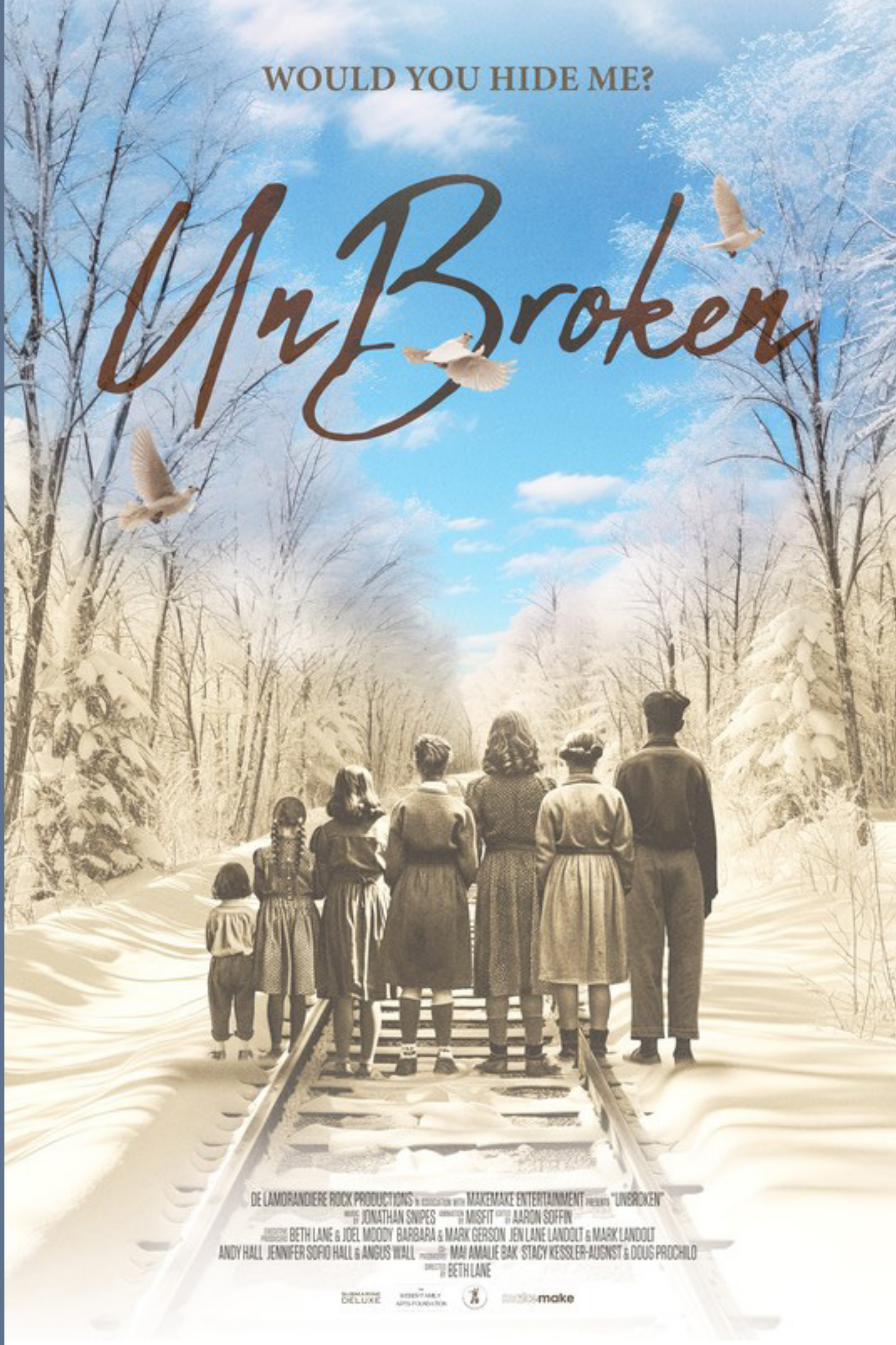
Learning Guide



JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

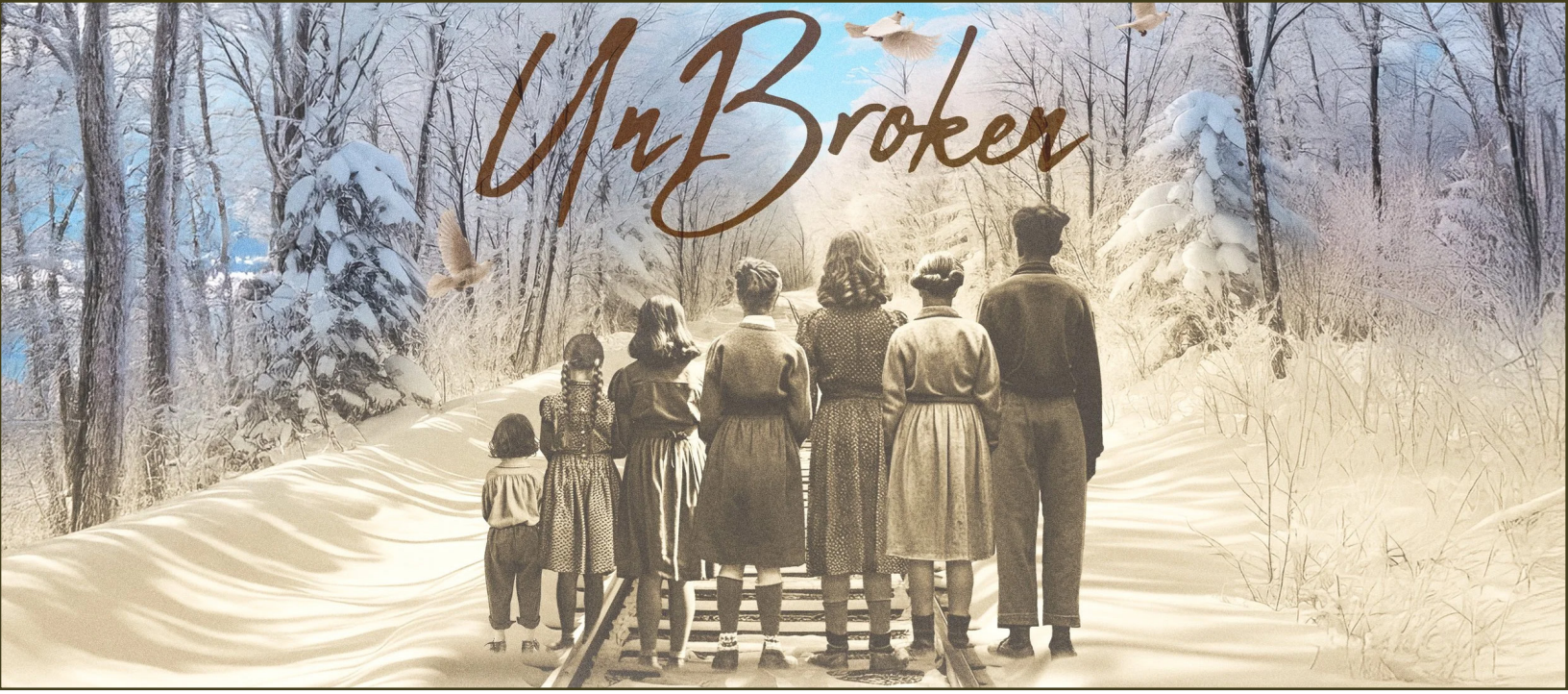


TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Facilitation Guidelines
4	Supporting Learners Without Access to Biological Family Histories
5	Introduction to the Film
6	The Weber Siblings
8	Director's Statement
10	Historical Context: The Holocaust and Jewish Refugees
14	Section 1: *Everyday Courage — The Impact of Upstanders*
18	Section 2: *The Power of Storykeeping Through Archival Activism*
22	Section 3: *Empathy as a Practice — Listening, Reflecting, Acting*
28	Section 4: *Preserving Memories Through Mixed Media*
31	Section 5: *Echoes and Restorations — Healing Trauma Across Generations*
34	Handout 1: Items Recovered in the Ringelblum Archive
41	Handout 2: Empathy Map
42	Handout 3: Self-Care Wheel
43	Film & Image Credits
44	About Journeys in Film

Note to users:

Each section is designed to be used independently and can stand alone for learning and growth in these areas in connection with the film. Handouts connect with specific sections but can be used in other ways. Sections can also be used in conjunction with one another, and some sections include suggested connections to one another. You can also use the guide in its entirety for a rich, in-depth learning experience.

Go2Films

JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

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, increase global competency, 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 your 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 and 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 bothers you, 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 blind spots 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.

SUPPORTING LEARNERS WITHOUT ACCESS TO BIOLOGICAL FAMILY HISTORIES

UnBroken centers on archival research, family history, and ancestral memory. However, educators should be mindful that not all learners have access to information about their biological families. Some may be adopted, in foster care, estranged from family members, displaced by migration, or lacking records due to war, incarceration, or historical trauma. Others may simply not feel comfortable discussing family matters.

To ensure an inclusive learning environment:

1. Broaden the definition of "family history."

Instead of focusing solely on biological lineage, invite learners to explore:

- chosen family
- cultural or community traditions
- important adults in their lives
- neighborhood or local histories
- community archives or public records
- collective identities they participate in

2. Provide multiple entry points into genealogical inquiry.

Students may:

- research local historical sites
- interview a mentor or community elder
- analyze a cultural practice meaningful to them
- reflect on stories from their community, school, or neighborhood
- explore a historical event connected to their identity

No learner should be required to disclose personal or sensitive information.

3. Offer alternatives to sharing personal stories.

Include options such as private journaling, fictionalized narratives, archival exploration, or creative projects that do not require personal family details.

4. Avoid assumptions.

Use inclusive language such as "people who influence you," "stories connected to your community," or "a tradition that shapes your identity" to prevent placing learners in uncomfortable positions.

5. Build psychologically safe environments.

Genealogical and historical inquiry can evoke strong emotions. Offer opportunities to opt out, step away, or choose a different activity. Normalize diverse family experiences and emphasize that identity is shaped by many forces, not only ancestry.

By creating flexibility, honoring privacy, and recognizing diverse lived experiences, educators can ensure that all learners can engage meaningfully with the film's themes of memory, identity, justice, and repair.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FILM

UnBroken is the miraculous true story of the seven Weber siblings, ages 6–18, who evade capture and death, and ultimately escaped Nazi Germany. Following their mother's incarceration and murder at Auschwitz, they relied solely on their youthful bravado and the kindness of strangers.

After being hidden in a laundry hut by a benevolent German farmer, the children spent two years on their own in war-torn Germany. Emboldened by their father's mandate that they "always stay together," the children used their own cunning instincts to fight through hunger, loneliness, rape, bombings, and fear. Climactically separated from their father, the siblings were forced to declare themselves orphans in order to escape to a new life in America. Unbeknownst to them, this salvation would finally tear them apart, not to be reunited for another 40 years.

