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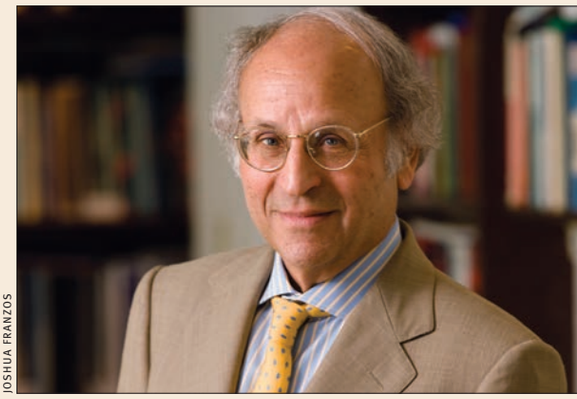
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JOSHUA FRANZOS

I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain. —James Baldwin

Like all of you, I continue to struggle to make sense of the terrible events that transpired in our city on the morning of October 27. I am deeply saddened that such violence and hate should erupt in a house of worship in Squirrel Hill, a welcoming and peaceful neighborhood that many of us have called home.

You probably already know that among the 11 massacred that day were three members of the Pitt health sciences community. Dr. Richard Gottfried was a graduate of our School of Dental Medicine who taught dental students and regularly provided free care to those in need. Dr. Joyce Fienberg was a generous and caring researcher in Pitt's Learning Research and Development Center, closely allied with our neuroscience programs; she was known for using her intellect to help others. Dr. Jerry Rabinowitz was a greatly respected teacher in our UPMC Shadyside family medicine residency program, from which he also graduated as a young doctor. He was one of the first physicians who would accept appointments with AIDS patients in the early '80s. He was known for his selflessness, humility, and openness; likewise, his patients felt that they could be transparent with him. (Jerry was, for many years, my wife's mother's physician.) Jerry's widow, Miri, is a widely admired PhD research associate in our Department of Neurosurgery.

The entire city is grateful to the police and other first responders who were on the scene at Tree of Life Synagogue that day. Pitt trauma doctor Keith Murray, a member of the SWAT team, and tactical EMTs went into the synagogue while the shooter was still armed and firing.

This city is also grateful for the aid to the injured provided by our interprofessional teams, including those in emergency medicine and trauma surgery, who responded brilliantly. They provided sorely needed light in a very dark time. I'm less familiar with what unfolded at Allegheny General Hospital, where doctors treated the shooter. I do know that they treated him as they would any other. That hospital's president, Dr. Jeffrey Cohen, was married at Tree of Life. Dr. Cohen felt compelled to meet the man who had murdered his neighbors and who'd pledged to kill as many Jews as he could. Dr. Cohen told the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, making no apologies for the shooter, that he did not see the face of evil when he met the man. Instead, Dr. Cohen saw "someone all alone, and all he hears is the noise in his head all the time."

Though we may try, how can we fathom unfathomable acts? Part of me doesn't want to fully comprehend such dark, dark hate that took 11 precious lives. I can take some comfort in this: The colleagues we've lost were beacons of light. And we can continue to learn from them.

Dostoevsky, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, describes the scene at the funeral of Ilusha, a young boy. Karamazov makes a speech to Ilusha's schoolmates: "Boys, we shall soon part. But let us make a compact here, at Ilusha's stone, that we will never forget Ilusha and one another. And whatever happens to us later in life, even if we don't meet for 20 years afterwards, let us always remember. My dear children, you must know that there is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory. . . . People talk to you a great deal about your education, but some good, sacred memory . . . is perhaps the best education. If a man carries many such memories with him into life, he is safe to the end of his days."

The memories of our colleagues that we carry will shield, nurture, and inspire us. As Karamazov said, these memories are perhaps the best education, and also the ultimate and most durable of the many gifts that Richard Gottfried, Joyce Fienberg, and Jerry Rabinowitz have given to us.

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