

The
ARMOR *of*
LIGHT

A film by Abigail E. Disney

PLANNING YOUR EVENT:
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

www.ArmorOfLightFilm.com

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CREDITS

This guide was developed by Faith Rogow, Ph.D., InsightersEducation.com based on work by the Public Conversations Project with input from Peace is Loud and Fork Films. Reproduction for non-profit, educational use is encouraged.



WELCOME

Thanks for joining with thousands of people across the country who are ready to change the conversation about guns in America. With your help, *The Armor of Light* can spark a new dialogue that lifts people out of the muck of unproductive rhetoric and into a more authentic relationship with others and with the topic.

USING THIS GUIDE

This guide was created to help you use *The Armor of Light* to engage members of your community in a respectful, substantive conversation about gun violence in America, our shared responsibility to protect our children and families, and the value of every human life. The goal is to use the film as a springboard for conversation that brings new insights, deepens understanding, and identifies shared values.

In these pages you'll find step-by-step instructions and advice on setting up your screening. (For dialogue facilitation tips and discussion prompts, please see the accompanying Discussion Guide.)

These tips are designed to meet the needs of a wide range of audiences and situations, from faith-based congregations to secular university classrooms, and small group meetings to large community forums. That means you'll find recommendations that will meet your needs and also some that make little sense for your particular event. Just skip over those that don't apply.

For every event, choose strategies that allow you to create a safe space where people can speak and listen with open hearts and minds. And thanks for taking on the important challenge of opening a pathway for dialogue about gun violence in a society that celebrates life.



CONVENING YOUR EVENT

In the U.S., safe spaces where people can talk about difficult issues are rare. By convening a screening of *The Armor of Light* – and welcoming people to learn and share with open hearts – you are giving your community a precious gift.

Planning Steps

Clearly Define Your Objectives

- How can the screening benefit your community?
- What outcomes are realistic? (For example, is the end game to get people talking, or do you expect the group to agree on taking some sort of action?)

Identify the Target Audience(s)

- Who needs to attend the screening in order to meet your objectives?
- Is the event for members of a particular group (e.g., a single church or a college class), or a set of groups that are intentionally coming together to address issues across differences?
- Is your event invitation-only, or open to the general public?



Groups that are likely to be interested in The Armor of Light include:

- faith-based organizations and religious congregations
- civic and political groups
- university and high school student groups and classes
- gun violence prevention groups
- educators
- gun club members and hunters
- people involved in law enforcement and the justice system
- medical and public health professionals
- fraternal organizations and veterans groups
- youth groups (Scouting, 4H, etc.)
- conflict-resolution programs and violence reduction initiatives

Everyone's lives are touched by gun violence. Think out of the box when you think about who might want to be involved in your community.



Find Partners

If your event is public, every partner you add will strengthen your outreach capabilities and create a more powerful community screening. Each partner can also strengthen your own organization as you build relationships.

Define Your Capacity

If you plan to work with others, be clear about what you can – and can't – bring to the table. Are you offering a venue? Funding? Event organizing services? Publicity? Be clear about your capacity so you can seek partners who complement your strengths, and so partners can have clear expectations of you.

Set the Agenda

Determine the length of your event and how it will be structured.

- Will this be a one-time gathering, or part of a series of meetings?
- The film is 1.5 hours. To leave time for a substantive discussion, as well as introductions, acknowledgments, explanations of process, and breaks, your event will need to be at least 2.5 - 3 hours long.
- Do you want to invite speakers or community members who have a story to share related to guns and the sanctity of life (and how much time will you give them to speak following the film)?
- Do you plan to start with a reflection exercise or dive right into the film (and how much time will that take)?

Sample Agenda

For a 3 hour event:

1. Welcome / Introductions (5 min.)
2. Film Screening (90 min.)
3. Break / Refreshments (15 min.)
4. Explanation of Process / Conversation Agreement (15 min.)
5. Discussion (45 min.)
6. Feedback & Closing (10 min.)

Secure a Location

When choosing a venue, consider:

Accessibility: For public events, make sure the venue is accessible to people with disabilities and that the location is easy to get to for your intended audience.

Size: The screening room should fit everyone comfortably without being so large that it inhibits interaction (particularly if community building is one of your goals).

AV: Be sure the venue has high-quality projection and sound equipment.

Neutrality: Choose a venue that is welcoming. This is particularly important for inter-group dialogues. For example, houses of worship might be comfortable for congregants, but not for people of other faiths. A university campus might feel right for students, but intimidate community members. Examples of neutral spaces might include a public library, community center, or an independent theater.

Auxiliary spaces: If you plan to break your audience into smaller groups for the discussion, be sure the facility can accommodate this. If you plan to provide childcare, be sure the site includes safe space for children where they can make noise without disturbing the screening or discussion.

Select a Date and Time

Check venues: Be sure that your venue is available on the day and time you have chosen and that you take whatever steps are necessary to reserve it.

Avoid conflicts: Check congregation, organization, community and school holiday calendars to ensure that your selected date doesn't conflict with another major event likely to draw the same audience.

Ask your partners: Consider the days and times that partners have successfully drawn an audience in the past.

Find a Facilitator

Try to identify someone who can make people feel welcome and energized, and who will keep the discussion moving rather than lecture or publicize their own work. Give the facilitator a copy of the Discussion Guide and ask that he or she review it prior to the event.