Filmmaker Beth Lane, daughter of the youngest Weber sibling, embarks on a quest to retrace their steps, seeking answers to long-held questions about her family's survival. The film examines the journey of the Weber family as told through conversations with living siblings — now in their eighties and nineties — while Beth and her crew road trip across Germany, following the courageous, tumultuous, and harrowing path taken by her family over 70 years ago.

UnBroken is Beth Lane's feature directorial debut, and it is both a professional milestone and a personal quest to immortalize the incredible survival of the Weber siblings — the only family of seven Jewish siblings living in Nazi Germany known to have survived and emigrated together.

THE WEBER SIBLINGS

Alfons Weber
1927 – 2016

Alfons was born as the first child and only son of Alexander & Lina Weber in Paderborn, Germany. As a teenager, he lost his mother and was separated from his father for long periods of time, so he took on the role as the protector of his six younger sisters, who all adored him. Alfons settled in Chicago, where he married and raised a family, working as a physicist. He had planned to take a trip to Germany with his niece, Beth, but his death in 2016 meant that this trip never came to be. Beth's film UnBroken is her way of finally taking that trip with her uncle.

Senta Saulters
1929 – 2016

The eldest Weber daughter, Senta was born in Paderborn, Germany. After immigrating to the United States, she met her husband, Bob Saulters, with whom she raised four sons and co-owned small businesses in Chicago. She was a devout Catholic, and a creative soul with a love for poetry, dancing, and singing. Her lovely singing voice is missed dearly by her siblings and entire family.

Ruth Gilliana
1930 – 2023

Ruth was born in Berlin and came to be the driving force that would ultimately get the seven Weber siblings out of Germany once and for all, thanks to her unrivaled street smarts and moxie. Ruth raised five children in Chicago and she had four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was an avid Tiger Woods fan!

Gertrude Chapman
Born 1932

Born in Berlin, Gertrude lives in Buffalo Grove along with the love of her life, Sherwin Chapman, her husband of over 55 years. Together, they raised three children in the Jewish faith, and now they have six grandchildren and one great grandchild. Gertrude was the nerve center of communication once the Weber siblings came to Chicago, and she is still the chief cook and bottle communicator.

Renee Dicker
1935 – 2020

Born in Berlin, Renee eventually had three children, four grandchildren and a great-grandchild. Her matter-of-fact, no-nonsense approach to life has an enduring quality that inspires all of us to live an authentic and meaningful life.

Judith Lal
Born 1937

Judith was born in Berlin. As a young adult she worked at The University of Chicago and met her adoring husband, Harbans Lal. Judith converted to Sikhism when she married, and together, they raised three children. Today, she lives in Texas and enjoys spending as much time with her granddaughter as she can.

Ginger (Bela) Lane
Born 1939

The youngest Weber sibling, Ginger Lane was born Bela Weber in Berlin, Germany. After immigrating to the United States at age six, she was adopted by the neurosurgeon I. Joshua Speigel and his wife, Rosalynde, an artist who raised Bela in an artistic household. She became a ballerina and eventually married and had three children. She is the proud grandmother to seven grandchildren, and is the recipient of numerous awards for her contributions to disabilities advocacy, as well as dance and choreography. In the Spring of 2022, Ginger's image was featured on Chicago bus stops and billboards in honor of Women's History Month!

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Beth Lane, Director

On the morning of September 11, 2001, I was sitting in a coffee shop next to the Empire State Building in New York City when my phone rang. "Go outside," my husband said. "The World Trade Center buildings have been hit by an airplane." I thought he was joking. But I went outside, looked down the barrel of Fifth Avenue and saw that the sky was changing. Smoke rose where the towers had stood. I watched in disbelief as the impossible unfolded. Frozen. Silent. I called a friend in the suburbs and asked her to pick up my three children from school — "just in case." I even gave her my sister's phone number in Illinois… "just in case."

I had grown up believing the Holocaust could never happen again. Ever. But on that terrible sunny day, something shifted. The fear. The hatred. The shock of pure evil. It all felt terrifyingly familiar.

My mother, Ginger, was born into poverty in Berlin. As a little girl, she watched the Gestapo kidnap her mother, who was later murdered at Auschwitz. My mom, known as Bela, became one of the hidden children of the Holocaust. Against all odds, she survived. Bela and her six siblings emigrated from Germany to the United States, were then separated into different foster homes, and eventually, my mother was adopted. Her American life was born with loss, silence, education, culture, and love.

In 1986, 40 years after leaving Europe, Ginger, my mother, reunited with her biological brother and sisters. I found out after the reunion. I wasn't there. And I've always carried that absence with me.

Ten years later, Alfons, Senta, Ruth, Gertrude, Renee, and Judith stood together again — this time on my mother's front lawn, beneath a towering paper Statue of Liberty. That gathering unlocked something. We opened scrapbooks. Studied photographs. Read a short memoir Uncle Alfons had written. Eventually, he returned to the village of Worin, Germany, where the children had been hidden. With local historians, he submitted an application to Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Museum in Jerusalem, to honor the farmers who saved them, Arthur and Paula Schmidt. In 2015, the Schmidts were officially named Righteous Among the Nations, and in 2018, a ceremony in The Gardens of The Righteous took place to unveil their names on the granite walls. Uncle Alfons passed away just months before the ceremony, in 2017.

Seventy-two years after my mother fled Europe, she decided to pick up where her brother Alfons left off and return to their hiding place in Worin. I went with her. That journey altered the shape of both our lives. Three weeks later, the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, took place, a white supremacist rally. And I knew the story I had inherited now carried urgency. I had never made a film before. But without question, this story needed to be told.

On October 8, 2023 — less than 24 hours after Hamas attacked and kidnapped civilians at a concert in Israel — *UnBroken* had its world premiere. The timing was surreal. One week later, it won Best Documentary Feature Premiere. That single moment ignited a forty-city tour, a national theatrical release, and finally a Netflix debut on Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. Within 24 hours, *UnBroken* soared to #5 in the Top 10 movies in the U.S. on Netflix. To date, over 1.5 million people have streamed our film.

Why does it connect? Because *UnBroken* is not just a film. It is an invitation.

To feel.
To remember.
To examine who we are and who we choose to be.

I did not create *UnBroken* to make a political statement or a religious one. I made it to build empathy. To remind us that caring is an action. That standing up for one another is a choice. That the way we treat others is the truest measure of who we are.

UnBroken carries a message that is both urgent and enduring. And after audiences absorb its message, I want more than reflection. I want audiences to feel more deeply, care more fiercely and choose, in their own lives, to be upstanders. For themselves, for their communities, and for humanity.

— Beth Lane, Director

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE HOLOCAUST AND JEWISH REFUGEES

Germany Between the Wars

The German Empire shattered after World War I. The Treaty of Versailles forced the loss of key industrial land and dictated that Germany pay significant reparations to allied countries. Blockades, continued shortages of food, fuel, and manufactured goods, and skyrocketing inflation stymied the rebuilding of the economy. Anger over the treaty and social unrest spurred revolutionary movements and political instability, paving the way for radical nationalist ideologies.

Amid this turmoil, the German Workers' Party — renamed the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or Nazi Party, in 1920 — rose to prominence by opposing the Treaty of Versailles and promoting a vision of moral renewal rooted in antisemitism. Despite the party being briefly outlawed, by 1932 it was the largest political party in Germany. Shortly after Adolf Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, the Parliament (Reichstag) was destroyed by an act of arson. This event enabled Hitler to suspend civil liberties and political opposition. In retribution, the government rounded up Communists (the group blamed for the fire) and opened the first concentration camps to hold enemies of the state at Nohra, Oranienberg, and Dachau. When President Hindenburg died in 1934, Hilter merged the offices of President and Chancellor, declaring himself Führer, or leader of the country.

The Rise of a New Antisemitism

Antisemitism had deep roots in the continent, rearing its head throughout the two-millennium history of Jewish communities in Europe. Late 19th-century "Social Darwinism" gave it new, pseudo-scientific language, postulating a hierarchy of distinct human "races" in constant conflict with one another for superiority and survival. ***(It is critical to note that there is no biological evidence to support the theory of race or inherent difference between races.)*** The "white" or "Aryan race" crowned this bogus hierarchy while Jewish peoples were seen as a distinct and inferior race. Although Jews represented only approximately 1.7% of Europe's population in 1933, antisemites claimed they held an outsized influence on culture, politics, economics, and media. At the same time, the eugenics movement was gaining favor and influence within the racial policies of the United States and was much admired by Germans arguing for a racially "pure" populace. Postwar Germany's social and economic crises created fertile ground for these ideas, offering scapegoats for national humiliation and decline and a roadmap toward desired supremacy.

Persecution, Emigration, and Genocide

The Holocaust was not a single event, but an escalating and evolving series of laws, policies, and actions perpetuated by the Nazi government, their allies, and collaborators against Jewish people between 1933 and 1945. These actions deprived Jewish citizens of their rights, property, and freedom, and included isolated and mass episodes of violence that ultimately culminated in genocide.

As persecution intensified in the early days of the Nazi Regime, hundreds of thousands of Jews fled Germany and Austria, creating a global refugee crisis. Many Jewish, secular, and Christian organizations worked tirelessly throughout the war and in its aftermath to assist Jews in emigrating. By 1939, 400,000 had escaped to neighboring countries, the United States, Palestine, Great Britain, Central and South America, and the Japanese territory of Shanghai; many were later caught as Nazi territory expanded. Countries began to implement strict Jewish quotas, and steep emigration taxes levied by Germany left many trapped.

When emigration was impossible, Jewish families sought ways to protect their children. The Kindertransport brought 10,000 Jewish children to Britain between 1938 and 1940, where they were housed with British foster families or in residential homes and schools. A similar, smaller program ran in the United States. Although meant as a temporary measure, most of these children never saw their families again.

After invading Poland in September 1939, the Nazi Regime established ghettos for the forced segregation of Jewish populations. Hundreds of ghettos were created across Central and Eastern Europe, as well as 20,000 concentration camps to imprison enemies of the state without recourse to normal legal proceedings. Thousands of Jews in both the ghettos and camps died from starvation, disease, and violence.

By late 1941, all emigration of Jews was forbidden, and Hitler ordered the remaining 338,000 Jews in the Greater German Reich and Protectorate to be deported. The result was forced displacement to severely overcrowded ghettos in Eastern Europe, mass executions by mobile killing units, forced labor, and eventually the development of a plan the Nazis called "The Final Solution to the Jewish Question." This last stage of the Holocaust included the deportation of Jewish people to five death camps for execution.

Rescue and Survival Amidst the Holocaust

The Weber siblings featured in *UnBroken* were among only a few thousand Jews that survived by hiding in Germany. Across occupied Europe, individuals and networks risked their lives to save Jewish people, providing shelter, food, supplies, false papers, or safe passage. As was the case with the Webers, children were often separated from their parents and sent into hiding. Many more were left orphaned when their parents were arrested or murdered. In France, organized networks smuggled up to 15,000 Jewish children into Spain and Switzerland, while Danish resistance fighters organized fishermen to ferry 7,200 Jews to neutral Sweden. Countless brave efforts like these saved tens of thousands of lives.

