



Time-Tested Solutions for Evolving Discrimination: Addressing Modern Anti-Semitism with Techniques from the Past

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INTRODUCTION

There is a problem with the increase in anti-semitism today (Guterres, 2018). According to the Anti-Defamation League, although incidences of anti-semitic vandalism decreased 19% from 2017 to 2018, physical assaults on Jewish individuals increased 105% and harassment increased 5% (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.). Despite the fact that the Holocaust occurred decades ago and anti-semitism may seem to be less of a concern than it was at the time of World War II, anti-semitism is on the rise (Guterres, 2018). Anti-semitism is not new; it has existed for centuries (Anti-Defamation League, 2013), and has evolved throughout history depending on the cultural context of the time (Gerstenfeld, 2007). Expression of anti-semitism continues to shift and evolve to fit into whatever context is

applicable at the time (Gerstenfeld, 2007).

The researcher aimed to address this problem by gathering older Jews' strategies of coping with anti-semitism and formulating an easily-teachable model about how to combat modern forms of anti-semitism.

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

- ❖ The three subjects outlined many similar experiences of discrimination.
- ❖ Discrimination often started in early childhood and continued throughout their lifetimes.
- ❖ The discrimination experienced varied.
- ❖ Two main types of "coping mechanisms" used to respond to the anti-semitism were described: internal and external strategies.
- ❖ Responding to external anti-semitism internally and reaching outwards to actively counteract it.
- ❖ Internal strategies discussed included seeking comfort within the Jewish community and reflecting on one's Jewish identity as a source of pride.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This project aimed to gather informations about how Jews in the past addressed anti-semitism to provide strategies for addressing modern forms of anti-semitism. Qualitative data was gathered from the resources already cited in this literature review, as well as from the personal histories of Jewish adults who were interviewed during the research-gathering phase of the project. The researcher used the information provided in the interviews, to formulate a model about addressing modern anti-semitism (Please see the Findings section for said model).

The inquiry approach for this project was an Action-Phenomenological hybrid, as the researcher studied ways to address discrimination by asking people from a specific religious group.. The primary data collection tools were

interviews with Jewish adults aged 55 and up. Three interviews were conducted with members of Beth Am, a local Reform synagogue. To categorize and analyze the data, the researcher used a coding technique, in which the qualitative data was grouped by common theme and sorted.