Assign Additional Tasks

- Make sure you know who will be responsible for things like:
- reproducing handouts
- bringing refreshments
- creating & posting signs (for public events, so people can easily find the screening room)
- bringing name tags, markers, sign-in sheets, etc.
- operating the AV equipment
- bringing a copy of the film

To Get a Copy of the Film

Complete the screening request form at ArmorOfLightFilm.com/Host

Get the Word Out

Send invitations and/or text, call, and email friends, family, congregants, organization members, and/or everyone you can think of that is part of your target audience.

- For public events, download The Armor of Light flyer from the screening toolkit and customize it with your event details.
- Post the flyers all over the neighborhood! Consider bulletin boards and window displays at restaurants, grocery stores, community centers, barber and beauty shops, etc.
- Send reproducible copies to organizations that have newsletters (e.g., churches, civic groups, youth groups). Ask all partners to spread the word to their members.

AT THE SCREENING

SET UP

Check Equipment

Arrive early to set up and test your A/V equipment for projecting the film and, if needed, for facilitating speakers or discussion (e.g., microphones). Don't forget batteries, extension cords, adapters, and, of course, the film.

Check Supplies

Make sure you have handouts (the Conversation Agreement and Self-Help Tools for Participants in the Discussion Guide), name tags & markers, tape, refreshments, sign-in sheets (if applicable).

Room Setup

If seats are movable, place them in a configuration that will both facilitate conversation and ensure that everyone can see the screen.

Signage

Post signs in and around the venue so people know they are in the right place and can easily find the room you are using.

Review

Ask the facilitator and any invited speakers to arrive early. Review with them how their part of the event will proceed.

DURING THE SCREENING

Introductions

Make the most of your allotted time. Introduce partners, thank sponsors and hosts, and let people know how the event will proceed, but do it in “headline” format. Nothing brings down the energy level of a room more than a series of introductions that are too long. If you wish, leave time after the film for partners to describe their work.

Discussion

Engaging the audience in dialogue about the film is as important as the film itself! The Discussion Guide offers advice for facilitators and sample questions. If you are using them, don't forget to distribute copies of the Conversation Agreement and Self-Help Tips for Participants.

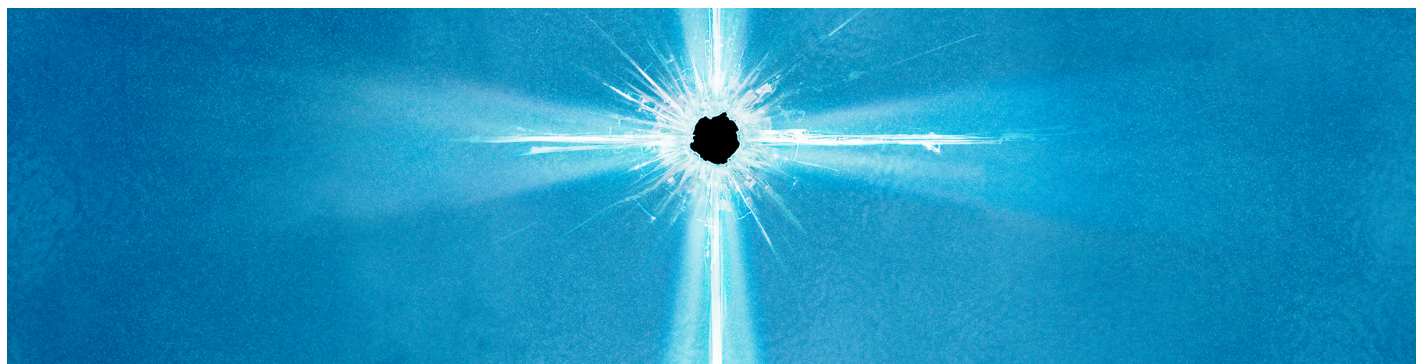
Poll Everywhere

Display the Poll Everywhere slide you received as part of your screenings toolkit. It provides instructions on how your audience can send us feedback in a brief (1 minute or less) survey. Their comments help us measure the impact of the film as well as better serve you in the future. If you're unable to display the slide, ask your audience to text ARMOR to 22333.

Next Steps

Be prepared to facilitate follow-up meetings and/or ways for participants to stay in touch. When you thank people for coming, share the url for the film's website: ArmorOfLightFilm.com

Step back and enjoy! You've done something really important.



AFTER THE SCREENING

Thank You

Send thank you notes to partners, speakers, the facilitator, and if possible, discussion participants.

Tell Us About Your Event

The production team for The Armor of Light is working to bring discussions of the film to diverse audiences around the country. Hearing more about your event can help those efforts. Please fill out the event feedback form at ArmorOfLightFilm.com/Event-Feedback

Updates

Send updates to event participants about issues or initiatives that came up during the event and/or announcements about related upcoming events. Note: This will be easier if you collect email or other contact information at the event.

Spread the Word

Without breaching any confidentiality agreements that may have been made at the event, let others in your community know about your efforts to initiate conversations about the moral underpinnings of gun violence in the U.S. If you're able, offer your expertise to help others organize their own screenings.

For More Information

Visit: ArmorOfLightFilm.com  Facebook.com/ArmorTheFilm  Twitter.com/ArmorTheFilm