Most dangerous of all was sheltering Jewish people, as the Schmidts did for the Weber children. Individuals and families were hidden in secret rooms, attics, cellars, and barns. In other instances, organized networks placed Jewish teens on farms in the Netherlands and France, where they hid in plain sight, or passed Jewish children off as gentiles in Christian orphanages, schools, and convents. An acute challenge was finding enough extra food and other supplies for hidden Jewish people without attracting attention during a time of shortages and rations. For this reason, many people rotated their hiding places frequently. Sometimes survival depended on the support of a few individuals, but often it required a chain of helpers. It is estimated that 30,000 people were required to save 5,000–7,000 Jewish people in Berlin.

The State of Israel created an award called Righteous Among Nations to commemorate individuals who were documented to have risked their lives to harbor, support, and save Jewish people from the Holocaust. To date, 28,486 people have been honored, including Arthur and Paula Schmidt. When their names were added, they were only the 600th names from Germany, a very small number in comparison to other countries.

Shattered Families After the War

By the war's end, the Nazis had murdered six million of Europe's 9.5 million Jews, along with five million other individuals: Communists, Roma, Black people, political opponents, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, the disabled, and prisoners of war. Displaced Persons camps administered by allied forces and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration housed more than 800,000 people in the immediate aftermath of the war, including 250,000 Jewish survivors awaiting resettlement. These homeless survivors faced the same insecurity, isolation, and trauma that many refugees still endure today. The last DP camp in Europe didn't close until 1952.

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, survivors searched desperately for missing family members. Many children, raised from a young age under false identities or hidden in Christian homes, struggled to reconnect or even recognize their surviving family. Reunification in many instances brought about identity crises, trauma, and even legal custody battles. Thousands of other Jewish children grew up in orphanages when no family remained.

Within this context, we can see the survival of the Weber children as emblematic of the plight of Jewish families, and extraordinary in the fact that all seven siblings and their father survived the war. Without the bravery and selflessness of those who helped them hide, survive, and ultimately emigrate, their story of hope and resilience would surely have been a tragedy.

Sources

The Holocaust Encyclopedia of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The Holocaust Explained from The Wiener Holocaust Library

History of the Holocaust Timeline from the Montreal Holocaust Museum.

Additional Resources

The case of two families who are still trying to find and reunite with lost children are chronicled by Joanna Beata Michlic for The Wiener Holocaust Library.

The Imperial War Museum hosts an online exhibition documenting six of the children who were part of Britain's Kindertransport. The European Holocaust Research Infrastructure project has translated letters of some children, documenting their experience of Kindertransport.

Video testimonies recount Jewish children's experiences of hiding, escaping, and being incarcerated during the Holocaust: Child Survivors of the Jewish Holocaust, California State University, Northridge.

Useful Terms

Antisemitism: A certain perception of Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward the Jewish community. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. (This definition utilized for this guide was adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.)[1]

Aryan: Originally a term used to describe speakers of Indo-European languages, the meaning evolved under Social Darwinism to describe a mythical "superior" or "master race" of people, specifically white Christian Europeans.

Concentration camp: A prison or other facility used for the internment of "enemies of the state," including political prisoners, minorities, and other groups of people deemed "undesirable." Prisoners were detained and held indefinitely in harsh conditions without recourse to normal judicial proceedings, sometimes for the purposes of forced labor, transportation, or execution, as with the Nazi extermination or death camps.

Eugenics: The discredited and racially biased study of human genetics that led to a set of controlled selective breeding practices aimed at "improving" the genetic quality of the population.

Ghetto: A segregated part of a city where Jewish people were forced to live, often in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions.

Pogrom: A Russian word meaning "to wreak havoc, to demolish violently." The term has historically been used to refer to violent attacks and riots against Jewish people.

Reparations: The act of making amends; compensation paid by a defeated nation for damages to or expenditures of another nation as a result of hostilities.

[1] *Antisemitism definition adapted from "What Is Antisemitism?" IHRA, May 5, 2025. https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism*

SECTION 1: *EVERYDAY COURAGE — THE IMPACT OF UPSTANDERS*

DRIVING QUESTION

What do you think influences or motivates an upstander's decision to stand up for what they believe is right?

We recognize upstanders by their commitment to stand up against injustice, often at great personal risk. In our collective memory, these people loom larger than life. Historic figures —such as Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her bus seat and drew attention to the Civil Rights movement; Malala Yousafzai, who became a leader in the fight for girls' rights to education; or Harvey Milk, who championed legislation for equal rights — may come to mind when we think of "Upstander." Over time, these people become symbols, and it can be easy to forget that they are, or were, normal people, just like us.

In *UnBroken*, through the lives of the Webers, we learn of several upstanders who, through whatever means they had available, stood up for the Jewish people and against the Nazi regime. During the film, farmers, priests, and neighbors embody the courage, empathy, and action of upstanders, making it clear that upstanders live among us and don't only belong in history books. This section shines light on how we might translate the historic lives of upstanders into our own everyday actions.

If learners are not familiar with the terms *upstander* and *bystander*, it is important to introduce learners to those terms before moving into discussion and activities. Definitions are provided herein that can be shared with learners.

Personal Reflection

When have you witnessed someone acting as an upstander? How did their actions impact you or the situation?

Discussion Questions

1. What are some qualities that define an upstander? Do those qualities differ from those of bystanders? When the time comes, who do you want to be?

2. How can small acts of courage create significant change in a community? What are some examples?

3. How can the stories of upstanders from history inspire us to take action in our own communities today?

4. What are the internal obstacles (e.g., low self-esteem) and external obstacles (e.g., threat of violence) that prevent people from being upstanders? How might those obstacles be dismantled or diminished?

Extension Activities

1. *UnBroken*: Values Mapping

Watch this *UnBroken* clip (01:18:13 – 01:21:49)

Divide learners into small brainstorming groups and ask them to work together to generate a list of values on one half of a large sheet of paper (each value does not need to be shared by the entire group). Ask them to discuss what might happen to a society if these values were to break down. (This could be an opportunity to bring in current events.)

Next, ask them to see if any of the values they listed were evident in the people or situations represented in *UnBroken*. What value connections can the group make to the people and situations in the film? On the other half of the paper, write down a person or situation that corresponds to a value and connect them with a physical line. One value might connect to multiple people or scenarios.

2. Oral History Interviews

Ask learners to reach out to a family member or another community member who is at least 30 years older than they are. If there is no one in their immediate circle they can reach out to, have learners connect with local senior centers or retirement communities.

As a class, review this list of interview questions and brainstorm which questions might be the most interesting or generative to ask. Think about some warm-up questions and some questions that might be a bit more challenging. Encourage learners to focus on open-ended questions.

Remind learners to ask their potential interviewee for permission to record the interview (audio or video) and to set a time expectation with their interviewee (30 minutes to an hour) when they schedule the interview.
At the interview, have the learners share the story of *UnBroken* with their interviewee, and explain the concept of an "upstander" in contrast to a "bystander." Ask the interviewee if there have been any significant events in their lifetime that they recall, or if there have been any personal experiences where they acted as an upstander, witnessed one in action, or benefited from an upstander action by another. Most importantly, create a welcoming space for them to tell their story.

Finally, have learners share the takeaways from their interviews with their classmates. They could share through a slideshow presentation, verbal presentation, mini-zines, newspaper-style articles, faux social media posts, or through another final presentation.

3. Stand Up for the Upstander: Self-Care Through Community

Print and pass out the "Blank Self-Care Wheel" and give learners the following prompt:

> *Taking action can alleviate feelings of helplessness, and by disrupting injustice, upstanders can make a significant difference in the life of the person being targeted, generating optimism that an equitable future is possible. However, taking action can also come at a personal cost. How can a person focused on taking care of others also take care of themselves? Brainstorm the ways self-care might look for you in each category (e.g., Physical: taking a walk in nature or joining a dance class; Psychological: journaling or practicing self-compassion; Spiritual: meditation, yoga, prayer.)*

Next, either as a whole group or in small groups, ask participants to share their ideas and write them on the larger poster board/whiteboard, grouping similar ideas. The goal is to generate a robust list of diverse self-care strategies for everyone to see.

Then explain the concept of "community care." In this view, self-care is not a selfish act but is necessary maintenance to show up fully for one's community.

Finally, Pair and Pivot: Ask each pair to select two or three specific self-care ideas from their "Self-Care Wheel" and brainstorm ways to transform them into a group or community activity. What community resources could they connect with (e.g., local parks, libraries, community centers) to make their ideas actionable?

Example: **Individual self-care**: "Reading a book" → **Community care**: "Start a book club that meets in a public space like the library to discuss themes of wellness and community."

Final thoughts: While the activity explores transforming a self-care activity into a community one, the most foundational skill of self-care is taking the time to identify what you actually need. Solitude and connection are both valid choices.

4. Upstander Challenges and Opportunities: Your Community, Your Values

Note to Facilitator:

This activity is an optional suggestion that may not be appropriate or workable for all learning communities. Please use your discretion and knowledge of your learning community to decide if you want to include this activity and focus on framing it with thoughtfulness and care. Group sharing should only be done if that feels appropriate and safe. Otherwise, learner writing assignments and personal reflections can be shared only with the facilitator or kept for themselves, depending on the setting you are in.

Ask learners to imagine the people who are most important to them. Have them consider if they could imagine risking those relationships to uphold their values. Have them reflect on their community and connections explored in **Activity 1** (if that activity was done in your learning space). Ask learners to see if they can locate any points where someone might have upheld their values because of their closest relationships. Include a writing opportunity in which learners explore the following question by themselves or others in their community: *What considerations or personal risks do you feel are sometimes made in order to model our values for the generations to come?*

Now ask learners to reflect on this question as personal reflection: *What considerations or personal risks feel too high and keep you from modeling your values at times?*

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Bystander: A person who is present at an event but does not take part; this can include a person who stands by and watches while harm is done to another person or group of people.

Self-care: Purposeful strategies to promote healthy functioning and well-being that attend to a spectrum of human needs.

Upstander: A person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied.

Additional Resources

Dare to Lead–List of Values Printable PDF
https://brenebrown.com/resources/dare-to-lead-list-of-values/

Story Corps List of Great Questions
https://storycorps.org/participate/great-questions/

A Self-Care Action Plan
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0iVTQS8ftg

Bystanders are Essential to Bullying Prevention and Intervention
https://www.stopbullying.gov/sites/default/files/2018-08/Bystander-Factsheet.pdf

Upstander Project
https://upstanderproject.org/

SECTION 2: *THE POWER OF STORYKEEPING THROUGH ARCHIVAL ACTIVISM*

DRIVING QUESTION

What do you think influences or motivates an upstander's decision to stand up for what they believe is right?

