SAFE

INTERSECTION PRESENTS AN XYZ PRODUCTION "SAFE PLACE" MUSIC BY MARK CRAWFORD SENIOR PRODUCERS GORDON QUINN AND ALI FUJINO
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JASON STEPHENS, DAVID J. CORNFIELD, LINDA A. CORNFIELD DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY BRENTON OECHSLE
PRODUCERS BRENTON OECHSLE AND SAMUEL-ALI MIRPOORIAN WRITTEN BY SAMUEL-ALI MIRPOORIAN DIRECTED & EDITED BY SAMUEL-ALI MIRPOORIAN

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Facilitation Guidelines

Filmmakers use immersive storytelling to produce intense thoughts and emotions in the viewer. **Journeys in Film** uses this powerful medium as a springboard for meaningful dialogue around humanity's most pressing issues. In this guide, you will find suggestions for leading productive conversations that broaden perspectives, encourage empathy, and build new paradigms for education.

- When watching a film or having a powerful discussion, normalize taking breaks and exercising bodily autonomy.
 Acknowledge that conversations around complex topics can be vulnerable, complicated, and challenging.
 Encourage members to voice and do what is right for them without needing to explain or apologize.
- People do their best when they know what to expect.
 Start and end meetings on time.
- Share or co-create your intentions for the meeting.
- Create your space. If possible, share snacks or find other ways to create an inviting, comfortable atmosphere.
- Create a trustworthy space. Maintain confidentiality; only speak to your own experience.
- Minimize distractions while you are together. Silence cell phones and devices so you can give your full attention to the conversation.
- Practice whole-body listening. Listen to words, tone, body language, and the feeling in the atmosphere.
- Acknowledge voices that may be absent. Is there a lived experience that isn't represented in your group?
 Who are the bridge people who might be able to connect you with other people in your community who might bring new perspectives to the table?

- Adopt an attitude of positive intent. If someone says something that rubs you the wrong way, assume positive intent and ask for more information.
- Ignite your curiosity around other people's views and opinions. Listen to understand, not to respond. You don't need to agree with others in your group or make it known that you are "right" to have a worthwhile conversation.
- Words matter. Be open to learning and practicing new ways to communicate with others.
- Be clear, direct, and kind in your communication.
 Nobody benefits when you bottle your opinions.
- Everyone has blindspots and biases; cultivate a space of grace as you enter into new territory together.
- If a conversation gets heated, practice acknowledging the tension, pausing as a group, and taking a collective breath together before diving back in or taking a longer break to reset.
- Privilege your relationships with others over the content or agenda of the meeting. Show each other kindness.
- Create a closing ritual that celebrates the time you've spent together and either gives closure or gives members something to think about before your next meeting.



Jerod Draper: A Life Cut Short

In many ways, Jerod Draper had an average, normal childhood in southern Indiana. But in high school, Jerod lost his best friend at the age of 14 and his first love at 15. To cope with the sudden losses, Jerod started experimenting with drugs. After high school and throughout his young-adult years, Jerod's substance abuse intensified. Throughout his 20s and 30s, Jerod continued to fight for sobriety while marrying and having a daughter. Following his divorce and being unable to see his daughter due to substance abuse, Jerod made a vow to stay clean. On October 4th, 2018, Jerod was well over a year sober, yet fighting a familiar challenge: the severe depression and anxiety resulting from withdrawal. That evening, Jerod endured a fatal night of torture after being arrested for a routine traffic stop.





Introduction to the Film (Including Content Warning)

This investigative documentary film is short but impactful and, at times, very hard to watch. It includes mature content, nudity, violence, and Jerod's death, which we see through surveillance footage of the jail cell where Jerod was being held. Please reference the Facilitation Guidelines herein to create a safe space for viewing. If you are watching the film on your own and find that you need to pause the film, take a break and return to it. Honor those feelings. It is acceptable, on your own or in a group, to look away and let your ears do the viewing if you feel overwhelmed by the images shared.

