

# Changing the Conversation: Documentary Screening Guides

Documentaries are a uniquely powerful educational tool. They bypass our intellectual defenses and speak directly to our hearts. They can tell the truth in ways that words alone sometimes cannot. T'ruah is inviting communities to host screenings of two powerful and timely films: **"No Other Land"** and **"There Is Another Way."** Both documentaries bring viewers face to face with Palestinians and Israelis who are fighting for justice in the land.

## About the Films

**"No Other Land"** is an Oscar-winning documentary that chronicles the displacement of Palestinian villagers in the West Bank's Masafer Yatta region. Directed collaboratively by Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers, the film offers a poignant exploration of the human cost of the occupation and the transformative power of empathy and partnership. For many viewers, especially those new to Palestinian narratives, this may be a first encounter with these lived realities.



It is a powerful and emotionally intense invitation into empathy and understanding. Telling the viewer what they can expect to see in the film in advance will be important to help transition into the experience with intention and help name some of the emotions that may arise for them while watching the film.

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**“There Is Another Way”** is a documentary created by Combatants for Peace, a grassroots movement of Israelis and Palestinians working together to end the occupation and bring peace. Through the personal stories of former Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters who have renounced violence, the film reveals how former enemies have found common ground in nonviolence, joint activism, and mutual humanity. The film explores how October 7 and its aftermath deepened fear and division between members of Combatants for Peace, but through intentional conversation, reconciliation and joint activism was possible.

This film underscores the necessity of nonviolent paths to peace. It assumes the viewer has some basic understanding of the context and is particularly powerful when viewers come in with some grounding in the broader dynamics of the conflict. This film includes traumatic and graphic images of October 7, which will be important to warn your community about.

If you are screening both films as a series, start with “No Other Land” to ground viewers emotionally and in the reality of the occupation on the ground. Although the films discuss different parts of the region, understanding the occupation provides useful context for “There is Another Way.”



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## What is included in this resource?

- Framing and Pre-Film Preparation: Best practices for preparing your community to watch the films
- Post-film discussion guides for “No Other Land” and “There Is Another Way”
- Logistical guidance for purchasing each of the films and hosting a screening

## Framing and Pre-Film Preparation

These films are likely to evoke a wide range of emotions for individuals in your community, and they may be especially challenging if your community members are not used to discussing the experiences of Palestinians. Your role is to prepare your community for what to expect, invite them to welcome discomfort and uncertainty, and share why you think watching these films together matters. Some best practices to do this:

### Before the screening:

- Watch the film(s) in advance, and take note of the feelings and questions that arise for you.
- When you send an email inviting people to the film, provide useful context such as the trailers for the films and inviting them to look up [Combatants for Peace](#) or read about Masafer Yatta. There are a number of good resources to begin with, including [this article](#) from +972 or [this article](#) from Times of Israel.
- It may also be helpful to define terms like “the occupation” and/or provide warnings that the group may hear certain words that may make them uncomfortable.

### At the screening:

- Be a warm and caring presence, so that members of your community feel safe expressing whatever emotions arise for them.
- While you’re welcoming everyone, name the range of emotions people might experience. This can disarm defensiveness and invite openness. You can even share a bit about your personal experience watching the film.
- Share your reasons for wanting to have a screening and discussion. Why your community, and why now?

# **“No Other Land” Post-Film Discussion Guide**

*Recommended length: 45 minutes to 1 hour*

This film is going to evoke many emotions for people in your community and likely different emotions for different people. When guiding them through discussion it will be important to name at the beginning that all feelings are valid and that the emotions that come up for people may even contradict each other. When planning the discussion, you should decide if you want to have small group discussions or a larger group discussion.

If you are facilitating, be prepared for people to express a range of emotional reactions: sadness, pain, anger, disbelief, fear, defensiveness. We recommend naming reactions for participants if they have trouble doing it themselves. After each person shares, we suggest repeating back what they said and making sure you understand what they are saying before moving on to the next person.

## **“No Other Land” Suggested Discussion Questions:**

1. What feelings are coming up for you after watching the movie? Where do you feel them in your body?
2. What was most surprising to you about the film?
3. Did you make any assumptions about Basel and his family when you first saw them? What were they? Did those thoughts change over the course of the film?
4. One of the overarching themes is the impact of the trauma from being a kid raised amongst so much fear. How do you understand that trauma? How does understanding that trauma help us understand relationships or tensions between Israelis and Palestinians in that region?