The saying "history is written by the victors" underscores the fact that what we learn as history can often be one-sided and biased in favor of the most powerful elements of society. History books and archives are full of those who had property or wealth, who were literate, and whose actions society deemed worthy of remembering because of certain social or cultural values, either then or now. The result is an erasure of the lived experiences of minority groups and those with less power and influence. So often, our understanding of history relies on an incomplete picture.

The collection of oral histories and records such as letters and photographs can help round out our understanding of the past. Importantly, these personal lived experiences also ground history in the individual rather than the collective. Hearing, for example, that six million Jewish people were murdered during the Holocaust is very different from reading Anne Frank's diary, seeing pictures of people interred in concentration camps, and hearing the Weber siblings recount their harrowing tale of survival in *UnBroken*. This is how we move from big ideas to being able to recognize the humanity in others and empathize with their experience. It's how we learn to see ourselves in other people's stories.

But the stories and items that document the lives of underrepresented people need to be preserved if we are to learn from them. They need someone to recognize their value, to collect and safeguard them, to organize them in a way that is easy to access, and to shine a light on their existence.

The term "activist archivist" was first coined by Howard Zinn in 1970 and is defined as "an archivist who strives to document the underdocumented aspects of society and to support political and social causes through that work." (https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/activist-archivist.html)

Personal Reflection

1. One way to think about history is as a collection of stories. Who gets to tell those stories? How does that change whose stories we hear? Why was Beth the right person to tell her family's story? What story is the perfect one for you to excavate and share?

2. Our everyday lives can feel so boring and normal, it's hard to recognize that someone might someday find them fascinating. Imagine someone living 150 years from now. What would you like them to know about you, your family, and your community? What might they find interesting? What traces of your life might future individuals use for understanding?

Discussion Questions

1. In the film *UnBroken*, filmmaker Beth Lane consults many primary sources related to her family's time in Germany, in addition to the interviews she does with the surviving members of the Weber family. How does her use of primary sources help her tell their story in a more impactful way?

2. How might our understanding of the Holocaust be different if we didn't have firsthand survivor accounts like those of the Weber family and other documentary evidence from Jewish people themselves?

3. Consider a story that is well known to you. It could be something you've learned in history class, a family story, or even a book you've read or movie you've seen.

a. From whose perspective is the story being told?
b. What assumptions are held within the telling of this story?
c. Who benefits from this perspective?
d. Whose perspective is missing? Why might it be missing?
e. How might the story be different if it were told by someone else?

4. How can social media and the use of hashtags create a digital archive to preserve voices and experiences that might not otherwise be heard? How can this contribute to broader activism? How might online spaces preserve or distort memory?

Extension Activities

1. Learn about the Oneg Shabbat Archive, also known as the Ringeblum Archive. This was an underground archive established in the Warsaw Ghetto by historian Emanuel Ringelblum and is one of the first and largest examples of archival activism. He recruited a diverse group of people to secretly document everyday life in the Ghetto under German occupation. The archive was stored in milk canisters and metal boxes and buried underground in the hopes that they would one day be recovered and expose the truth about the Holocaust. In all, approximately 35,000 documents have been saved from two sets of archived material. A third set was known to have been buried but has not yet been discovered.

a. Discuss the Nazi creation of Jewish ghettos to segregate and persecute Jewish people across German-occupied Europe.

b. Study the handout **Items Recovered from the Ringelblum Archive** (**Handout 1**). Discuss the following questions as a class or in small groups.

i. Why do you think the people who contributed to the Oneg Shabbat/Ringelblum Archive felt compelled to save these materials at great personal risk to themselves? Was it worth the risk?

ii. Has your understanding about life in the Warsaw Ghetto changed at all after studying some of the items found in the Archive? What do you know or feel now that you didn't before?

iii. In what ways was the creation of the Ringelblum Archive an act of resistance?

2. Conduct an oral history project by interviewing a family or community member. Either assign an event or social movement in living memory to focus on, or have learners choose their own.

a. Research your event or social movement of interest using both primary and secondary sources. What questions does your research raise? How might a firsthand account deepen your understanding? Are there holes in your research that oral history might be able to fill?

b. In small groups, brainstorm possible questions to ask your interviewee. Focus on open-ended questions, such as "tell me about…," or "describe…," or "what do you remember about…," or "tell me more about…." Remember to be respectful and to allow the interviewee to do most of the talking. One interesting question might be "What changes have you seen over time about how people remember or talk about that event?"

c. Conduct a short oral history interview. Record the interview if appropriate and with permission of the interviewee.

d. Analyze the content of your interview and primary research.

i. Did the interview reveal something that wasn't found in the archival record?

ii. Does the interviewee's memory challenge the archival record in any way?

iii. What biases are present in both the oral history and the archive?

iv. Did the oral history challenge, change, or deepen your understanding of the event or social movement?

3. Create a community archive to capture a week or month in your community. Learners may choose to define a theme to guide their work or keep it broad. Some possible themes include a week in the life, everyday heroes, archive of the pandemic or other significant recent local event, then and now. Have learners collect artifacts such as photos, interviews, social media posts, posters, newspaper clippings, demographic data, other ephemera, etc. For each physical or digital item, have learners provide a contextual note that details:

a. The larger context of the item. Where does it come from and why does it exist? What was happening in the community at the time this was made?

b. What does it tell us about the theme of the archive?

c. Whose story or voice does it represent?

d. Does the item challenge or expand what's usually recorded in official archives?

Once the archive is complete, have learners examine it as a whole.

a. How did you decide what to include and not to include?

b. Are there patterns or themes that emerged across the collection?

c. Are there any perspectives that are overrepresented, underrepresented, or missing?

d. Did you face any challenges as archivists?

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Archive: A collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people.

Ghetto: A segregated part of a city where Jewish people were forced to live, often in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions.

Primary source: A firsthand account, original document, or other artifact that provides direct evidence of a time or event and was created by people or things who were present during the time or event.

Secondary source: A source of information created about an object of study without direct firsthand evidence.

Additional Resources

Examples of Archival Activism:

After Violence Project:
https://afterviolenceproject.org/

Archive of Immigrant Voices:
https://archiveofimmigrantvoices.omeka.net/

Black Women's Organizing Archive:
https://bwoaproject.org/

Disability Rights and Independent Living Movement:

Oral Histories and Archives:
https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/oral-histories-archives-disability-rights-independent-living-movement/

Documenting Ferguson:
https://digitalexhibits.library.wustl.edu/s/ferguson/page/home

History of Disability: Complete Guide to Resources, Archives & Civil Rights Movement:
https://www.disabilityresources.org/history.html

NYC Disability Rights Archive:
https://nycdisabilityrightsarchive.org/

Outwords Archive:
https://theoutwordsarchive.org/

South Asian American Digital Archives:
https://www.saada.org/

The Baltimore Legacy Project:
https://baltimorelegacyproject.com/

The Documented Border:
https://exhibits.lib.arizona.edu/exhibits/show/documented-border/intro

The Freedom Archives:
https://freedomarchives.org/

The Lesbian Herstory Archives:
https://www.lesbianherstoryarchives.org/

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition:
https://boardingschoolhealing.org/

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada:
https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-of-canada/

Toxic Docs:
https://www.toxicdocs.org/

Website of Disabled in Action, the organization founded by Judy Heumann:
https://www.disabledinaction.org

Learn more about Ghettos in Occupied Poland from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:
https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ghettos-in-poland?series=33

They've also produced a short podcast on the Ringelblum Archive: ***"What A Secret Archive Taught the World"*** (17 min):
https://www.ushmm.org/learn/podcasts-and-audio/12-years-that-shook-the-world/what-a-secret-archive-taught-the-world

NSDOKU Munich (The Nazi Documentation Centre) has an excellent multi-media exhibit on the Warsaw Ghetto and creation of the Ringelblum Archive:
https://www.stories.nsdoku.de/ringelblum-archives

The Jewish Historical Institute houses the **Oneg Shabbat/ Ringelblum Archive**:
https://www.jhi.pl/en/oneg-shabbat

The website **Poetry in Hell** contains a collection of Yiddish poetry found in the Ringelblum Archive that is translated into English:
https://poetryinhell.org/

Library of Congress has a Teacher's Guide and Primary Source Analysis Tool for Students working with primary sources:
https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/

SECTION 3: *EMPATHY AS A PRACTICE — LISTENING, REFLECTING, ACTING*

DRIVING QUESTION

In the film* UnBroken, *one of the Weber descendants says, "When you're faced with adversity, who do you become?" Put another way, When faced with injustice or suffering in the world, what kind of person do you want to be? What morals, ethics, or beliefs do you hope will guide you in your choices?

Empathy is a core thread running through *UnBroken*, from the quiet bravery of those who sheltered and helped the Weber siblings, to the emotional labor of family members unearthing painful memories. Empathy is a learned skill that is at the heart of other traits such as kindness, cooperation, tolerance, and even forgiveness. It is the thing that best determines whether we help someone else in need. Like all skills, it requires practice to develop fully.

Empathy also connects with civic engagement and action. When individuals practice compassion and consider the feelings and needs of others, they view their community and society more broadly in a different light, and this can lead to a feeling of responsibility for oneself in connection with others and can drive an interest in civic engagement and community building.

Note to Facilitators:

Discussions and activities around empathy and perspective-taking can be challenging for some learners, particularly those who are neurodivergent. Activities that rely on recognizing nonverbal cues or abstract scenarios may unintentionally cause stress or feelings of exclusion for some participants. It is useful to underscore that ***empathy is not expressed in one uniform way,*** and neurodiverse individuals may demonstrate understanding, care, or moral reasoning differently than their neurotypical peers. ***Our goal should be to expand what empathy looks like and provide accessible ways for all learners to connect meaningfully and participate.***

Personal Reflection

1. What is the difference between sympathy and empathy? Have you ever felt empathy for someone that caused you to take compassionate action on their behalf? Have you ever felt that you should do something for someone else, but then didn't? What stopped you?

2. Think of a person whom you disagree with or dislike. Make a list of similarities and differences that you think you have. How many similarities can you think of? Next, write a short dialogue between the two of you, taking the other person's perspective. While you don't need to change your mind, does this change how you feel about the other person?

3. Have you ever read a book or watched a movie from the perspective of someone who is different from you that challenged your thoughts, beliefs, or understanding of the world? Journal or sketch about that experience. Can you pinpoint what it was that helped you see things differently? Has that experience changed your behavior?

Discussion Questions

1. There is a poignant moment in *UnBroken* when filmmaker Beth Lane approaches a group of teens in Berlin and asks, "If this [the Holocaust] were to happen again, would you hide me?" One teen replies, "I would like to say yes and I hope that I would make that decision in the moment, but you never know." Another teen says, "I think I would do it because I'm a refugee. I have family here now and I'm so grateful for that because it could also happen to me." Empathy may not always lead to action. What might motivate you to take action in the face of real or perceived risks or other barriers?

