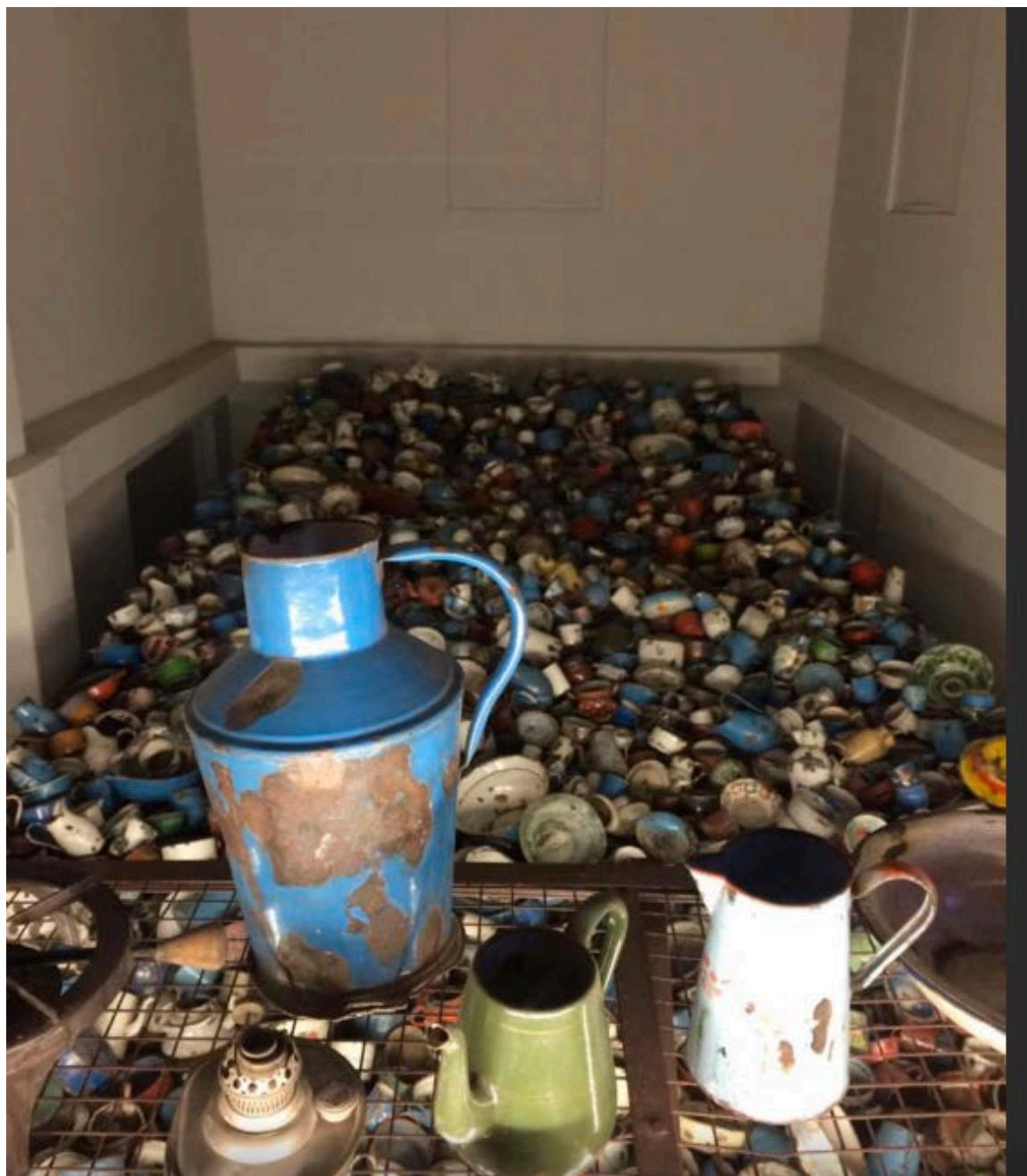
Let's begin with the idea of legacy. Is there a legacy which you feel you have inherited? From whom? How does that legacy influence who you are and what you do? Is there a story you can share which illustrates that influence?

Take a moment to bring a story to mind. Use the space below to write some notes to yourself. After two minutes, we'll introduce ourselves by sharing what came to mind.

3. Learn

Our identities are manifest through the choices which we make. We would expect what we value to be prioritized and to tell the world a wordless story about who we are. Our choices make an impact on our daily lives, on the lives of those around us and on both our community and our world. What story do we tell by how we interact with the world?

The image below, from a display in the museum of the Auschwitz I Concentration Camp, vividly captures one way in which our choices tell the story of who we are. Take a few moments to consider it, and then we'll discuss both what we see and the stories it tells.



Interpretive Questions

What are we looking at in this photo? What story does it tell?
Who is represented by the various pitchers and bowls?
What other identities might the owners have had in addition to what comes readily to mind?

Here are some additional questions to think about. Please use the space below to make some notes to yourself:

Reflective questions

If asked to pack a bag and leave on short notice, what would you include?
What narrative might others construct if looking at your most valued possessions?
Beyond material objects, what other aspects of your life define or reflect who you are?

4. Do

In Pirkei Avot, the Ethics of the Fathers, we learn: “Do not say I will learn when I have time; perhaps you will never have time.” To what extent does how we use our time reflect the things we most value? You’ve thought about which possessions you most value. Has this conversation made you question which possessions are critically important to you? What about your use of time?

Find a conversation partner and choose a sheet of butcher paper on the wall. On half of the page, draw two large circles and mark them to look like a clock. Using the hour numbers as your guide, each of you mark off how you spend your time on the average day on one of the clocks. When you’ve finished, compare clocks and discuss. Does the time devoted to each activity reflect the importance you would assign to it? Why or why not?

Now draw two large circles on the other half of the page and create the clock which you would choose as a more accurate reflection of your values and priorities. How

do your own clocks differ from one another? Describe why you think those differences exist. How far out of your reach would it be to move your first clock closer to your second clock?

Take a walk around the room with your partner and look at each of the drawings. Discuss the gaps you see between real and ideal and challenge each other to come up with three practical steps to shift your narrative, whether in terms of time or possessions, to get closer to the legacy you would want to leave.

Return to your seats ready to share. How close are you today to the imprint you would want to leave on the world? What are the obstacles to getting there? What are your three steps you'll take to help achieve the goals?

Thank you for being part of this conversation.