

EVERY
CASUALTY
COUNTS

A guided discussion

ECC Witness Circles

A conversation about the people
behind the numbers

everycasualty.org



You're welcome here

1

We'll hear one person's story.

2

We'll talk honestly.
Every question is welcome.

3

Nothing you say leaves this room.

4

You don't need to be an expert, or agree on politics.

A question to begin

How many people do you think were killed in armed conflict around the world last year?

Make a guess before we turn the slide.

Around 245,000 people

were killed in armed conflict in 2025 – the third-deadliest year since global records began in 1989.

1994 820,000+ the deadliest year on record



Rwanda – more than 820,000 people in a hundred days.

2022 300,000+ the second



More than 300,000 – driven largely by the war in Tigray, Ethiopia, and by Ukraine.

2025 245,000 the third



Estimates, Uppsala Conflict Data Program – read as scale and trend, not exact counts.

“One man's death is a tragedy. A million deaths is just a statistic.”

Attributed to Stalin

“If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will.”

Mother Teresa

Everything in this conversation lives between these two sentences.

Why we go numb

When we file someone as 'other', the part of the brain we use to imagine another mind stays dark.

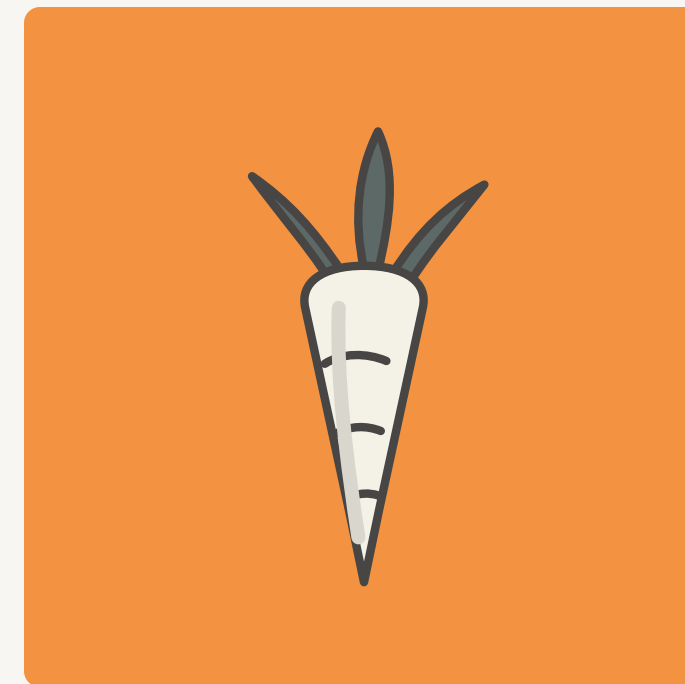
We process them the way we process objects. **Dehumanisation** is what makes killing possible.

Dr Lasana Harris, UCL

The reversal is almost absurdly simple

Ask: would this person prefer carrots, or broccoli?

You cannot wonder what someone wants for dinner without conceding they are a someone. One small act of imagination, and a thing becomes a person again.



CARROTS

or



BROCCOLI

Meet one person

Instructions

Choose one profile from ECC's Memorial
memorial.everycasualty.org

Read it aloud, slowly. Then hold a
moment of silence together.



Record. Recognise. Remember.

Casualty recording is the painstaking effort to document every death in a conflict – the name, the age, the place, the circumstances – one person at a time.

Done right, it is complex, including many overlapping facets.

Around the world, a network of local organisations does this heartbreaking work, often by interviewing surviving families, and often at personal risk.

It underpins accountability, legal cases, compensation – and the right of a family simply to know the fate of the person they lost.



Recording the dead is an act of dignity.



It protects the living

records can serve as evidence for accountability and justice.



It restores identity

ensuring every life matters, and is remembered.



It refuses the idea

that anyone is “collateral damage.”

War devalues human life. Casualty Recording is the work that restores that value.