To anchor yourself and engage with this important content, remind yourself of the purpose and reasons that the investigative journalists and filmmakers created this film. They sought to raise awareness and to invite people to take action to reduce these experiences in the future, as well as to potentially call for further accountability regarding Draper's death. Take Fred Rogers's advice to "look for the helpers." Those behind this project are helpers, and you (and/or your educational/community learning group) can also be a helper/helpers. It is easy to want to ignore these difficult realities and truths about institutions.

This discussion guide was created to help us take note of these realities and face them directly either on our own, or, if possible, in community with concerned individuals. This guide includes resources and potential opportunities for positive engagement and action. It offers the opportunity for us, the viewers, to gain greater understanding and demonstrate empathy and compassion for others as we step into our power and engage deeply with this content.



Finally, thoughts and beliefs about mass incarceration and the criminal justice system can vary tremendously depending on political identity, geography and personal experiences. Journeys in Film hopes that if you are part of a community that has come together to watch this powerful story, regardless of each individual's current stance on the issue, you will find opportunities to connect and grow as a community through engaging with this film and discussion guide.



Director's Statement

Since 2018, I've been working on my debut feature documentary, GREENER PASTURES. Through that film, I built many relationships, and through these connections, a group of professionals from Kaetemquin Films brought SAFE PLACE to my attention.

Jason Stephens of this group of contacts determined I was the individual to make SAFE PLACE. The film would be a documentary with a short, quick production schedule: thirteen interviews conducted in seven days with one month edit to completion.

I became the writer, director, producer, lead cinematographer and editor to make the film from start to finish. With support and guidance from Jason, I felt prepared to produce this film.

I jumped in and everything fell into place. Jerod's family opened up to me, and I gained access to the public deposition videos.

SAFE PLACE changed my life and my focus on filmmaking.



Personally, I wanted to highlight police brutality as it affects individuals throughout the criminal justice system. Over the last few years, some of the most severe abuse of power stories I have heard focused on people of color. SAFE PLACE exposes us to events that take place with a white male and highlights my discovery that injustice does not have color boundaries. I also realized how susceptible rural jails are to this type of injustice.

My backyard in Indiana revealed rural justice trends in the lack of understanding, educational training resources, and leadership. Add abuse of power, and we have a recipe for tragic endings like Jerod's. I often felt confused, helpless, and frustrated making this film. I wanted to understand why this happened to Jerod and what I could do for others.

In the end, I hope SAFE PLACE gives my audiences an empathetic point of view, opening hearts and minds to these issues. I am grateful for the opportunity to make this film supporting Jerod and others like him.

—Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian, independent filmmaker, Indianapolis, Indiana

You can learn more about Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian and his film work at https://workofmiro.com.



Criminal Justice Reform: Improvements & Changes



Changes to the U.S. criminal justice system have historically been slow, but the last two decades have seen increased calls for reform, with the most significant changes coming in the last three to five years, in part because of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Among the changes that many communities are beginning to institute are diversion services (programs designed to divert people from the criminal justice system to other relevant support services) and community based responses and programs. These services are most common in major metropolitan areas. Most diversion services and programs are focused on psychiatric treatment, substance abuse treatment, medical care, education and work resources, and diverting individuals to other community, state and or federal resources that may be relevant.

Diversion services and programs have proven to be beneficial in many municipalities. These services also free up law enforcement to focus on solving homicide cases while also reducing recidivism, as individuals that may have previously found themselves in a revolving door of various types of incarceration instead receive the mental health and/or substance abuse treatments they need.



