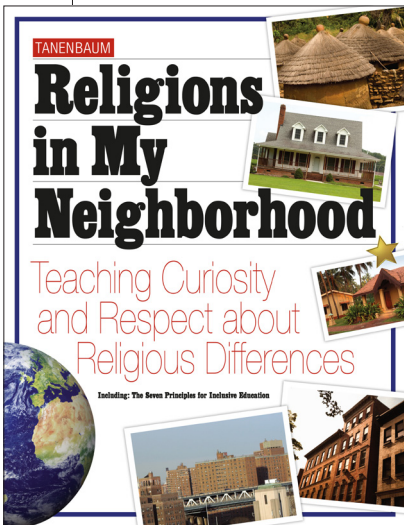


Can I say that?



Imagine for a moment that you are a teacher about to lead a science lesson on galaxies with your fourth graders. In the middle of the lesson, one of your students raises her hand and asks, “Is there only one god?”

How would you answer? Would you know what to say?

If you’re answering from your own beliefs you might, like many teachers in the United States, be inclined to answer “Of course there is only one god.”

But, you might pause and wonder in the same moment, “Can I say that? Is it a violation of the separation of church and state?”

The answer to the second question is clear. Public school teachers cannot promote a particular belief to students. A teacher may believe there is only one god, of course, but he cannot try to influence his students to share his belief.

The answer to your student’s question, however, is not as simple.

In addition to the religions that believe there is only one god, there are those that believe in multiple gods—and people who believe in none. Both Taoism and Hinduism, for examples, are monotheistic religions believing in one ultimate, unknowable being but recognizing multiple deities as manifestations of the divine.

Are you a teacher who took classes in world religions? Are you prepared for this discussion? Or are you uncomfortable teaching about religion in the classroom? Many teachers avoid the subject entirely, not mentioning religion even when it’s relevant to current or historical events.

So, what can you do to make sure you are ready to answer your student’s question?

The answer is clear: turn to Tanenbaum.

We offer practical ways to implement solutions that make teaching about religion easier. Our latest solution is *Religions in My Neighborhood*.

We are celebrating the release of *Religions in My Neighborhood*, a K-4 curriculum and teacher training initiative. We created *Religions in My Neighborhood*—with leading multicultural specialists—specifically for educators who want to teach curiosity and respect about religious differences.

The standards-based *Religions in My Neighborhood* addresses identity, beliefs, rituals, traditions, sacred spaces and learning about religious differences throughout the school year.

As part of the release celebration, Tanenbaum is hosting a keynote lecture on **Thursday, April 18, at 8 am**. The event, which is focused on religious diversity in classroom learning, is for curriculum professionals, administrators and professors of education.

If you know an education professional who would like to participate, have them visit Tanenbaum.org/RIMN for more details about the event. And if you’d like to learn more about the *Religions in My Neighborhood* program – we’d love to have you join us.

“*Religions in My Neighborhood* is a must-have for every elementary school educator. This ground-breaking tool provides new ways of teaching academics, respect for all in our multicultural society and is an accessible resource for teaching about religion.”

— Jack Lund, President & CEO, YMCA of Greater New York

Atheism: No Laughing Matter



Friends,

The late Phyllis Diller was a pioneer in more ways than one. She paved the way for female comedians—and atheists.

She was 37 years old when she made her stand-up comedy debut at San Francisco's Purple Onion in 1955. And

by that time, she was an atheist. Throughout her long career, she shared her story, matter-of-factly mentioning her beliefs in interviews.

What interests me is that Diller publically admitted being an atheist before those who identify as “nones” (including atheists) were “out” in large numbers. Today, the “nones” are the fastest growing category of believers in America. But being an atheist is not so easy. Even the media makes that point.

In a recent episode of the television drama *The Good Wife*, the title character, Alicia Florrick, admits that she's an atheist. The theme of the episode gave the show's writers a chance to tackle issues of atheism at work, in politics and across the country. And they did.

At one point, another character Eli Gold tells Alicia, “Voters hate atheists. They think they spend all their time fighting manglers outside of City Hall.” In fact, Eli was right, but not only about voters. Lots of people hate atheists.

In December 2012, the International Humanist and Ethical Union released a report detailing discrimination against humanists, atheists and the non-religious. Did you know that in at least eight states, atheists and non-believers can't hold public office? And Arkansas has a law that bars an atheist from being a witness at a trial?

Every day across the country, children recite the Pledge of Allegiance, which in 1954 added the phrase “One nation, under God.” For many, this is an important addition.

But imagine what would happen to a fifth grader, who spoke up about the pledge and matter-of-factly stated, “I'm an atheist.” Would she be bullied? In an increasingly religiously intolerant world, we have to be concerned.

The truth is, difference is normal. And this is something that schools can teach and reinforce, so children learn to stop bullying classmates who are different.

“Voters hate atheists. They think they spend all their time fighting manglers outside of City Hall.”

—Eli Gold, *The Good Wife*

One way to start is with The Golden Rule. Every world religion has one and, even though atheism may not be a religion, Phyllis Diller said it best when she described herself in an interview: “I'm a kind person. I'm kind to everybody. I treat everybody the same, and I'm proud of that. In fact, that's my religion.”

