

POV Community Engagement & Education

DISCUSSION GUIDE



Wuhan, Wuhan
a film by Yung Chang

www.pbs.org/pov



WUHAN WUHAN

Wuhan Wuhan is an observational documentary unfolding during February and March 2020 at the height of the pandemic in Wuhan, China. With unprecedented access at the peak of the pandemic lockdown, *Wuhan Wuhan* goes beyond the statistics and salacious headlines and puts a human experience into the early days of the mysterious virus as Chinese citizens and frontline healthcare workers grappled with an invisible, deadly killer.

The film focuses on five heart-wrenching and endearing stories: a soft-hearted ER doctor and an unflappable ICU nurse from the COVID-19 hospital; a compassionate volunteer psychologist at a temporary hospital; a tenacious mother and son who are COVID-19 patients navigating the byzantine PRC healthcare system; and a volunteer driver for medical workers and his 9 month pregnant wife whose heartfelt story forms the backbone of this film.

Wuhan Wuhan is a testament to the universality of our collective pandemic experience, that no matter what country, no one is immune to disease and that we, as a human species, share the same humanity in our struggle to survive.

Content Warning: While *Wuhan, Wuhan* is a person-focused narrative situated in the earliest experiences with COVID-19, this ongoing pandemic continues to impact the daily lives of millions. Please know that conversations around an ongoing pandemic will likely conjure memories, feelings, and painful experiences for those in your community. For this reason we have included a [Grounding Activity](#) for you to offer those in attendance at the close (or throughout) your conversation.

USING THIS GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	Film Summary
3	Using this Guide
4	Letter from the Filmmaker
5	Participants
7	Key Issues
8	Background Information
16	Discussion Questions
23	Credits & Acknowledgments

This guide is an invitation to dialogue. It is based on a belief in the power of human connection and designed for people who want to use *Wuhan Wuhan* to engage family, friends, classmates, colleagues, and communities. In contrast to initiatives that foster debates in which participants try to convince others that they are right, this document envisions conversations undertaken in a spirit of openness in which people try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively.

The discussion prompts are intentionally crafted to help a wide range of audiences think more deeply about the issues in the film. Rather than attempting to address them all, choose one or two that best meet your needs and interests. Because COVID-19 remains in our lives today, and with so many loved ones, neighbors, and community members deeply affected by the pandemic, this film can also stand as a meditation for us all. The storytelling, musical score, and characters lend themselves to a unique opportunity to be reminded of our shared humanity and the universal connections we share around the world to live, love, and help one another remain safe.

For more detailed event planning and facilitation tips, visit <https://communitynetwork.amdoc.org/>.

LETTER FROM THE FILMMAKER



As a Chinese person who grew up in North America, I feel strongly committed to telling a nuanced story that doesn't generalize a population of people and reveals them to be individuals, not just a monolith. Nationalism builds walls and this is not the intention of this film. In *Wuhan Wuhan*, the lives of the people we follow are individually a document of perseverance, but collectively they represent the profound humanity we universally hope for in times of crisis. I'm driven to make this film because of anti-Asian racism quelled by double-speak and mis-truths from leaders around the world, who obfuscate the realities of this pandemic; that in the end it is the everyday person, the essential frontline workers, the volunteers, the intergenerational families, it is us, who must navigate the ups-and-downs of this unprecedented and historic event that will shape our lives forever. In a way, as systems and governments fail us, the people have come together. We will survive.

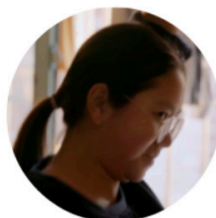
- Yung Chang, Director

PARTICIPANTS

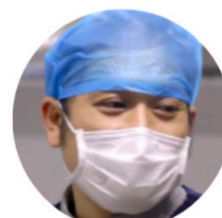
Participants



YIN



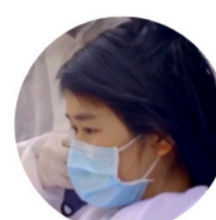
XU

DR. XIANNEN
ZHENG

XUILI



LAILAI

DR. GUIQUING
ZHANGGRANDPA
SHEN

SUSU



WUHAN CITY

Yin, 30, volunteer medical driver and factory worker

After being furloughed from his job in a tobacco factory during the lockdown, Yin works as a volunteer driver for medical workers shuttling them between the quarantine hotels and the hospitals. Unable to endure the monotony of his lockdown daily routine at home with his wife, Xu, who is 37 weeks pregnant, Yin seeks advice from his passengers and fulfills his sense of duty during the pandemic.