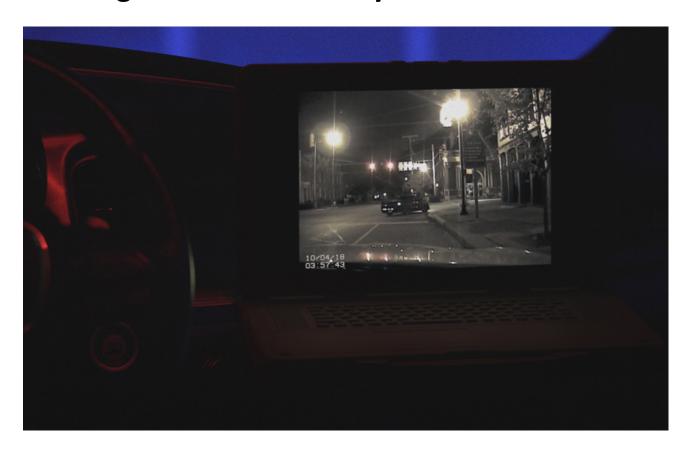
We understand the challenge of exploring this important and complex issue in settings where time may be limited. We also realize that some of these questions may require additional learning and research. We encourage you to start with questions 1 through 3 and see where that leads your learning community and/or educational group/ classroom. If time permits, delve more deeply using the rest of the questions. Some may lead to further research and learning opportunities, such as question 4 regarding protocols in one's local community. Learners/students/ community members may wish to explore the rest of the questions on their own.

- 1. In your opinion, is jail a safe place? Before watching the film, did you (like Jerod's mother) think of jail as a safe place? What do you think now?
- 2. In Draper's case, there was no internal investigation. Do you feel that an investigation was warranted? What do you think the result is when an investigation does not happen following a death like this? Should there be a formal investigation when some dies in law enforcement custody?
- **3.** Do individuals, like Draper, who are in the midst of a mental health crisis and/or serious substance abuse crisis, need a law enforcement response, medical response and/or psychiatric response or a combination thereof?
- 4. In your community, do you know what the protocol is when someone dies while in custody? Do you know the number of deaths at your local jail in any given year?

- 5. Does the bulk of the blame for Draper's death lie with the individuals in the cell with him and the choices that he made or with the systems that are currently in place to manage situations like Draper's? Or is it not an either/or choice?
- **6.** What do you think about the "theory" referenced by law enforcement interviewed about the incident of introducing pain to gain compliance?
- 7. How do the rights and humanity of a person shift when they are arrested?
- 8. While abuse of individuals held in jail occurs throughout the United States, rural jails, like the one Draper was held in, are the most susceptible to acts of injustice and brutality against individuals inside of their cells. Inadequate training, poor leadership and insufficient resources are among the reasons. What can be done to rectify this situation?



Law Enforcement Officers and Jail Staff: Training and Accountability



In the United States, a national standard of training required for law enforcement officers and jail and prison staff does not exist. This means that the number of training hours and the standard of that training can vary a great deal throughout the country. On average, patrol officers receive 21 weeks of training. In comparison to law enforcement training around the world, the United States is among the nations requiring the least number of hours of training.¹

One outcome of the inconsistency in training at facilities throughout the United States is that law enforcement individuals using the training they have been given may respond inappropriately, inadequately, or ineffectively with dire outcomes. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the United States' primary source for criminal justice statistics defines arrest-related deaths as civilian deaths occurring before, during, or after an arrest that can be attributed to one of the following: use of force by law enforcement officers, injuries sustained while fleeing officers or while in custody, self-imposed events (such as suicide or intoxication), or death due to medical conditions or illness.²

¹ Data from BBC News report: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-56834733

² https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/arrest-related-deaths-ard#publications-0



BJS implemented an Arrest-Related Deaths (ARD) program in 2003 to fulfill the requirement of the Death in Custody Reporting Act of 2000. Highlights from the Federal Deaths in Custody and During Arrest 2020 report reflect that federal law enforcement agencies *reported* 65 ARD and 614 deaths in custody, with homicides accounting for 47% of ARD, 26% reported as suicide, and 13% as a result of accidents. Eighty-nine percent of ARD victims were male, 69% were white, and 62% were between 22 and 44 years of age.³ Data and tracking exists for federal facilities and as such would not include incidents at county facilities, like the one where Draper was held. Additionally, the reasons for deaths are determined by law enforcement and facility staff in most cases as investigations are not common.

Police accountability measures began to be put in place in some communities starting in 2015. Among the measures that have been put in place in various jurisdictions are: data collection on use of force, independent investigations, early warning systems to identify officers with possible behavioral problems, the creation of a National Decertification Index (which does not have uniformity in its implementation), body cams, and civilian review boards.⁴

In the United States, state prosecutors often make decisions regarding when to charge a person with a crime based on the likelihood of a positive conviction rate. Traditionally, the standard of proof to charge and convict a law enforcement officer with a criminal charge in the act of injury and/or death of someone in carceral custody has been seen as quite high, leading to a practice of not bringing charges against law enforcement officers and other jail and prison staff.

