

## Combatants for Peace Personal Stories



**Maya Katz** was born in kibbutz Gesher, at the border of the Hashemite kingdom and now lives in Tel-Aviv. Her grandparents came to Israel from Germany and Poland before World War II, and were among the founders of the kibbutz. She was raised in a socialist and Zionist community and served in the IDF. She is a clinical psychologist in private practice and also works at Headspace Clinic for adolescents. In past years she has treated Holocaust survivors and their family members. Maya joined Combatants for Peace in 2011 and is a member of the Tel-Aviv-Nablus group which works in the rural area south of Nablus. She was the former Israeli coordinator of the group. Maya is also a member of the C4P steering committee.

In 2015, Maya was producer of the Israeli-Palestinian Memorial Day ceremony, which has been held on the eve of Memorial Day for the last nine consecutive years. This ceremony is the largest annual event held by the Combatants for Peace movement. On this particularly difficult day they call for both sides to acknowledge the pain and the aspirations of those living on the other side of the fence and to strive to prevent the next war. At the ceremony, Israeli and Palestinian bereaved families speak about their personal pain. The Israeli-Palestinian Memorial Day ceremony demonstrates the reality of empathy and mutual respect among peoples and the ceremony demonstrates, however briefly, the possibility of peace, not on the basis of disregard for or indifference to the pain, but rather with a direct reference to the loss and bereavement on both sides.

