

‘Normal Life’ in Israel: 1 Year Post-Oct. 7 Terror Attacks

Over the decades, “normal life” in Israel has looked very different than normal life in most every other country in the rest of the world. That’s because Israel has been surrounded by mortal enemies who want nothing less than the nation’s destruction, because Israel’s very existence is constantly being threatened, because Israel must live in a state of perpetual vigilance. And what happens when the nation lets down its guard and its security systems fail? Oct. 7 happens.

Some of the most revealing accounts from the massacre came from non-Israeli young people who attended the Nova Music Festival. On the morning of Oct. 7, as the sound of rocket blasts was heard, these non-Israelis were alarmed. “Are we under attack?” they wondered. But their Israeli friends danced and partied on. “Nothing to be worried about! We get bombed all the time.”

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Little did any of these young people realize that this day would be different than the rest. But until the full reality hit, this was just another day in the life of an Israeli.

For more than a decade now, many Israelis install apps on their cell phones to alert them to missile attacks in their area, sounding red alerts. Can you imagine having an app like that on your phone?

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A few years ago, while we were attending a conference in Pennsylvania, an Israeli friend casually showed me her cell phone as missile warnings came flooding in. No big deal!

Every home must have a safe room, designed to be more protective in the case of bombing, while every building has a built-in bomb shelter or access to one nearby. And in some parts of the country, such as Sederot, near the Gaza border, residents can never be more than 15 seconds from a bomb shelter.

Welcome to the so-called normal life in Israel.

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