Again, we understand that time may not allow you to address all of these questions, focus on the key questions. Focus on those first.

- 1. What do you know about law enforcement training either nationally or locally in your community?
- 2. What do you think law enforcement got "right" when dealing with Draper?
- 3. Do you think law enforcement might have been able to assist Draper in his agitated state through a different response than the one they gave? Or do you think they did the best they could in this situation? Should they have shifted their approach when Draper told officers that he had taken drugs?
- 4. What do you think about the use and presence of the taser in this situation?
- 5. Who seemed to be in danger at the jail? Staff? Draper? County property?
- **6.** Do you feel there was an excessive use of force in Draper's case?
- 7. Do you think a gap exists between training and action? If so, how might that gap be closed?
- **8.** Did you think there was evidence of criminality on the part of the jail staff?
- 9. Of the police accountability systems listed above, which do you think would be the most effective? Least effective? Body cams are listed, but surveillance did not seem to cause changes in behavior by officers engaging with Draper. What strategies might lead to effective change?

³ https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/federal-deaths-custo-dy-and-during-arrest-2020-statistical-tables#:~:text=Federal%20 law%20enforcement%20agencies%20reported,accidents%20 each%20accounted%20for%2013%25

⁴ https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11572



Trauma, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Challenges



Common media portrayals of mental illness and individuals battling addiction offer dramatic and distorted images of the mentally ill as criminal and unpredictable. These poor representations are misleading and promote misunderstandings that can foster inappropriate responses to individuals in crisis.

A broader understanding of the relationship between trauma, especially childhood and adolescent experiences of trauma, and prolonged mental health challenges and substance abuse disorder among adults is just beginning to take place.

Trauma-informed responses in the carceral system are even rarer. Trauma-informed care is treatment and care administered with an understanding of the pervasive nature of trauma and that promotes environments of healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently re-traumatize individuals.⁵ Trauma-informed care in public health is growing, but is still not a standard of care in many areas, particularly rural areas and communities.

- 1. What instances have you seen in which trauma, substance abuse, and mental health challenges are clearly connected?
- 2. Have you or has someone in your life/community been affected by substance abuse? What tools and resources have been helpful for those individuals (or for yourself)? What actions were NOT helpful?
- 3. In your community, what resources are available for individuals facing mental health challenges or struggling with substance abuse? Is the local jail often a holding place for individuals in crisis?
- 4. What signs did officers have that Draper was in a mental health crisis and/or suffering from a substance-abuse-related state of agitation?
- 5. What actions do you think are most helpful when someone is suicidal? What actions are least helpful?
- **6.** How is your personal understanding of mental health challenges, substance abuse disorder, and trauma expanding and changing? What have you noticed or learned about these issues recently? What would you still like to learn?

https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-istrauma-informed-care.html



What Is a Safe Place?



After receiving Jarod's phone call from Harrison County Jail, Jarod's mother, Vicki Budd, shares her initial thoughts: "He'd been doing very well, clean the past 12 months, but nevertheless, I actually felt relieved. He was in jail. He was safe there. He wouldn't get hurt, wouldn't hurt anybody else. He was in a safe place."

Jail and prison are often seen as synonyms. Both are confinement places operated by law enforcement, but they are not the same. Jail is the holding space for individuals awaiting trial or who have been arrested but not yet charged. People in jail have not been convicted of a crime. Because of the cash-bail system, that prevails in the U.S., individuals are sometimes in jail for years. Cash bail requires payment of a certain amount of funds in order to await trial at home. Individuals who can't pay await trial in jail. Often, people spend years awaiting trial. Prison is where individuals go after they have been convicted of a crime and sentenced. In small towns and rural areas, there can be overlap with the same buildings housing individuals awaiting trial also holding those who have been convicted.