2. In the film *UnBroken*, Ruth reports that her mother, Lina, used to say, "You help others, you help yourself." What does this mean to you? Can you recall a time that helping someone else made you feel better or also helped you?

3. Empathy is a skill that, just like a muscle, needs to be exercised. *UnBroken* offers the viewer opportunities to exercise their muscles of empathy and compassion. The filmmaking team carefully crafted the film with this in mind. Reflect on how the film encouraged you to think about compassion and empathy. Brainstorm ways in which you have learned empathy, and what more you could do to exercise and build this skill. Consider things like the people in your life, the media you consume, volunteer activities, where and how you spend your money, and how you speak, listen, and respond to others.

Extension Activities

1. Create an Empathy Map.

There are so many powerful and poignant moments that the Weber siblings recount in *UnBroken*. Assign or have students select one story from the film (or another story of resilience) and design an empathy map.

Key moments from *UnBroken* for this activity:

- Gertrude and Bela discuss their mother's arrest by the Gestapo (00:21:23 – 00:24:33)
- Bela talks about her experience of hiding on the farm (00:38:33 – 00:40:54)
- Ruth recounts escaping the Russian army and riding a bike to Berlin (00:48:00 – 00:51:57)
- Ruth and Gertrude talk about their family being separated in Chicago (01:13:54 – 01:18:50)
- Ruth discusses Bela's adoption (01:13:54 – 01:18:50)
- Bela sees her sister and/or her father after her adoption (01:13:54 – 01:18:50)

a. As a class or in small groups, discuss the ways in which we can move beyond what people say to infer deeper meaning.

Facilitator tip: Consider things like word choice, the use of euphemisms or humor, how fast someone is speaking, tone of voice, body language, and the listener's own background knowledge and experiences. See Note to Facilitator at the beginning of this session.

b. Give learners a copy of the **Empathy Map Handout (Handout 2)**. Have them record the name of the person whose perspective they are considering (subject). Some clips have more than one sibling recounting the story; learners can focus on one person or all of them. If possible, allow them to rewatch a clip of the story they are considering. Ask learners to record key details about what their subject said, including words or phrases that jumped out to them. Then have them record their subject's physical actions and what they can infer from them, as well as their potential thoughts and feelings.

c. As a large learning group, in small groups, or through reflective writing, explore the following questions:

i. Did this activity deepen your empathy for the subject and their lived experience? Do you understand it in a different way?

ii. What personal experience or background knowledge did you draw on as you made your inferences about your subject's thoughts and feelings or interpreted their actions and motivations? Were you reminded of anyone or anything else?

iii. How might your personal experience or background knowledge shape the kinds of conclusions you came to about your subject's thoughts, feelings, and motivations?

2. Facilitate a listening circle (also sometimes referred to as a talking circle or restorative circle).

Listening circles are safe places for individuals to share and listen to each other's perspectives, often in response to a shared challenge or experience. The goal is empathy and understanding rather than problem-solving or debate. Listening circles draw on a rich indigenous tradition of turn-taking, consensus decision-making, and deep listening.

Facilitator's tip: Listening circles work best in groups who know each other well and have strong, respectful, and supportive group dynamics. It is critical that participants feel safe and are safe to express themselves. Listening circles can be used to address a variety of issues, including interpersonal conflict, issues or events in the classroom or school community, or to help learners process larger events in their lives or the world around them. Listening circles are most effective when practiced frequently. See the resources linked below for more information on listening circles and how to conduct them.

a. As a group, come up with guidelines or rules for your listening circle.

Facilitator's tip: Consider things like confidentiality, voluntary participation, deep listening, and speaking one at a time with no interruptions.

b. Arrange the group in a circle if possible. Assign a discussion topic. Depending on your group and how close learners are, you may wish to consider something relatively safe, such as thoughts and feelings on school culture, or you may wish to consider something with more emotional depth, such as a recent event that learners would have different perspectives on and feelings about. An alternative is to conduct a listening circle about the themes in *UnBroken*.

c. You may wish to have a symbolic item that each speaker holds while speaking to remind everyone to take turns and not to interrupt.

d. Leave time to close the circles with gratitude to those who shared and listened, as well as reflections about any shifts in understanding that took place. Follow up with any learners who may have had a particularly difficult time with the exercise.

3. Research project: Empathy in Action

UnBroken portrays a number of examples of the quiet bravery of people whose empathy led them to action on behalf of Jewish people during the Holocaust. Research a person (historical or contemporary) who has taken compassionate action in response to injustice or the suffering of a person or group unlike them. Create a slideshow to present your findings.

Examples include:

Irena Sendler, Warsaw Ghetto
Clara Barton, American Red Cross
Jane Addams, Hull House
Paul Rusesabagina, Hôtel des Mille Collines
Bryan Stevenson, Equal Justice Initiative
Chiara Lubich, Focolare Movement
William Wilberforce, trans-Atlantic slavery
Ryan Hreljac, Ryan's Well

Include in your slideshow:

a. A short (paragraph) biography of your subject

b. Details about their compassionate action and the community they acted alongside or represented. If possible, an account of what led them to take action. Was it a personal experience or event that inspired them, or something more general?

c. An assessment of the risks and consequences of their actions.

d. A reflection about how you hope you might have acted if faced with the same circumstances. Would you do anything differently? What personal values, beliefs, or experiences might shape your decision to act or not, or the kind of action you'd take? Are there barriers to action that you can identify?

4. Create an Empathy Zine that shows what empathy means to you and how it can shape relationships, communities, and justice.

Learners can consider their own journey and experiences around empathy, people who have taught or inspired them, and examples from their community, such as mutual aid networks, bystander intervention, clothing and/or food drives, and even protest and other forms of civic engagement. They may wish to include in their zine:

a. Text: original writing, poetry, snippets of text cut from other sources, quotes, timelines, newspaper article clippings, etc.
b. Visual representations: drawings, photographs, collage, stickers, emojis, memes, other tools of visual storytelling, etc.

5. Write a poem or short story, taking the perspective of someone else.

Write about what you notice or feel when you see life from their point of view as opposed to your own.

Facilitator's tip: This activity will be most impactful if learners consider a specific individual — a family member, classmate, or someone in the community — rather than a generic person. For example, a migrant family on their street rather than migrants in general, or a family friend who is grieving rather than people who have lost someone in general. If this is challenging for some students, an alternative is to provide photographs from newspapers or other sources where context is obvious and discuss them in advance.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Civic empathy: The ability to understand and respect the experiences of others in ways that strengthen community connection and democratic participation.

Civic engagement: Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. Promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.

Deep listening: The practice of paying attention to a speaker's verbal and nonverbal communication in order to perceive and understand the deeper meaning, behavior, emotions, and intentions that lie beneath their words. Deep listening is used to help the speaker uncover their own understanding and self-awareness.

Empathy: Understanding a person from their frame of reference rather than one's own, or vicariously experiencing that person's behavior, feelings, perceptions, and thoughts.

Perspective taking: Looking at a situation from a viewpoint that is different from one's usual angle. This may involve adopting the perspective of another person or that associated with a particular social role, as in role play exercises.

Sympathy: The feeling of concern for someone who is experiencing something difficult or painful.

Tipping point: The point at which a series of small changes or incidents becomes significant enough to cause a larger, more important change.

Viewpoint: A position or perspective

Zine: A zine, short for fanzine or magazine, is a vehicle for visual storytelling and/or the convenience of information in a short compact format with visuals. Zines are known for being DIY and part of a subculture focused on self-publication. They were traditionally made on paper and reproduced with a photocopier or printer. This tradition continues, but virtual zines also exist. Zine creators are often motivated by a desire to share knowledge or experience. Some zines are created by small presses or cooperatives.

Additional Resources

Civic Engagement:

20 Civic Engagement Activities for High School Students from Kialo Blog:
https://blog.kialo-edu.com/lesson-ideas/civic-engagement-activities-for-high-school-students/

A Toolkit for Supporting Youth Civic Engagement in Underserved Communities from Generation Citizen:
https://www.mentoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/GenerationCitizen-Toolkit_360-Civic-Learning-updated-8.12.19.pdf

Civic Engagement from American Psychology Association:
https://www.apa.org/education-career/undergrad/civic-engagement

"Civic Engagement Can Booth Youth Mental Health," The Jed Foundation:
https://jedfoundation.org/civic-engagement-can-boost-youth-mental-health/

Civics Resources from the American Association of State and Local Histories:
https://aaslh.org/civics/

Five Ways to Increase Civic Engagement from Social Studies.org:
https://www.socialstudies.org/

iCivics (Learning Hub for Civic Education):
https://vision.icivics.org/

Youth Civic Hub (Created by Youth, For Youth):
https://www.youthcivichub.org/

Listening Circle Resources:

Information and resources on Circle Practice from "Ways of Council":
https://waysofcouncil.net/

"Tips on Implementing Restorative Circles in your School" from Novak Education:
https://www.novakeducation.com/blog/tips-on-implementing-restorative-circles-in-your-school

"Using Talking Circles in the Classroom" pdf by Alaina Winters, Heartland Community College:
https://share.google/HJXko8yXiFRrn5YVw

Zine-making Resources:

Free Tutorial: Make an 8-Page Zine from L.A. Zine Fest:
https://www.lazinefest.com/resources

How to Make Zines from The Library of Congress:
https://guides.loc.gov/zines/external-websites

Intro to Zines from ZineLibraries:
https://www.zinelibraries.info/running-a-zine-library/intro-to-zines/

SECTION 4: *PRESERVING MEMORIES THROUGH MIXED MEDIA*

DRIVING QUESTION

How do different mixed media elements, such as animation and archival footage, work together to create a more immersive storytelling experience?

UnBroken beautifully weaves memory and mixed media to tell a powerful story of hope and discovery and healing. Exploring memory and the process of preserving memory was a key component of the filmmaking process and offers an opportunity for learners to explore and understand memory and to engage with media in ways that can improve media literacy, communication, empathy, and understanding.

Scientifically, memory is a complex cognitive process where the brain encodes, stores, and retrieves information gathered by our sensory organs. But practically, memory is a profoundly personal wellspring from which we draw our beliefs about the world we live in. When we remember something, we bring it back into our consciousness from the past. Looking at the processes scientifically, memory almost seems straightforward, as if we can pull up a catalogued photograph from the past and know exactly what something looked like. But memory, as it is experienced, is far more complicated. Two people can attend the same event and recall completely different details. Two children can grow up with the same mother, but remember her as having a completely different personality. Even our own cherished memories of a person or event can, and do, change over time as the memory is pulled into consciousness again and arrives in a completely different context, since we experience and learn new things over the course of our lifespan.

Media, such as photographs, newspapers, film, and audio recordings, refer to the ways we deliver, transmit, capture, or store information. At first glance, these methods may seem more reliable than the human mind, but, again, the reality is much more complicated. The details of a text can degrade, leaving holes in the author's original meaning. A photograph, taken out of context, could convey the opposite of what actually happened in a historical moment. Media is a common part of everyday life, part of a creativity toolbox, and makes up cultural artifacts that hold both personal significance and historical value. This section invites you to explore memory and media as imperfect but powerful communication tools.