Xu, 23, tour guide, wife of Yin

Xu is in full term pregnancy and is expecting to give birth to a “pandemic baby” during the extraordinary lockdown period in Wuhan. She is as nervous as any first-time-mother, but with the added stress of protecting her family from an invisible virus. This is doubly aggravating to her since her husband, Yin, decides to be a volunteer medical driver risking his own safety for others and, in her eyes, neglecting his role as a father-to-be.

Dr. Xiannian Zheng, 35, ER Chief Physician

Dr. Zheng works at Wuhan No. 5 Hospital which is the first designated hospital for critical COVID-19 cases. As the ER chief doctor, he faces insurmountable pressure, known and unknown obstacles, and the high risk of catching the virus himself. Though the hospital is constantly in lack of medical supplies, he races against time, dedicated to save more lives and embolden the spirits of his overworked colleagues.

Dr. Guiqing Zhang, 55, Psychologist

Arriving from Xinjiang province as a volunteer, Dr. Zhang, a psychologist, provides professional support for thousands of patients in Fangcang Temporary Hospital. Dealing with the unexpected news of her father's terminal lung cancer, she nonetheless forges ahead to help her patients heal and find ways to endure their mandatory quarantine.

Susu, 34, ICU Nurse

Working in the ICU with the most severe COVID-19 cases, Susu practices patience and kindness as she cares for each of her patients, especially "Grumpy Grandpa" in Bed 15. Quarantined in a hotel for medical workers and unable to return home to see her two children and her husband, Susu perseveres by turning her love for her family towards her patients.

Xiuli Liu, 41, Lailai's Mother

After testing positive for COVID-19, Mama Liu and her son, Lai Lai, are quarantined in the Fangcang Temporary Hospital for treatment and observation. To be released from the mandatory quarantine, you must test negative for COVID-19 three times. With the impending closure of the temporary hospital and not knowing the prospects of their recovery, Mama Liu fights to protect her son and their livelihoods in a medical system bogged-down by bureaucracy.

Lailai, 9

As a 9-year-old boy, Lai Lai is still trying to understand what living in the Fangcang Temporary Hospital means, which largely means escaping into his mother's smartphone and video games. Seeing his mother being so protective of him, he decides that even if he recovers first, he will never leave his mother's side.

Grandpa Shen, 56

Under Nurse Susu's watchful eye in the ICU, Grandpa Shen is Bed Patient 15 recovering from COVID-19. Amongst the medical staff, he is jokingly known as "Grumpy Grandpa", a common stereotype for Wuhan senior citizens who have the national reputation of being curmudgeonly.

Synopsis & Participants

Wuhan Wuhan chronicles the early months of the global pandemic in the first city that faced locked down—Wuhan, China. At a time when much uncertainty and fear existed, the filmmakers were able to capture the everyday lives of people living, surviving, and helping one another maintain their human connections. These stories illuminate many topics and will be of special interest to people who want to explore the following topics:

- COVID-19
- Health care
- Mental health & Trauma
- Caregiving
- Intergenerational families
- Parenting
- Friendship
- Grief
- Community, Volunteerism, & Mutual Aid
- Adversity & Courage
- Propaganda & Misinformation



BACKGROUND INFORMATION**The First Months of COVID-19**

“People were too optimistic about this virus at the start.”

— Wuhan Medical Professional

“This pandemic is unprecedented. We don’t know much. We may make mistakes.”