- 1. What is a "safe place" for you? What support do you need when you are struggling with a challenge, mentally or emotionally?
- **2**. How can we create safe places for individuals who are in crisis?
- 3. In the last 2–4 years, many cities and counties have begun to create diversion services and intake centers so that social workers, mental health professionals, etc. handle calls related to individuals in mental health crisis or in the midst of a substance-abuse-related crisis, rather than law enforcement responses that would place these individuals in jail. Does your city or county have such a service? How would individuals know about this service and seek it out instead of calling 9-1-1? Are 9-1-1 calls routed to such services in your community instead of toward a traditional law enforcement response?



What Can You Do? Community Action and Engagement



SAFE PLACE exists because individuals heard what happened to Jerod Draper and that no criminal charges were brought against the officers involved in Draper's death. These individuals—lawyers, investigative reporters and journalists, filmmakers, advocates—decided to take action. Each of them used their specific skill set to make sure that Draper's death was not brushed under the rug.

It might be helpful to know that psychiatrists and social workers recommend that if you need to call 9-1-1 because a loved one, friend or other individual is in a mental health crisis or substance-abuse-related crisis and in danger of harming themselves and others, that the individual that calls 9-1-1 should remain in contact with law enforcement as an advocate for the individual taken into law enforcement custody.



The first two questions encourage reflection regarding the film. The rest of the questions are focused on additional research and potential action. Remember that taking one simple action can make a difference.

- 1. What role did journalists play in bringing Draper's case to light? How are they seeking "justice" for the family? What skill sets do you have that could highlight Draper's situation?
- 2. Jerod's mother sees her son's death as a reflection of our failures as a nation to handle the drug problem effectively. Do you agree with this assertion?
- 3. What does substance abuse look like in your community? How is it handled? What resources are available for individuals battling substance abuse? What barriers are there to those resources?
- 4. Similarly, what resources are available for individuals facing mental health crises in your community? What barriers are there to accessing those resources?

- 5. How are funds allocated in your community? What amount of taxpayer funds go toward jail and prisons versus mental health services and substance abuse programs? Are you in agreement with how funds are allocated or do you think they should be allocated differently? What action could you take to voice your opinion on this topic?
- 6. How would you define someone who is an advocate? Have you ever considered yourself to be an advocate or created an advocacy strategy in case you needed to call 9-1-1 because of a loved one's mental health crisis? Are there alternatives to calling 9-1-1 in your community? Do you have those numbers readily accessible?
- 7. Research local resources for free or low-cost health services in your community. Create a document that shows how to find and access those resources and share it on your social media platforms and/or post on community bulletin boards. Or, if a document or resource like this already exists, can you help distribute it?



Additional Resources

More on Jarod Draper's Death

Death Sentence – Indianapolis Star Special Report: https://www.indystar.com/in-depth/news/investigations/2021/10/12/how-trip-to-indiana-county-jail-couldbe-death-sentence/5483328001/

"Releasing video of final hours of Jerod Draper's life was difficult but necessary," Indianapolis Star:

https://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/2021/12/08/indiana-jail-jerod-draper-why-indystar-releasing-video-being-tased/8869076002/

Civic Engagement

Helpful guidance in writing (and getting published) a letter to the editor

Writing an Effective Letter to the Editor | Union of Concerned Scientists (ucsusa.org)

This civic guide for participation includes actions specific to Los Angeles, but also has some useful general information around civic engagement

https://www.la101.guide/participation-101

Crisis Response Resources

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: https://988lifeline.org/

Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741:

https://www.crisistextline.org/

National Alliance on Mental Illness:

https://www.nami.org/Home

National Institute on Drug Abuse: https://nida.nih.gov/

Psycom List of Helplines:

https://www.psycom.net/get-help-mental-health

Criminal Justice Reform & Additional Information about Rural Jailing

Brennan Center for Justice: https://www.brennancenter.org/

Criminal Justice System Utilization in Rural Areas, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority:

https://icjia.illinois.gov/researchhub/articles/criminal-justice-system-utilization-in-rural-areas