Sounds a lot like The Golden Rule to me.

In friendship,

Joyce S. Dubensky
CEO

SHARED VISION: Education

BAHA'I

The spiritually learned are lamps of guidance among the nations, and stars of good fortune shining from the horizons of humankind. *Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, page 33*

BUDDHISM

A good, all-round education, appreciation of the arts, a highly trained discipline and pleasant speech; this is the highest blessing. *Sutta Nipata, verse 261*

CHRISTIANITY

Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding. *Proverbs 4:7*

CONFUCIANISM

The principle of learning consists in preserving man's clear character. In giving new life to the people and in dwelling in perfection, or the ultimate good. *Ta Hsueh (The Great Learning)*

HINDUISM

The raft of knowledge ferries even the worst to safety. *Bhagavad Gita 4:36*

ISLAM

The learned are the heirs of the Prophets and the Prophets do not leave an inheritance of dirhams and dinars, but only of knowledge. He who acquires knowledge acquires a vast portion. *Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed*

JUDAISM

[Wisdom] is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and whoever holds on to her is happy. *Proverbs 3:18*

SIKHISM

True learning induces in the mind service of mankind. *Adi Granth, Raga Asa, page 356*

TAOISM

For these four things are most useful to men, wisdom (combined with) courage, vision (combined with) knowledge, wealth (combined with) generosity, and good words (combined with) good deeds. *Adarbad Mahraspandan, The Teachings of the Magi*

SAVE THE DATE!

2013 Tanenbaum Award Ceremony

TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2013

The Plaza Hotel
770 Fifth Avenue
6:30 p.m. Cocktails
7:15 p.m. Dinner & Show

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Media Bridge-Builder Award
Dr. Reza Aslan
Adjunct Senior Fellow
Council of Foreign Relations

For more information,
contact Guirlaine Belizaire at
212.967.7707 x112 or
GBelizaire@Tanenbaum.org

CALL FOR ARTISTS!



We want to learn more about the religions in your neighborhood. Submit your art, showcasing the religious diversity of where you live. Throughout the year, we will select and showcase submitted work in our publications.

For more details, visit
Tanenbaum.org/RIMNArt

Changing the Status Quo

■ CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Empowering Women of Faith ... Joyce Dubensky was a panelist on “The Role of Interfaith Dialogue in Peacebuilding & Women’s Empowerment” symposium **at the United Nations.**

Connecting Around the World ... Tanenbaum and the *Peacemakers in Action* **trained 55 educators in Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Nigeria** using Tanenbaum’s pedagogy *The Seven Principles for Inclusive Education* ... *Peacemakers* Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge and Jose “Chencho” Alas **connected grassroots activists from Honduras with African National Congress officials in South Africa.** This transcontinental partnership with the *Peacemakers* is designed to foster technical and experiential support to benefit the Honduran activists.

For more updates about Tanenbaum’s *Peacemakers*, visit <http://bit.ly/PeacemakersUpdate2013>

■ WORKPLACE

Global Leaders Addressing Religion ... Tanenbaum congratulates **new Corporate Members** Citi and Weil Gotshal & Manges for leading their industries in proactively addressing the religious dimension of diversity at work.

Training Around the World ... Mark E. Fowler, Tanenbaum’s managing director of programs, participated in NASSCOM’s 2013 Diversity and Inclusion Summit in Bangalore, India, alongside leaders from Goldman Sachs’ Religion and Culture Forum. The panel discussion focused on the critical need to proactively address the sensitive topic of religious diversity in the workplace in India ... Joyce Dubensky conducted a presentation about global diversity challenges and opportunities at Barclays in Canary Wharf, London for representatives of leading multinational corporations.

■ HEALTH CARE

Engaging Faith Communities for Health ... The Tanenbaum *Heath Care* team, in collaboration with Cicatelli Associates Inc. and funded by the New York State Department of Health Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program, delivered a series of trainings educating contractors on how to engage faith communities in tobacco control.

Training the Providers ... Tanenbaum delivered a presentation to residents at Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital as a part of our ongoing work training pediatric residents in religio-cultural competence ... Lynn Stoller, senior program associate, delivered a Grand Rounds presentation at Woodhull Medical Center in Brooklyn.

■ EDUCATION

Training Educators ... Tanenbaum distributed curricular materials at the United Federation of Teacher’s second annual anti-bullying fair ... Mark Fowler participated on an anti-bias curriculum panel at the National Association of Multicultural Education conference.

Fighting Bullying ... The *Education* team presented a session, “Cultivating Global Citizenship in our Religiously Diverse World,” with the Independent School Diversity Network.



CALLING ALL TEACHERS!

Tanenbaum will offer its 36-hour professional development course, *Cultivating Global Citizenship*, from Monday, July 22 through Wednesday, July 31. The immersion course, which provides a road map for nurturing respectful curiosity, offers educators teaching tools that include:

- Instructional techniques
- Theories of multicultural education
- Ways to establish inclusive learning environments

To learn more and register:
Education@Tanenbaum.org



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