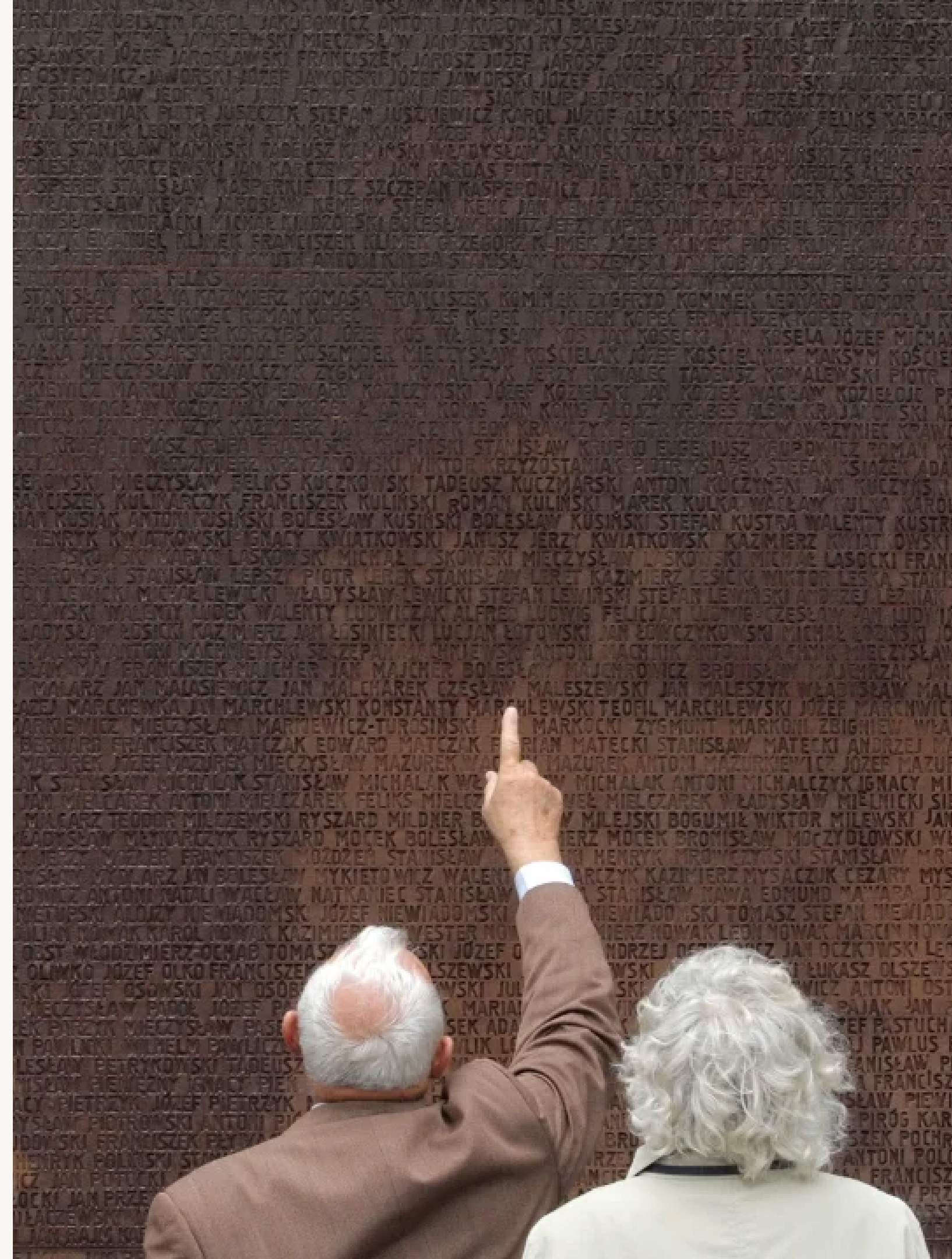
We already believe every person counts

Equal worth is the quiet premise beneath the whole of civic life: one person, one vote. Equal before the law. Every name on the village memorial carved the same size, whatever rank the person held.

War is where that belief is tested. If every life counts here, every life counts everywhere.

Instructions

Share a value, a piece of history, or a family memory that speaks to this – the worth of a life, or the duty to remember the dead.



A grayscale photograph of a person holding a large document titled "THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF Human Rights". The document features the United Nations logo at the top left. The person is holding the document open, and the text is clearly visible. The background is dark and out of focus.

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1 (1948)

Written in the shadow of the World Wars, by a generation that had counted its dead.

We already know how to remember

The two-minute silence. The last post. The names read aloud, one by one, each carrying equal weight. This country keeps a ritual that insists the dead of war are individuals – not numbers.

Most people killed in today's wars will never have a memorial anywhere.

Casualty recording builds the record a memorial needs



Let's talk

Instruction

One question at a time. Gentle and respectful voices – off politics, onto people and dignity. There are no right answers, and every voice should be heard.

Question 1

Did anything change for you when we read one person's story? How did you feel?