— Dr. Zheng, ER Doctor, Wuhan No. 5 Hospital

- On December 12, 2019 a cluster of patients in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China reported shortness of breath and fever. Two weeks later, the World Health Organization was notified of a number of cases of pneumonia of unknown origin in Wuhan. Initial clusters of this outbreak were mapped and appear to have originated in the Hunan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan.
- On January 7, 2020 Chinese authorities identified and isolated a new coronavirus as the causative agent of the outbreak. With the Chinese New Year in the coming weeks, Chinese authorities allowed residents of Wuhan to continue moving freely around the city, not fully aware or informed of how contagious this new coronavirus would become.
- On January 23, 2020, China quarantined Wuhan to contain the coronavirus (COVID-19), sealing itself off from the rest of the country for the next six months. The World Health Organization (WHO) had confirmed that this coronavirus was spread by human-to-human contact but a global public health emergency had still not been declared. At this point, it was estimated that the probability of transportation of COVID-19 to other cities in China before lockdown was approximately 369.
- On February 11th, the WHO officially named this novel coronavirus strain as COVID-19.
- By the end of February, Italy alongside China, had become a COVID-19 hotspot and over the course of the next month, the virus spread across the globe.
- Over time, and with extensive research completed and published by a variety of scientists and NGOs, the Hunan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan is confirmed as the most likely place of origin for the virus. Certainly as with any virus, virologists will continue to compile new studies, assemble new data, and continue the important work of sourcing the place of origin for the SARS Co-V-2 will continue.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sources:

Sencer, David J. "CDC Museum COVID-19 Timeline." <https://www.cdc.gov/museum/timeline/covid19.html>

Cohen, Jon. "Do three new studies add up to proof of COVID-19's origin in a Wuhan animal market?" *Science*, 28 February 2022, <https://www.science.org/content/article/do-three-new-studies-add-proof-covid-19-s-origin-wuhan-animal-market>.

Zimmer, Carl and Mueller, Benjamin. "New Research Points to Wuhan Market as Pandemic Origin." *New York Times*, 27 February 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/02/26/science/covid-virus-wuhan-origins.html>.

Zhanwei Du, Lin Wang, Simon Cauchemez, Xiaoke Xu, Xianwen Wang, Benjamin J. Cowling, and Lauren Ancel Meyers. "Risk for Transportation of Coronavirus Disease from Wuhan to Other Cities in China." *Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*, May 2020. https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/5/20-0146_article

Wuhan and the Pandemic



(Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wuhan>)

COVID-19 cases in Wuhan in December 2019

The map shows that most of the earliest cases of COVID-19 were in close proximity to Huanan Market, even if they were not directly connected with the market through working there or visiting. This suggests that transmission in the community around the market was occurring in December 2019. The map is based on a subset of data from 174 COVID-19 cases in and around Wuhan (1).

- Home address of cases with epidemiological link to Huanan Market
- No link to Huanan Market
- Market + Hospital



1. Jinyintan Hospital; 2. Wuhan Central Hospital, Houhu Branch (no. 2); 3. Hubei Provincial Hospital of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine; 4. Wuhan Central Hospital, Nanjing Road Branch; 5. Tongji Hospital; 6. Union Hospital; 7. Zhongnan Hospital; 8. Wuhan Jiangxia First People's Hospital

(Source: <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abm4454>)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province situated on the banks of the Yangtze River, is a city of 11 million, a key transport and manufacturing hub, and the place where the coronavirus was first detected. At the end of 2019 a small group of patients were transferred to Jinyintan Hospital—the most qualified hospital in Wuhan to deal with contagious diseases. It appeared they were suffering from pneumonia with fever, cough, and dyspnea (heavy labored breathing.) Their CT scans showed many had large white abnormalities in the lungs, but still nothing other than some sort of pneumonia was identified. More patients began to arrive with similar symptoms and memories of the SARS outbreak 17 years ago began to surface. On December 31, 2019, China sent their National Health Commission to Wuhan and after the working group, and the expert group, conducted many field visits and studies, they also concluded it was some type of viral pneumonia.

The first death from this disease occurred on January 2, 2020. The next day, four elite Chinese medical institutes conducted an unprecedented testing of samples from Jinyintan Hospital. Ten days later this “unknown” pneumonia was named “novel coronavirus pneumonia” — COVID-19. A national press conference was held on January 20th announcing that this disease was transmissible amongst people.