DATA AND FINDINGS

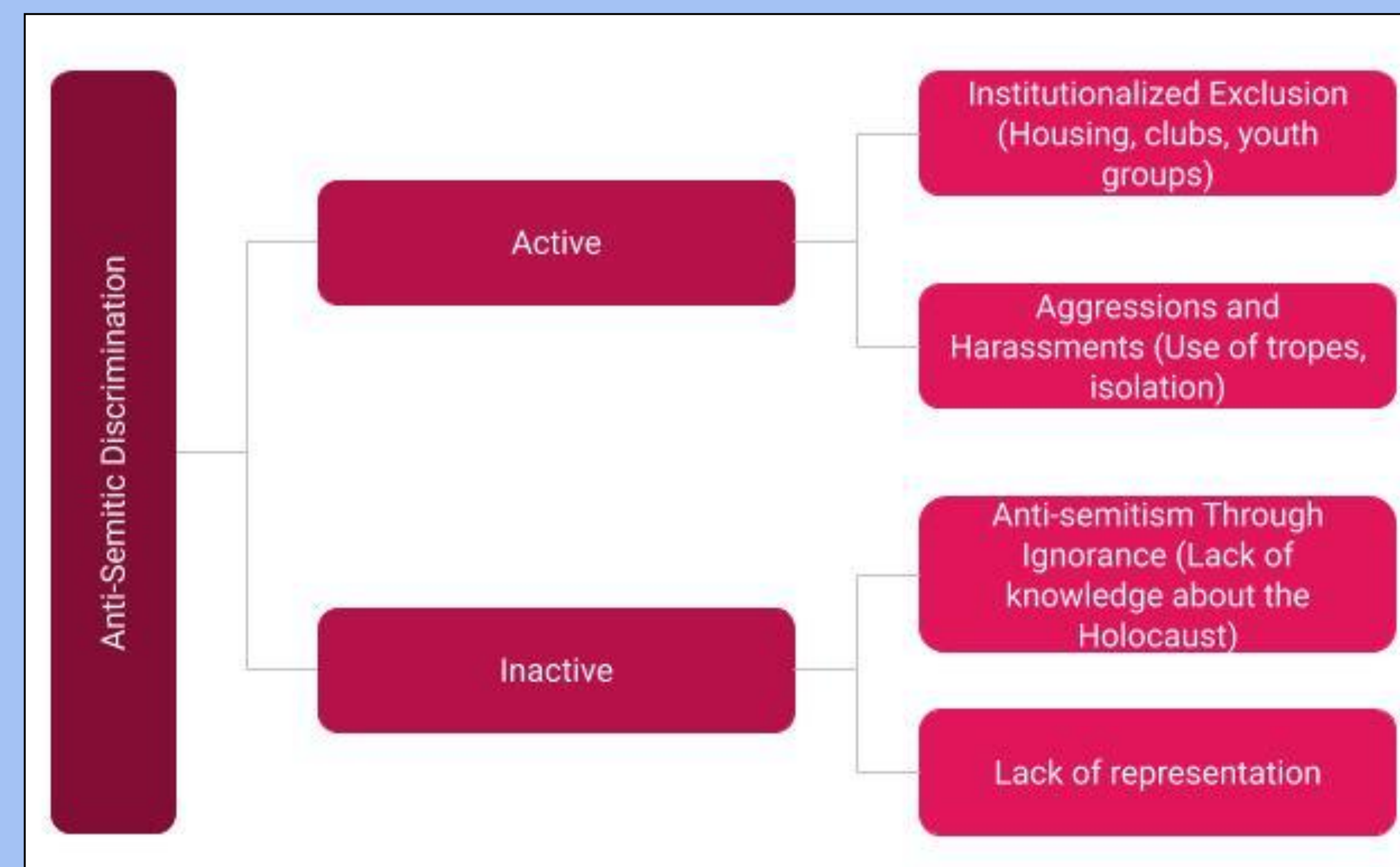


Figure 1 The subjects interviewed experienced many different forms of anti-semitic discrimination.

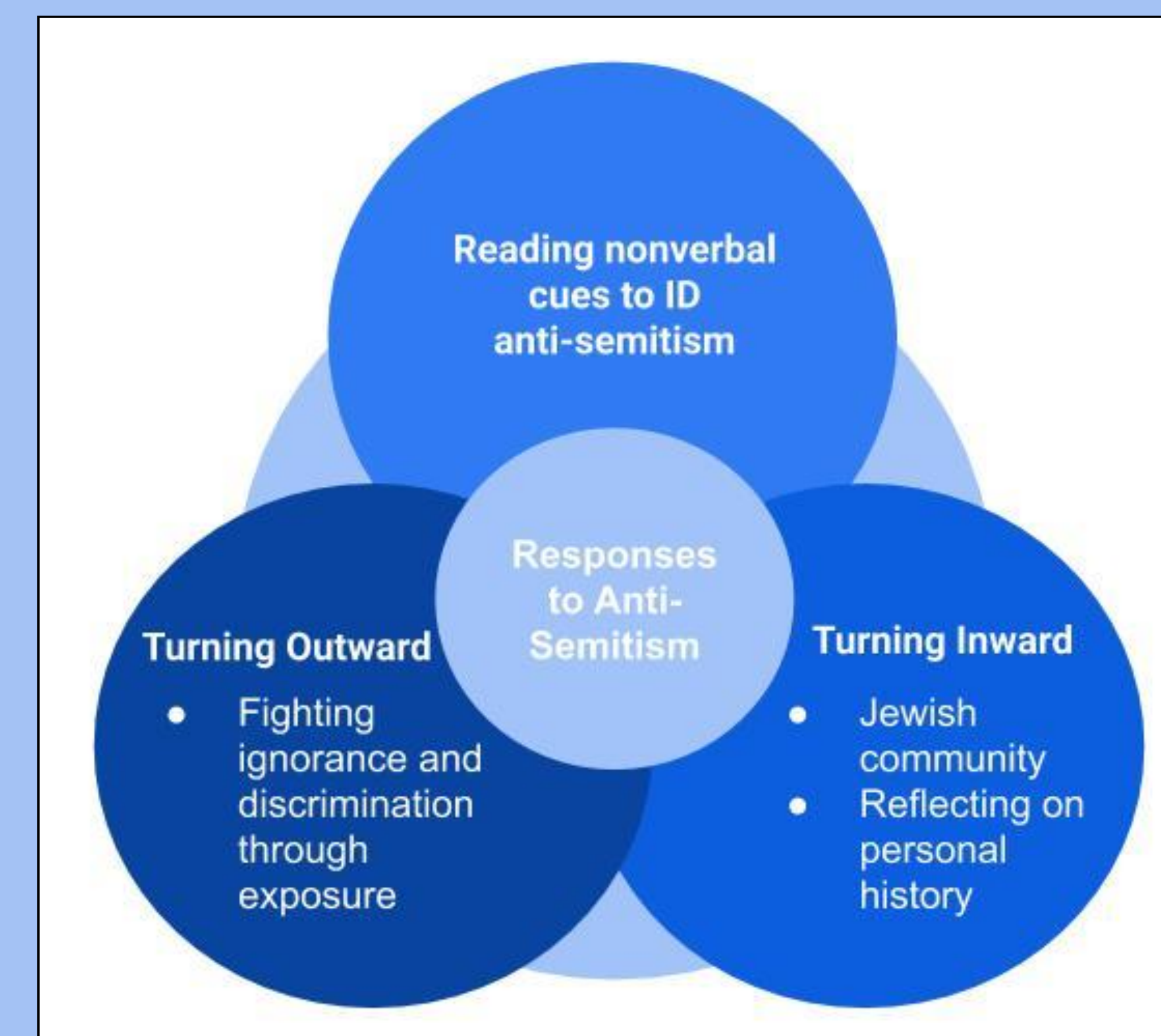


Figure 2 The subjects interviewed explained the different responses and strategies that they had developed throughout their lifetimes to respond to anti-semitism.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- ❖ **Expand upon personal experience, audience**
 - As a Jewish teen, hearing these stories was personally invaluable
 - Give others a similar experience (expand to larger population)
- ❖ **Expand program to include more interviews and stories**
 - Hearing more perspectives allows for a more comprehensive model.

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