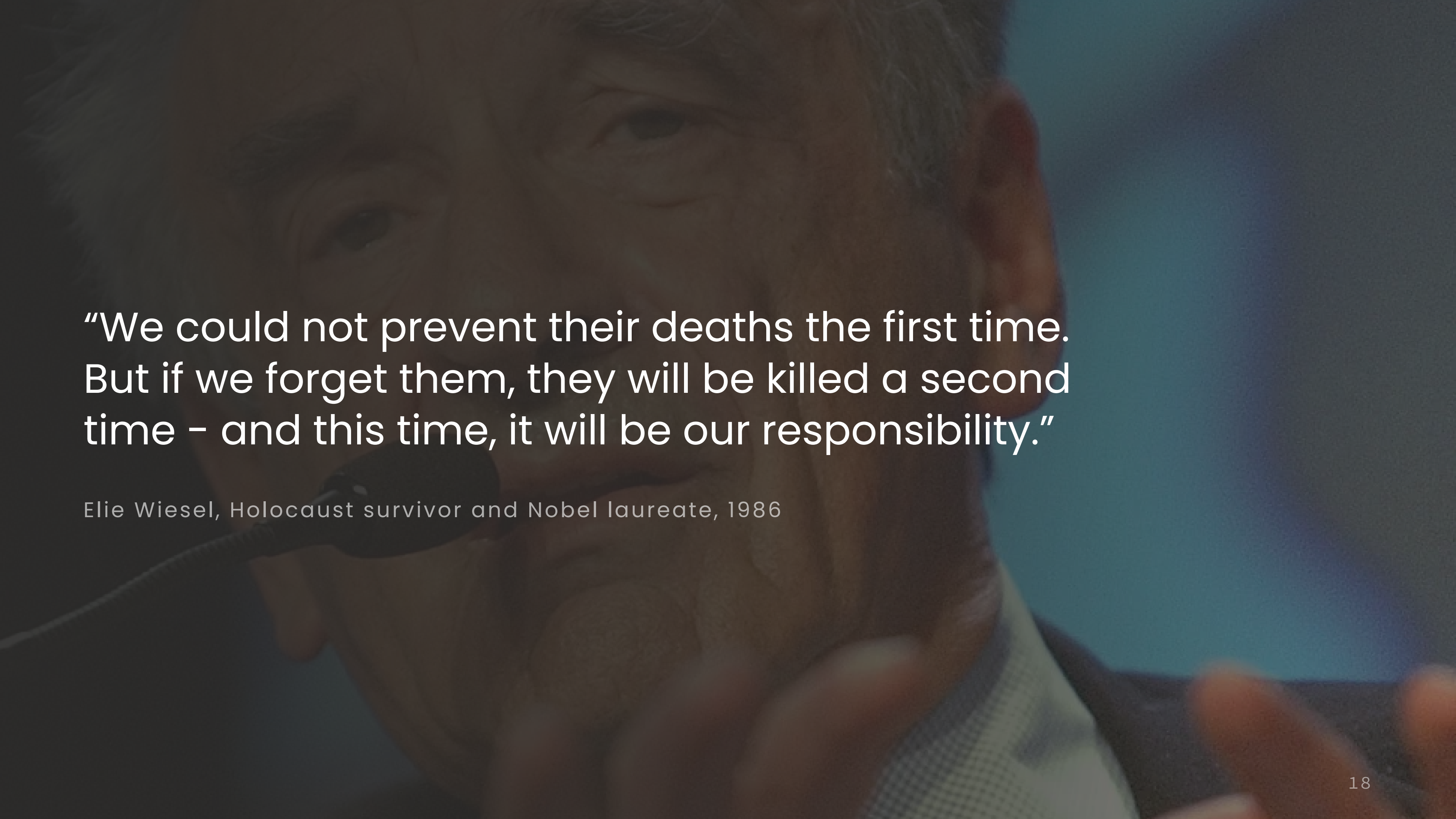
Question 2

Why does knowing someone's name and story matter?

Question 3

Life is precious.

What does that ask of us when the lives lost are strangers, far away, or “on the other side”?



“We could not prevent their deaths the first time.
But if we forget them, they will be killed a second
time – and this time, it will be our responsibility.”

Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate, 1986

We remember them by name

From mourning to hope and peace.

Instructions

We will read a handful of names from ECC's Memorial aloud, with a pause after each. As we read each name, choose one act of remembrance:

- 1 light a candle for each name
- 2 lay a stone in a bowl
- 3 hold a minute of silence



What will you do to ensure each life lost to war is remembered with dignity?

A small, personal commitment – to carry out of this room and into your own life.

Some people choose to

Lay a flower on Remembrance Day for someone whose name they learned

Light a candle on their birthday

Say a name aloud, and share their story with someone

Return to the Memorial when they are ready, and meet another person



Stay part of the circle.

1

Host it again

Bring this conversation to another group – a neighbouring club, a u3a interest group, a WI meeting, a group of friends.

2

Join us in November

A new edition of ECC's Memorial is released this November, with a memorial event for all in London on Remembrance Sunday.

3

Join the Remembrance Collective

everycasualty.org/RC

and **sign up to the newsletter**, which keeps you close to the work. You can also support ECC's mission there.



Every life deserves recognition.

By honouring the losses of the past, we can build a more peaceful future for everyone.

Instructions

Let us close with a final moment of silence.

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