Three days later, Wuhan announced an unprecedented city-wide lockdown sealing itself off from the world and closing all boundaries in and out of the city. We see in *Wuhan Wuhan* how the city was transformed. Streets and highways usually crowded with people, bicycles, and cars were desolate. Amidst surging cases of the virus, hospital beds became scarce and in response. In response, two new hospitals were hastily built in less than two weeks consisting largely of prefabricated rooms and components. The 1,000-bed Huoshenshan Hospital (meaning Fire God Mountain) opened its doors on February 3, 2020 and five days later, its sister hospital, Leishenshan (meaning Thunder God Mountain), opened with another 1,500 beds. Stadiums were converted and the convention center was turned into a shelter for people needing to isolate or for observation. To staff this surge of cases, medical assistance from around China flew into Wuhan totalling more than 38,000 additional healthcare professionals.

On April 8, 2020 Wuhan lifted its lockdown, 76 days after it began.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sources:

“Coronavirus doctor: ‘Everyone is stuck here and can’t leave.’” BBC News, January 23, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51222384>.

Gan, Nectar. “China lifts 76-day lockdown on Wuhan as city reemerges from coronavirus crisis.” CNN. April 8, 2020. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/07/asia/coronavirus-wuhan-lockdown-lifted-intl-hnk/index.html>

Ramirez, Leo, Sebastian Ricci, Hector Retamal. “Life in the time of coronavirus: the epicenter.” *Agence France-Presse*. February 2, 2020. <https://correspondent.afp.com/life-time-coronavirus-epicenter>

Williams, Sophia. “How can China build a hospital so quickly?” BBC News. January 31 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51245156>

Worobey, Michael. “Dissecting the early COVID-19 cases in Wuhan.” *Science*. November 18, 2021. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abm4454>



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Collective Stress and Trauma

“There is going to be severe trauma for our medical workers. It’s a process. But it will get better.”

— Dr. Zheng, ER Doctor, Wuhan No. 5 Hospital

Collective stress and trauma have been common global experiences as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Healthcare workers and frontline caregivers became particularly vulnerable to adverse mental health consequences such as anxiety, depression, insomnia. For professionals in Wuhan, these adverse mental health issues were exacerbated because of the lack of preparation and knowledge of the virus itself along with the ensuing death toll, and disruption of education, employment, daily routines, and family life. “Preparation and anticipation are critical buffers of psychological trauma because feeling prepared reduces the sense of being overwhelmed,”¹ but as the pandemic unfolded, uncertainty increased and these mental health issues accumulated.

The openness of the film participants to share their lives during this unprecedented time offers viewers a rare opportunity to connect with the fears, emotions, and vulnerability of individuals living in the city who were the first to experience a widespread outbreak and lockdown. Throughout the ongoing pandemic, connection itself became a scarce resource, but through the filmmaking process viewers have the opportunity to bear witness to individual challenges that others faced, as they unfolded amidst COVID.

Here are only a handful of scenes that shine a spotlight on the individual and collective traumas of the Wuhanese people:

- There are many who look to [Dr. Li Wenliang](#) from Wuhan Central Hospital, the first to send out a warning to fellow clinicians on 30 December 2019, as a hero. In *Wuhan Wuhan* a scene of a candle-lit altar to his memory is shown. He died on February 7, 2020 of COVID-19.
- In front of Fangcang Temporary Hospital, we meet Psychologist Chang. She is being introduced to 11 volunteer psychologists in front of a former convention center transformed into a makeshift hospital. We listen as Dr. Chang acknowledges their sacrifices and affirms the emotional toll of this work by saying, “we have our own fears and hardships.” She then escorts them to one of the makeshift tents where they each become fully covered in PPE with the only identifying marker being their name written on the outside of their jumpsuit.

¹ <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0267315#pone.0267315.ref008>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- As the group of psychologists delegates which groups needs therapy, one doctor simply states: “You don’t have to ask me. I can tell you this. Everyone here needs therapy, including me.”
- In a very poignant sequence of scenes we see the emotions of ICU Nurse Susu come to the surface. As she gets her hair cut by one of the volunteer hairdressers, suits up and returns to the ICU she shares, “We’re all facing the same challenges. I didn’t want to have any regrets.”
- Dr. Zheng recalls that he and his colleagues were informed that on Lunar New Year’s Eve, his hospital was taking care of over 1000 COVID patients, lined up in the hallways, squeezed in like in a market, waiting six or seven hours for a CT scan or to get an I.V. As he recounts that night being on call, with people in chairs if there were no beds, he says to the camera, “How did this happen? When will the end? I didn’t feel desperate. But I also didn’t see any hope... To an old classmate I said, ‘If I don’t make it, please take care of my child to the best of your ability.’ I’ve told no one this.”

