

BRAVING HEALING: Screening Support & Reflection Guide

Prepared by Sheltering Oak Psychotherapy. A place of steadiness, dignity, and healing.

A Note of Welcome and Expression of Gratitude

Thank you for being here and for your willingness to engage with *Braving Healing*. This documentary touches on experiences of harm, breaking silence, truth-telling, and the long path towards freedom.

Each person will encounter this material in their own way. There is no “right” response, but the fact that you are here – to share in this experience, these stories, and everything in between, is powerful. And we appreciate your courage and your strength in showing up.

We see you here and thank you for being here.

Caring for Yourself - Before, During, and After the Screening

Some people find this film grounding and affirming. Others may feel unsettled, emotional, numb, activated, or unsure what they’re even feeling. Please note that all of these responses are valid. Should you feel activated and/or triggered, please feel invited to choose what feels supportive.

Some grounding options include:

- Placing your feet on the ground and pressing your toes into the floor beneath you
 - Taking a slow breath in through your nose, and a longer breath out through your mouth
 - Placing your hands on your chest and applying as much pressure as feels comfortable
 - Naming five things you can see, four you can feel, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste
-

If Something Gets Stirred Up in You

Stories of trauma and healing can bring old memories, experiences, emotions, or body sensations back to the surface. Sometimes immediately, sometimes hours – even days later.

What you might notice:

- Strong emotions that phase in and out (sadness, anger, grief, relief), sometimes catching you off guard
- Feeling shut down, distant, or numb
- Restless, tired, or difficulty sleeping
- A desire to talk, or a desire to withdraw

None of these responses mean that you are “going backwards.”

Please be kind to yourself and remember that healing is not linear; emotions often arrive in unpredictable waves.

Optional Reflective Prompts

You are welcome to reflect on what has been stirred up in you. Sometimes, prompts can assist in creating the space to do this.

The following questions are meant to be a safe exercise that allows you to explore, express and release what you need, starting with asking yourself:

- What do I need?
 - Were there moments that felt validating, uncomfortable, confusing, even grounding within the film?
 - What did I notice in my body while watching the film? Did any moments or material feel harder than others?
 - What kind of care or support might I need in the next 24 - 48 hours? Do I have the appropriate support system set in place? If so, can I lean on them? If not, what is missing that I might need?
-

Support After the Screening

If you find yourself needing additional support following the screening, please remember that resources exist and are ready for you if/when you need them:

- Consider reaching out to someone you trust to let them know how you're feeling
- Engage in a grounding or comforting activity (rest, nature, gentle movement, creative expression)
- Seek professional support from a trauma-informed therapist
- Reach out to crisis and/or support resources if immediate support is required

Crisis and Support Resources (Canada)

- **Crisis Services Canada:** 1-833-456-4566
 - **If you are in immediate danger**, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department
-

A Gentle Reminder on Healing

Healing does not require remembering everything, feeling everything, or fixing everything all at once.

Often, healing unfolds through an increased sense of safety, supportive relationships, and moments of being seen, heard, and understood.

Remember that taking care of yourself matters, because you matter.

Thank you for sharing in this with us.