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Interfaith Relations

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Rules for dialogue cited by Jewish rabbi

NEW Rabbi Arnold Resnicoff is a retired long-term Navy chaplain, a former U.S. director for interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and a former special assistant on values and vision to the chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force. He recently shared some of the insights this life has given him in a Toronto, Canada, [Neighborhood Interfaith Dinner](#). He spoke of the ways that his own journey into religious life had been touched by the faith of others -- an Episcopal and a Southern Baptist chaplain. He said chaplains do not begin by talking about theology but by helping people who are lonely and afraid, establishing relationships based on trust. We must not be afraid to talk to each other and must not worry about having our faith watered down by doing so, he advised. In dialogue, we learn not just about the other but about the presence of God in the other. Resnicoff offered several specific pieces of advice:



- We must understand that religions are different and languages of faith are different, without making assumptions.
- We need to share with one another what words hurt, based on gender or race or religion.
- We must focus on "getting through the day" -- leading to cooperation -- and not upon the end of days, upon which we disagree.
- We should not compare "our teachings" to "their actions" nor "our beliefs" to "their words."