

# The origins of Stand Up lie in an organisation that was set up in 1994.

I can still clearly remember the moment that led me to establish Keshet - the first incarnation of Stand Up. I was lecturing at Melbourne University at the time on the Holocaust, and speaking about the world's abandonment of the Jews. While I was talking, my mind was spinning with news I'd read that day. It concerned a country about which I knew next to nothing. That country was Rwanda and the images I had seen forced me to ask questions about my generation's own silence, and therefore complicity, in the massacres that would rapidly turn into history's most intense genocidal spree.

The formation of Keshet in response to the Rwandan genocide was the first line of dots that I connected: I realised that the legacies of Holocaust memory are not only about Never Again for Jews, but about our role as custodians of the lessons of the Holocaust. Within a week, through a mass mailout, we had raised \$40,000 for Rwanda. I am proud that, over the years, the hard work of a new generation of Stand Up activists has continued to raise money for those in urgent need, wherever they are in the world.

The second set of dots that Stand Up connected for me was to bridge the gap between our Jewish identities and our ethic of universalist compassion. Yes, charity begins at home. And if we are not for ourselves, then it is true to ask: Who will be for us? For this reason, I am also proud

that as a Jewish community we have always supported Israel, Jewish welfare and educational institutions in Australia. Yet to be a Jew is to be entrusted with a mission to 'repair the world'. Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) has always been central to the Jewish conscience. If we are only for ourselves then we have failed in our role as Jews and human beings.

Stand Up has grown over the years into an organisation that is inspiring a new generation of young Jews to take their identities seriously; to live it authentically and with meaning, without having to make an artificial choice between helping 'Them' or 'Us.' The Jewish community should be proud of the work of Stand Up and its wonderful leadership. Its grass-roots activist approach gives hope to our Jewish future, to the world, and to the meaning of being Jewish in the twenty-first century

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