Personal Reflection

Think about *UnBroken* or another film or piece of art that has deeply affected you. What elements (visuals, sounds, the speaker, or media choices) contributed to that emotional response? How might this connect to somatic experience and/or somatic therapy?

"Somatic therapy explores how the body expresses deeply painful experiences, applying mind-body healing to aid with trauma recovery."
— Harvard Health

What can we learn from this about the responsibility of the storyteller, whether in the case of this film or in other storytelling settings?

Discussion Questions

1. How does using mixed media preserve memories and help to immerse the audience in the story and increase the impact of the narrative? Can you think of any instances when maximizing behavior to generate a specific emotional impact would not benefit an audience member?

2. If you were creating your own personal or historical narratives to share with someone else, what forms of media would you use? Why?

3. In what ways can visual storytelling help to reimagine and honor the experiences of marginalized voices in our communities? Similarly, in what ways can visual storytelling help us to reimagine and honor the experiences of upstanders so that we can envision ourselves as upstanders? How can visual storytelling help us foster empathy and compassion in ourselves and our communities? What other media, besides visual storytelling, could be used?

Extension Activities

1. Film Analysis:

Watch this clip from *UnBroken* (00:06:40 – 00:12:24) from beginning to end.

Jot down any thoughts, behavioral responses, emotions, or questions that come up as you are watching.

Review the "Useful Terms" for this section. Once you have finished, restart the clip. This time, note every instance a new element is used to tell the story.

As a class, share each element from beginning to end, identifying and adding any that may have been missed on your list.

(Examples: an old letter being read aloud, composer's musical underscoring, documentary footage of Beth visiting the old homestead, old family photos juxtaposed against what the site looks like now, the filmmaker's thoughts regarding the place, animation, archival footage, modern filmed interviews, propaganda footage, film clips, etc.)

2. Reflect, Respond, Balance:

After viewing *UnBroken* (or a shorter clip from the film), ask learners to create a mixed-media collage that represents their thoughts and feelings in response to the film, using any materials or media available to them. Ask learners to specifically focus on any themes that convey levity, joy, humor, or other positive aspects of the storytelling.

Once they have created their first draft of the piece, ask them to share their artistic interpretation with a partner. Have the partners discuss the potential impact on the viewer when the art they are viewing focuses on positive themes (e.g., resilience, connection, etc.). Are there any times when focusing on the positive could have a negative impact? Are there times when survivor guilt comes into play? How could that be mitigated?

3. Multimedia Weaving:

Divide learners into small groups. Ask the groups to tell a story about an imagined experience involving opportunities for someone to be either an upstander or bystander in their classroom, school, or town. The story should include a setting, characters, a beginning, middle, and end, and, ideally, an opportunity for character growth and bravery.

Once the story has a written script, ask each learner to contribute something to the collaboration. (This could be finding a piece of music to underscore the story, creating an original composition, finding photos, or recording video, etc.)

Once each learner has a contribution they are excited about, have the group come together to "weave" the elements together to support their original story. If necessary, allow them to tweak their original story to accommodate all the storytelling elements.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Animated: A filmmaking technique where still images, traditionally drawn or hand painted, are manipulated to create moving images.

CGI (computer-generated imagery): Computer software used to contribute to (or create) images in films, video games, commercials, art and print media. The term can refer to both 2D and 3D images, which can be static or animated.

Hybrid/Live-action/Animated integration: A technique that blends live-action footage with animated elements (drawn on, CGI, or other methods) to create a scene where both coexist.

Juxtaposition: Two things or images placed close together that have a contrasting effect.

Mixed media: Any artwork that combines multiple materials or techniques, like painting, drawing, collage, and sculpture, to create a single piece. Different materials (paper, fabric, paint, etc.) can be layered as can traditional and digital art-making methods.

Multimedia: Communication that uses a combination of different content forms (text, image, audio, video, and animation) into a single presentation.

Superimposition: A general term for layering one image (or video) on top of another. It can be used to combine a live-action scene with an animated one, or to layer a still photo on top of video footage.

Survivor guilt: Psychological distress that can arise when someone escapes or survives a situation when others have not. These feelings persist despite the fact that the survivor had no ability to control or change the situation.

Toxic positivity: An attempt to avoid negative emotions by replacing them with positive emotions or positive framing strategies. It is a maladaptive emotional management strategy which attempts to bypass feelings of sadness, anger, or other difficult to feel emotions. When used socially, it can be used to shame people who are experiencing negative emotions.

Additional Resources

How We Make Memories: Crash Course Psychology #13
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSycdIx-C48

Remembering and Forgetting: Crash Course Psychology #14
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVWbrNls-Kw

SECTION 5: *ECHOES AND RESTORATIONS — HEALING TRAUMA ACROSS GENERATIONS*

DRIVING QUESTION

How does storytelling serve as a tool for healing communities, families, or individuals affected by trauma?

Imagine you are at one end of a long tunnel. At the other end is someone you love or care about deeply. You call out one word of great importance and listen to your own voice echo down the tunnel. With each echoed repetition, this vital message sounds more faint until you hear nothing at all. You can only hope your message finds its listener. Stories passed down from generation to generation can follow a similar pattern, fading away as time passes, and eventually disappearing completely if no one begins to tell them anew.

In *UnBroken*, we follow seven siblings who, against unthinkable odds, were able to survive the Holocaust together. Then, in a terrible twist, they were forced to separate before starting their new lives in the United States. When they find each other again, we get to witness long-unspoken stories come alive as they reconnect with each other. These stories restored their family bond, but not to its former, "original" condition. This section explores the ways stories can both support and undermine our well-being, individually and within community. It examines how we choose which stories to tell, what elements we repeat to warn or guide future audiences, and how stories change across a lifespan — not only as memory shifts, but as we ourselves change, altering a story's meaning.

Personal Reflection

Who takes on the role of "storyteller" in your family or community? Where and when do those stories get told? If no person comes to mind, where and when could you become the storyteller?

Discussion Questions

1. Even though the context of their reunion had traumatic roots, the Weber siblings joked and laughed together in abundance. How is humor a valuable tool for healing?

2. Filmmaker Beth Lane says she was able to gather her family's stories "one fragment at a time, full of holes and often conflicting." Why are stories valuable to individual and community healing, even when you know people's memories of events are imperfect?

3. Who (in addition to the "victims" or "survivors" of a traumatic event) might need to be part of a healing process or need to heal themselves? Once a collective trauma has been experienced, who is (or should be) responsible for promoting healing?

Note to Facilitators: "Family" is Complicated.

The term "family" is culturally contextual. To one person, it may conjure an image of two parents with 2.5 children. Another person might imagine their closest friends, their "chosen family," when they hear the word. Additionally, for some learners real-life families might be full of unresolved relationship issues and pain. All that said, use the term "family" loosely, and adapt the discussion questions and activity directions to your specific group of learners. Many modern communities are losing their oral traditions that families once passed down through kinship groups. In Judaism, this practice is called "l'dor v'dor," meaning "from generation to generation." *Fiddler on the Roof* by Shalom Aleichem is a well-known example of a prominent work of art that grew out of this tradition. *Fiddler on the Roof* was based on *Tevye the Dairyman*. We are using the term "family" here to point learners towards the idea that they are (or have the potential to be) a storytelling conduit between the past and the future, regardless of their literal "family ties."

Extension Activities

1. Family/Community Story Freewrite:

Set a timer for the students to freewrite. Ask learners to set aside concerns about spelling and grammar and simply keep their pen or pencil flowing across the page until the timer goes off.

Prompt: *In as much detail as possible, write about a story a parent, grandparent, older relative, or community elder has told you. If nothing comes to mind, what do you wish you knew about your ancestors, community, or personal history?*

Once the timer goes off, ask learners to read their freewrites (either to themselves or to a partner) and jot down the themes that emerged from their story. If they wrote about what they wished they knew, what themes emerged that point to their current values?

2. Museum Display: Us, Now :

Option 1) If resources and time allow, ask each learner to bring in one item that represents either their learning community or their individual identity as part of the learning community. Once they present what their item means to them, have them place it in the "museum display." Once the display is complete, ask learners to imagine seeing the display for the first time. What additional information or context would be helpful for a visitor to have? Labels or written explanations? Histories or biographical details? A timeline? What would make this museum display tell a complete story for someone encountering it for the first time?

Option 2) If resources and time are scarce, ask each learner to write down an idea of what they would include in the museum display on a Post-it note. Encourage learners to consider ordinary objects as well as "special" objects. Remind them that ordinary objects can become extraordinary given a particular circumstance, just as ordinary people, like the Schmidts and Rudi Fehrmann, can become extraordinary in the face of adversity. Ask the learner to explain the significance of their item to the learning community before placing their Post-it note on the wall. Ask the group what they would think if they came across this collection of items. What would they think, or what assumptions might they make, about the community that left these artifacts? (This activity is an opportunity to reference back to the film, specifically the Post-it note scene in the film.)

Related Fact:

In 1994, the filmmaker's Uncle Alfons toured the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., upon its opening. As he visited the exhibits, he came face to face with a photograph of himself! (Photograph featured in the Introduction to the Film in this guide)

This profound moment, when Uncle Alfons saw his experience recognized and documented, ultimately launched the years of research that led to Arthur and Paula Schmidt being recognized as Righteous Among the Nations.

3. Mapping Who's in the Room?: Past and Present

Tape notecards with the following words (one word or phrase on each) around the room: *Languages, Religion, Country/State, Sports/Activities, Music/Favorite Band, Jobs/Careers*. (Add any other categories that work well for your learning community.)

Ask learners to write (only a few words at most) on sticky notes and leave them around each notecard to represent as many generations as they know about in their family (including themselves) or to represent as many generations in their community as they know. For instance, one learner might leave three sticky notes around the Languages notecard to represent themself and an uncle or an elder in their community: "American Sign Language," "Spanish," and "English."

Once the learners have visited and responded to each notecard, allow them to wander around the room again and read the clusters of words around each card.

Lead a discussion to find out what the group thought when they saw "Who's in the Room?" Did anything surprise them? Now, ask them to imagine how important those things are to their individual sense of identity. How do those words create their "story"? Who would they be without those stories? Encourage learners to consider the power and importance of intergenerational experiences and understandings.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Culturally contextual: A term that indicates that the meaning of a behavior, object, or concept will change depending on its relationship to history, social norms, and the broader environment.

Identity: Distinguishing characteristics, personality traits, qualities, or beliefs that give an individual their sense of self.

Intergenerational trauma: Occurs when individuals who have experienced significant trauma (like war, abuse, or natural disasters) pass on the psychological and emotional consequences of those experiences to subsequent generations through genetics, beliefs, parenting styles, or other learned coping strategies.