## **“No Other Land” Suggested Discussion Questions (continued):**

5. It was a choice to not share anything about Yuval’s life outside of his experience in Masafer Yatta. What do you make of that choice? What did you notice about how you identified with him or didn’t identify with him?

6. When the people of Masafer Yatta meet the Israeli journalist, they refer to him as a “human rights Israeli.” What do you think that means?

7. One of the really powerful quotes from the people in Masafer Yatta describing the Israeli military was, “They made us strangers in our own land.” Israelis and Palestinians both talk about not having any other land. What are you thinking about land and who land “belongs to” after watching this film?

8. Another powerful question asked frequently throughout the film by people living in Masafer Yatta was, “How do you expect us to forget the place we were born?” What role does the concept of “home” play in this crisis? How do you relate to that, personally?

9. Something that we, as Jews, hear a lot about as it relates to Israelis and Palestinians is the importance of security, and that having a strong military is necessary for having security. In contrast, the people in Masafer Yatta reflect on the idea that “security” is the tool that expels people from their homes. Did this film impact the way you are thinking about the concept of “security”? If so, how?

10. The film ends with two of the directors’ stating their hope that their work will “change this bad reality” Do you think this kind of activism can be effective? Has the film changed anything for you?

# **“There Is Another Way” Post-Film Discussion Guide**

*Recommended length: 45 minutes to 1 hour*

This film is going to evoke many emotions for people in your community and likely different emotions for different people. When guiding them through discussion it will be important to name at the beginning that all feelings are valid and that the emotions that come up for people may even contradict each other. When planning the discussion, you should decide if you want to have small group discussions or a larger group discussion.

If you are facilitating, be prepared for people to express a range of emotional reactions: sadness, pain, anger, disbelief, fear, defensiveness. We recommend naming reactions for participants if they have trouble doing it themselves. After each person shares, we suggest repeating back what they said and making sure you understand what they are saying before moving on to the next person.

## **“There Is Another Way” Suggested Discussion Questions:**

1. What feelings are coming up for you after watching the movie? Where do you feel them in your body?
2. What was most surprising to you about the film?
3. Trauma is a huge theme in the film. How does trauma, both personal and collective, shape the stories we tell and the ones we are able to hear? How did this theme show up for you while watching the film?
4. How did watching the traumatic footage from October 7th impact you/your ability to engage with the message of the film?



## **“There Is Another Way” Suggested Discussion Questions (continued):**

5. The film touches on how people feel closer to those they identify with—Jews to (Jewish) Israelis, Palestinians to Palestinians. How does this feeling of closeness impact your sense of solidarity across divides? How have you seen this in your life and experiences connecting with this issue?
6. The film shows that some Israeli activists stepped back from peace activism and the group after October 7th, while Palestinian activists continued peace activism and working with the group. Why do you think this was? How have you been inclined to step towards or away from activism?
7. Several Israelis in the film say, “We need peace, but we need a strong army.” What does this tension between peace and militarism reveal about the challenges of trust and security?
8. The film critiques the legacy of the Oslo Accords, often idealized by many people committed to peace. How do you wrestle with the complicated legacy of hopeful moments in history?
9. The activists in the film emphasize listening to the “other” in a deep, transformative way. What does that look like in practice, and how can we bring that into our own communities in a transformative way?
10. What can we commit to learning, unlearning, or doing differently after this screening?



## Logistical guidance for purchasing each of the films and hosting a screening

1. **Choose a format:** Decide whether to host an in-person, virtual, or hybrid screening.
2. **Select a venue:** Identify a suitable location, such as a JCC, synagogue social hall or sanctuary, or local theater. Ensure the venue can accommodate your expected audience size and has the necessary technical capabilities (large screen, sound, ability to hook your computer up to a large screen). This could be a great opportunity to partner with other organizations.
3. **Donate:** Especially if you are not charging for the screening, encourage attendees to make donations to support the communities of Masafer Yatta or to Combatants for Peace. Provide information on how they can contribute and/or get involved.
4. **Continue the learning:** Offer additional opportunities for people in your community to continue their learning. We recommend selecting a book — perhaps one that dives more into Palestinian experiences — from T’ruah’s **Book Recommendations for All Ages** and inviting participants to join for a book discussion.

### To Purchase “No Other Land”

The film is available via Gathr.com at [this link](#). Make an account on Gathr to purchase the film. The site will give you directions to screen the film on your laptop — from there you can play it on a computer, TV, or projector.

### To Purchase “There Is Another Way”

The film is available at this [link](#). Once you click on the link, select “create screening event.” The site will give you directions to host a screening of the film on your laptop — from there you can play it on a computer, TV, or projector.