Critical Resistance: https://criticalresistance.org/

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights:

https://ellabakercenter.org/

Equal Justice Initiative: https://eji.org/

Essie Justice Group: https://essiejusticegroup.org/

The Human Toll of Jails, Vera Institute:

https://www.vera.org/the-human-toll-of-jail-2023

Innocence Project: https://innocenceproject.org/

JustLeadershipUSA: https://jlusa.org/

List of Prison Reform Organizations:

https://centerforprisonreform.org/prison-reform-organizations/

Lucy Parsons Lab: https://lucyparsonslabs.com/

The Marshall Project, nonprofit journalism about the criminal justice system: https://www.themarshallproject.org

National Bail Out: https://www.nationalbailout.org/

National Library of Medicine: Monitoring Deaths in Police

Custody

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8495641/



Out of Sight: The Growth of Jails in Rural America, Vera Institute:

https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/out-of-sight-growth-of-jails-rural-america.pdf

Reducing Mental Illness in Rural Jails, National Association of Countires: https://www.naco.org/resources/reducing-mental-illness-rural-jails

Rural Jail – Its People, Problems and Solutions from U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs:

https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/rural-jailits-people-problems-and-solutions-criminal-justice-rural

Survived and Punished: https://survivedandpunished.org/

Intervention, Diversion and Mental Health Services, Sample Listings

Alternative intervention and diversion services are growing in areas across the country. A comprehensive list would be too long to include here, but we are providing a list of examples that you can use to identify and/or advocate for similar services in your community.

Albuquerque Community Safety is a newer service set up by the City of Albuquerque to provide holistic, empathetic, and informed responses to behavioral and mental-health related 9-1-1 calls. These services can also be accessed, in non-emergency settings, by dialing 3-1-1.

Bronx Móvil is a service provider in the Bronx. Their website is in Spanish reflecting the communities they serve: https://www.bronxmovil.org/

Denver STAR (Support Team Assisted Response) Program, an intervention program that has received a lot of media attention: https://www.denvergov.org/Government/
Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Public-Health-Environment/Community-Behavioral-Health/Behavioral-Health-Strategies/Support-Team-Assisted-Response-STAR-Program

USA Today article about STAR program:

https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/02/06/denver-sent-mental-health-help-not-police-hundreds-calls/4421364001/

East Texas Behavioral Network is a 24-hour crisis resource covering CHCS San Antonio, Burke Center Lufkin, BBT Diversion Center for Williamson County, Starcare EOU Lubbock, Texan EOU (all of which are 24-hour crisis centers for the uninsured).

Multnomah County (in Oregon) provides an extensive list of resources available in the county. Other places are starting to follow suit and are creating comprehensive resources listings as well:

https://www.multco.us/behavioral-health/mental-health-crisis-intervention

Understanding Trauma

David Baldwin's Trauma Information Pages: https://www.trauma-pages.com

National Center for PTSD: https://www.ptsd.va.gov

National Child Traumatic Stress Network: http://www.nctsnet.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach:

https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma14-4884.pdf

Video: When is It Trauma? Bessel van der Kolk Explains: https://bit.ly/2MMwNK6



Film Credits

Director/Producer Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian

Executive Producer David J. Cornfield

Executive Producer Linda A. Cornfield

Executive Producer Jason Stephens

Composer Mark Crawford

Co-Producer and Cinematographer Brenton Oechsle

You can access and share this film through https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZvshwQSqkA.

Image Credits

Page 1: Safe Place Poster

Page 4: Family photo of Jarod Draper used in the Indianapolis Star article "Releasing video of final hours of Jerod Draper's life was difficult but necessary"

https://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/2021/12/08/indiana-jail-jerod-draper-why-indystar-releasing-video-being-tased/8869076002/

Page 5: Safe Place Poster

Page 6: Headshot photo of *Safe Place* director Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian. Photographer: C. Thomas Lewis

Page 7: Still from Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian, Safe Place

Page 9: Still from Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian, Safe Place

Page 11: Still from Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian, Safe Place

Page 12: Still from Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian, Safe Place

Page 13: Still from Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian, Safe Place

This discussion guide for the film *Safe Place* and additional free materials for your classroom can be found at http://journeysinfilm.org.

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