Kinship: People connected by common ancestry, marriage, or other types of relationships or affinities, reflecting the broad ways familial and social bonds are formed.

Museum display (or exhibit): A curated arrangement of objects, images, and information organized to tell a story or convey an idea to visitors.

Post-traumatic growth (PTG): The possibility of positive psychological changes after experiencing a traumatic event. PTG is a process of not only coping with trauma but also emerging from it with an increased sense of resilience, meaning, and purpose. Also referred to by different practitioners and disciplines as Positive Adaptation after Trauma, Transformative Recovery, and Alchemical Growth.

Resilience: The process and outcome of successfully adapting to challenging life experiences through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.

Righteous Among Nations: The honorific given to non-Jewish individuals honored by the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, Yad Vashem, for putting their lives on the line to aid Jews during the Holocaust.

Values: The beliefs people have, especially about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life that guide their behaviors.

ITEMS RECOVERED IN THE RINGELBLUM ARCHIVE

"Hunger is a wild, raw, primitive, animal thing… From yesterday's soup until today is an eternity. I can't imagine that I will be able to sustain such a murderous hunger… Someplace in the world they eat as much as they want… Another hour until I get my soup, another hour, you understand?"

— Lejb Goldin, "A 24-Hour Chronicle of Hunger", August 1941.
Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

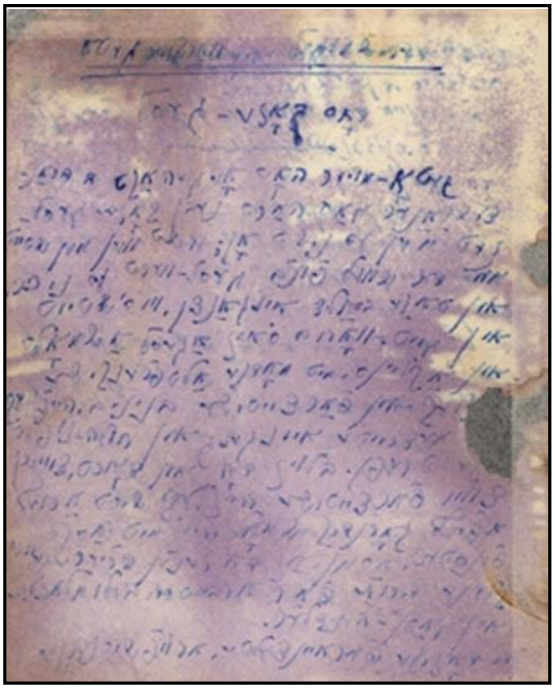
This set of rations was issued to the Weber family.

Food stamps (rations) for bread, sugar, marmalade, meat, flour, and "various," issued to the Weber family. Photo courtesy of the film, UnBroken*, and The Weber Family Arts Foundation*

Rations for Jewish occupants of the Warsaw Ghetto amounted to approximately 180–300 calories per day, otherwise known as "starvation rations." Nothing was guaranteed and food was often rancid or bulked up with sawdust or other inedible ingredients.

"From all sides I hear voices crying out for bread. A very small boy, trembling, stretches out his thin arm and begs… Here is a poor woman, her clothes torn and tattered. Swollen from starvation, she lies in the street like a corpse. I can't look at her and I turn my face away…"

— Yaffa Bergman, age 14, from a student essay, "What we see in the street," 1941,
Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.



"At night, the smuggling is carried out over the roofs of the houses, through narrow holes, through cellars and even through the wall of the Ghetto itself. In short, every possible way...

Who knows if some day a memorial will not be put up in memory of the smuggler, for having risked his life — because, in retrospect, we know that he thus saved a large part of Warsaw's Jews from death and starvation."

Excerpt from Perez Opoczynski's diary, Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

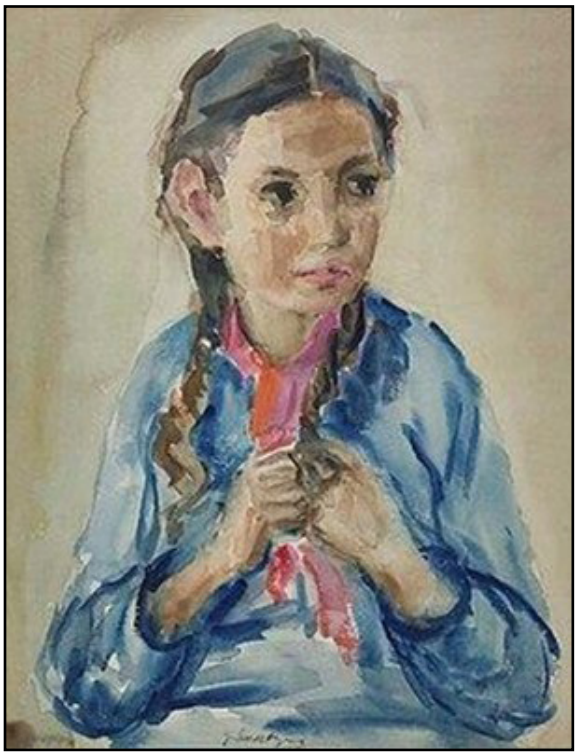
"The mildest punishment for smuggling is death, carried out on the spot...
The children who were smuggling had the most extraordinary and fantastic courage...
These children went through [the ghetto walls] several times a day, laden with goods that often weighed more than they did.

Smuggling was the only source of subsistence for these children and their parents, who would otherwise have died of starvation."

— Emanual Ringelblum, Polish-Jewish Relations.

One Pair of Shoes

by Rifke Galin



Painting by Gela Seksztajn

The wind wails, it's cold and wet.
And I can't go out today:
My little sister and I —
we both share one pair of shoes.

Today my little sister hid
the shoes someplace, I don't know where,
then she started teasing me —
So I caught her and hit her.

But I don't know what came over me —
Suddenly I began to see
how pale and thin my little sister is…
and then my anger left me.

Something seized me in my heart,
It made me so ashamed,
that in those two minutes
I became so very good.

"If you want," I say, "put on the shoes,
and take them for yourself always,
for I am strong and can insist,
and I love going barefoot anyway."

She looks at me and does not stir.
I see she doesn't believe a word.
Then I go closer to the bed
and softly pat her little head.

And once more I repeat
But this time with kinder voice:
"You want the shoes, take them, they're yours,
and wear them every day, your choice.

"For I am strong and can insist,
and love going barefoot anyway."
There was much more I had to say
but tears were choking in my throat.

Poetry in Hell, Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

German notice of eight Jewish people executed for leaving the Ghetto without authorization, November 17, 1941. Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

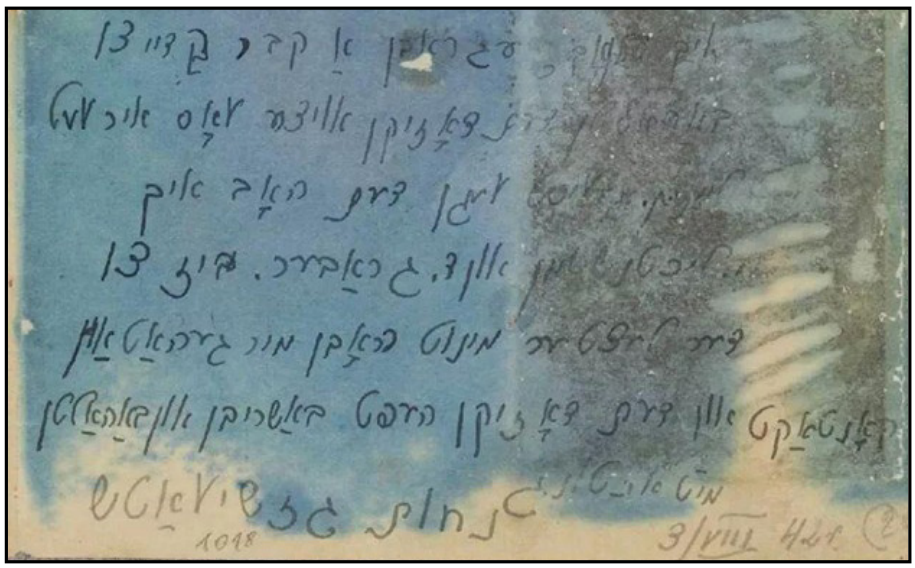
"He who fights for life has a chance of being saved:
He who rules out resistance from the start is already lost,
doomed to a degrading death in the
suffocation machine at Treblinka....
We, too, are deserving of life!
You merely must know how to fight for it!"

— Poster urging an uprising, January 1943,
Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

*Cover of **Iton Hatnua** (Newspaper of the Movement), an underground newspaper published in the Warsaw Ghetto by a youth group. Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland*

Candy wrapper. Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

In the summer of 1942, two students, Dawid Graber and Nachum Grzywacz, and their teacher, Izrael Lichtensztajn, worked tirelessly to document the mass deportation of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to concentration camps. On August 3, 1942, they wrote their last will and testaments and buried them along with a section of the Ringelblum Archive in the basement of their school.



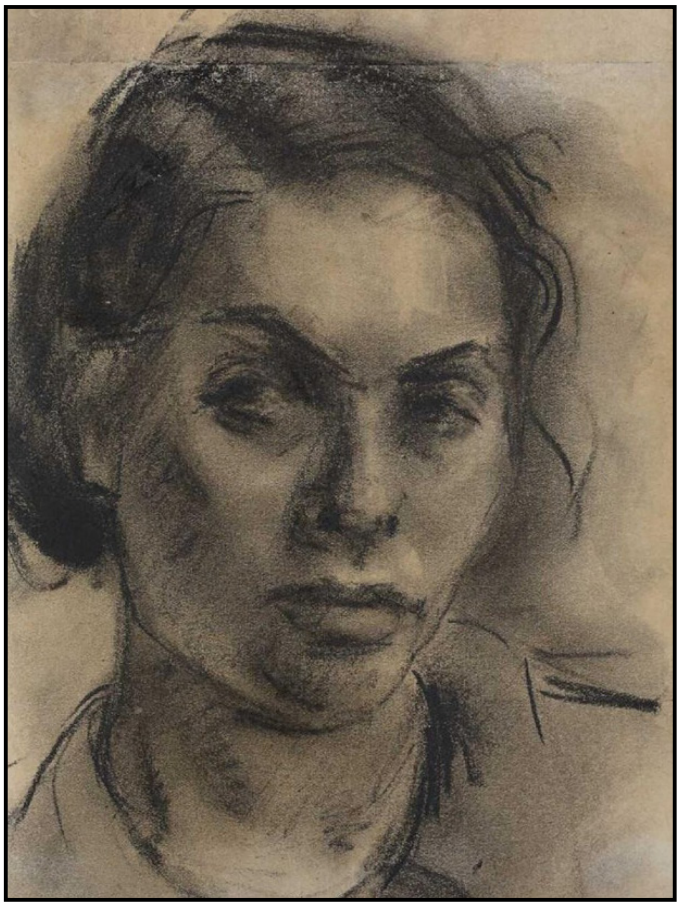
"While I'm writing this letter, I'm at work, it's 30 July 1942, 6 PM. I'm fully clothed and I have some food with me. I see them running, so I walk downstairs to the street and I find out that Smocza street from Dzielna to Gęsia have been blocked by the gendarmerie. My parents live at 41 Pawia street. I'm quickly asking what's happening and I learn that the street is blocked. I don't know what is happening to my parents. I'm waiting for the right moment to run and find out how they are. Now I hear shouts. They're coming. I'm in the yard. There was only fear.

I'm now in the building and I'm going to my parents to see how they are. I don't know my fate. I don't know whether I will be able to tell you what happened later. Remember: my name is Nachum Grzywacz."

— From the last will and testament of Nachum Grzywacz, Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

"What we were unable to cry and shriek out to the world we buried in the ground. I would love to see the moment in which the great treasure will be dug up and scream the truth at the world. So the world may know all. So the ones who did not live through it may be glad, and we may feel like veterans with medals on our chests. ... May the treasure fall into good hands, may it last into better times, may it alarm and alert the world."

— From the last will and testament of Dawid Graber, Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.



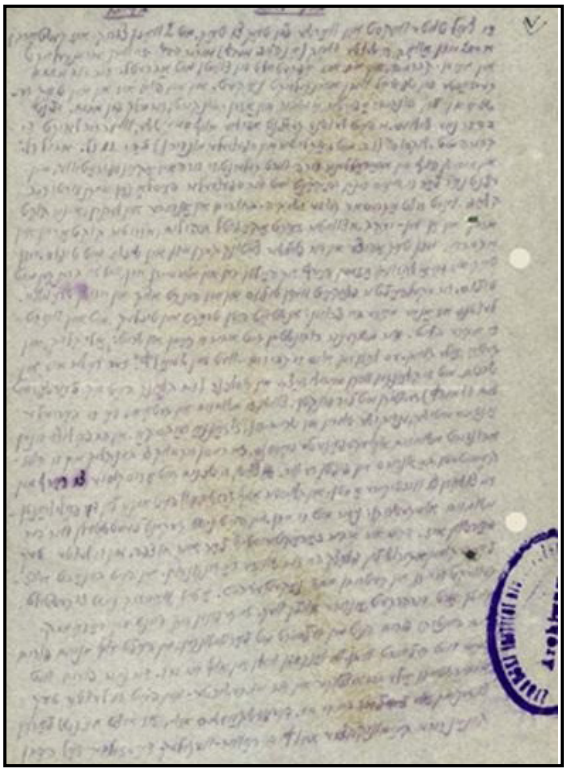
"Standing at the border between life and death, quite certain that I will die,
I would like to bid farewell to my friends and to my artworks (...)
I don't ask for praise, only for preserving memory about me and my daughter. (...)
I am calm now. I have to die, but I have done my job.
I would like the memory about my paintings to remain.
Goodbye, friends and colleagues, goodbye, Jewish nation!
Don't let destruction like this happen again.

— Gela Seksztain, August 2, 1942. Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland

---

"I wish my wife should be remembered, Gela Seksztajn, talented artist,
whose numerous works could not be exhibited, could not appear in the bright light [...].
At present, together with me, — both of us get ready to meet and receive death.
I wish my little daughter to be remembered. Margalit is 20 months old today.
She has fully mastered the Yiddish language [...]. I don't lament my own life nor that of my wife.
I pity only the so little, nice and talented girl. She too deserves to be remembered."

— From the last will and testament of Izrael Lichtensztejn, July 31, 1942,
Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.



"The future historians will have to devote a fitting page to the Jewish woman in the war. She will fill an important page in Jewish history for her courage and resilience. Thanks to her, thousands of families managed to survive the horror of those days. Recently, an interesting phenomenon has taken place. In some of the house committees, women have taken the place of the men, who have abandoned their tasks, tried and exhausted by their work. On some of these committees, the entire management is composed of women."

— From Emanuel Ringelblum's diary, Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

Poster for a symphony within the Jewish Ghetto
Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland.

Handout 2

Empathy Map

Says

What did they say about the story? What words or phrases jumped out to you?

Thinks

What do you think they were thinking when they recounted their story? What about when it happened? What beliefs might underlie these thoughts?

Write the name of the person whose perspective you're considering and 1–2 sentences about the event:

Feels

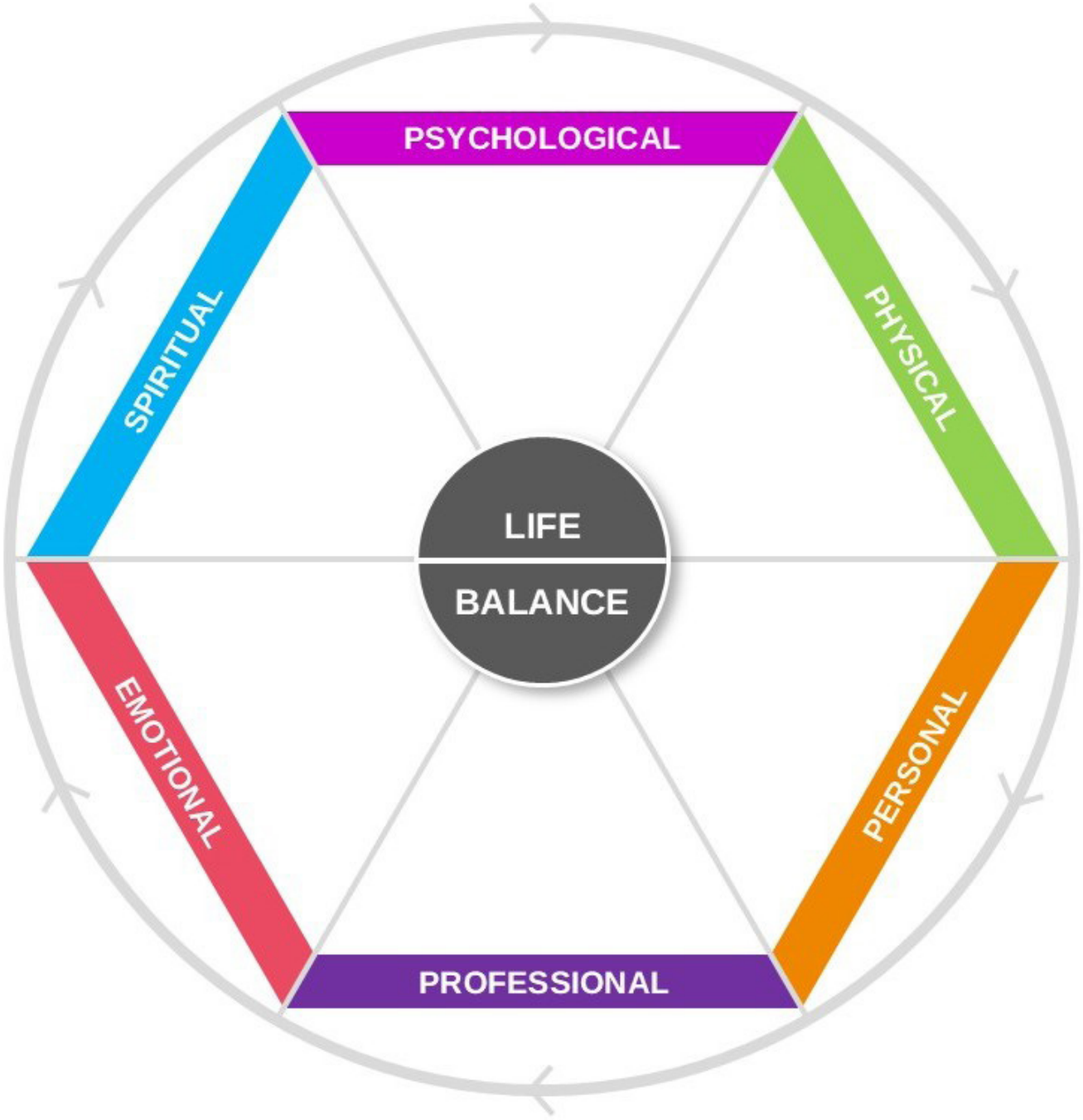
What emotions do you think they were feeling as they recounted their story? What about when it happened?

Does

What actions and behaviors did you notice as they recounted their story? What can you infer from these?

JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

Self-Care Wheel



FILM CREDITS

DIRECTOR
Beth Lane

SCREENWRITERS
Beth Lane, Aaron Soffin

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Barbara Gerson, Mark Gerson, Andy Hall, Mark Landolt, Beth Lane, Jen Lane Landolt, Joel Moody, Doug Prochilo, Jennifer Sofio Hall, Angus Wall

CO-PRODUCERS
Mai Amalie-Bak, Josh Buoy, Stacey Kessler-Aungst, Christine Cirker

CAST
Beth Lane, Philip Boehm, Gertrude Chapman, Renee Dicker, Ruth Gilliana, Ginger Lane

EDITOR
Aaron Soffin

COMPOSER
Jonathan Snipes

ANIMATOR
Misfit

IMAGE CREDITS

COVER & PAGE 2: *UnBroken* Film Poster

PAGE 5: Weber family Photo Courtesy of USHMM

PAGES 6-7: Photo courtesy of Anna Andlauer; ID photos courtesy of Weber family archives

PAGE 8: Headshot of Beth Lane by Austin Hargrave

PAGE 9: Photo of Beth Lane by Chad Batka

PAGE 10: Animated still for *UnBroken* created by Misfit, courtesy of the production

PAGE 14: *UnBroken* personal archives, circa 1956

PAGE 18: *UnBroken* production still

PAGE 22: *UnBroken* production still, Berlin 2019

PAGES 28: Weber family tree, comprising ID photos courtesy of Weber family archives

PAGE 31: *UnBroken* production still

PAGES 34-39: Images courtesy of Ringelblum Archive, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland

PAGE 34: Images of Food stamps courtesy of the film *UnBroken* and The Weber Family Arts Foundation

PAGE 42: *UnBroken* production still

Educating for Global Understanding

JOURNEYS IN FILM **RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

We create educational resources that spark community discussions and/or promote proactive learning for youth, parents, educators in K-12 and higher education, home-schoolers, and other learning communities. We also **create impact materials for libraries and community organizations.**

We leverage our established educational relationships to **promote materials in active outreach** to these audiences. We **extend the reach of a film and its lifespan** in the educational marketplace and beyond.

We work with a wide array of partners (non-profit organizations, educational institutions, educators, museums, teacher training institutes) to **develop resources tailored to the individuals and communities we work with and the audiences they seek to reach.**

Our resources focus on cultivating human empathy and compassion, developing a deeper knowledge of global issues and current challenges, and encouraging civic engagement.

JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

Journeys in Film *is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the use of film to promote a richer understanding of our diverse and complex world.*

JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

PO Box 65357
Albuquerque, NM 87193