Sources:

Dong, Joy. “Two years after his death, the Chinese doctor who warned of the virus is remembered.” *New York Times*. February 7, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/07/world/asia/chinese-doctor-li-wenliang-covid-warning.html>

Kuo, Lily. “A year after Wuhan coronavirus lockdown, trauma runs deep in China’s ‘Hero City.’” *The Washington Post*. January 22, 2021. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/wuhan-lockdown-coronavirus-china/2021/01/22/0d35e6d6-5612-11eb-acc5-92d2819a1ccb_story.html

“Wuhan’s Hidden Trauma: After the COVID lockdown.” *AlJazeera*. August 24, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/witness/2021/8/24/wuhans-hidden-trauma-after-the-covid-lockdown>

Bo Yu, Donell Barnett, Vidya Menon, Lara Rabiee, Yinelka Silverio De Castro, Moiz Kasubhai, Eren Watkins. “Healthcare worker trauma and related mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 outbreak in New York City.” *PLOS ONE*. April 29, 2022. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0267315>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Creativity & Connection Amidst the Pandemic

When the film opened in February 2020, Wuhan had been locked down for over a month and the outbreak was at its first peak.

When director Yung Chang “inherited” the raw video material he was immediately drawn to the characters and the humanistic footage. He learned that the 300+ hours of film had been collected by 30 filmmakers who were in Wuhan to gather material “””on the Yangtze River. Within weeks of their arrival, Wuhan was locked down and they were unable to leave. They pivoted quickly, and with incredible access, started to do what they knew how to do: they started filming everyday Wuhanese people, who despite extraordinary circumstances, opened up their lives and told their story to the world.

Chang recalls in an interview at CAAM Fest 2021, “We were just entering our first wave of the virus and the footage I watched was revealing the early experiences of everyday people, frontline workers and healthcare workers in a way that I had not seen before. This wasn’t ripped-from-the-headlines, salacious footage — it was intimate, emotional, three-dimensional storytelling.” Chang also shared that this was the first time he was not on the ground filming, but rather from the safety of his home office in Toronto, he found himself looking through the eyes of other cinematographers, stitching together stories, filtering out scenes and creating this unique “time capsule” documenting the first months of COVID in Wuhan, the epicenter of the pandemic.

Of the many noteworthy aspects of *Wuhan Wuhan*, this documentary and the process of making the film, reflects how connection, collaboration, and collective processing can be creatively discovered amidst difficult times. Whether you were behind or in front of a camera, or engaging in other creative outlets; creative expression offered one outlet where individuals could find a sense of connection despite isolation.

Sources:

Chung, Yung. “How Yung Chang turned 300 hours of footage from Wuhan’s early pandemic into a gripping documentary.” *CBC*. May 12, 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/arts/how-yung-chang-turned-300-hours-of-footage-from-wuhan-s-early-pandemic-into-a-gripping-documentary-1.6022285>

Yuill, Bessie. “Coronavirus: Documentary crew stranded in Wuhan unveil eerie viral short film of abandoned city.” *Independent*. 20 February, 2020. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/coronavirus-wuhan-the-long-night-documentary-short-film-a9346626.html>

Hansika Kapoor and James C. Kaufman. “Meaning-Making Through Creativity During COVID-19.” *Frontiers in Psychology*. December 18, 2020. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7775492/>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cher-Yi Tan, Chun-Qian Chuah, Shwu-Ting Lee, and Chee-Seng Tan. "Being Creative Makes You Happier: The Positive Effects of Well-Being." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. July 18, 2021. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8305859/?report=classic>



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



STARTING THE CONVERSATION

The film score, dialogue, and framing of scenes in *Wuhan Wuhan* is succinct and artfully woven together to reflect the uncertainty, fear, and tension of the pandemic. After watching this documentary, take a moment to sit with your emotions, breath deep breaths, and like the technique that Dr. Zhang recommends to a woman at the Fangcang Temporary Hospital when caregivers come at night:

Open your eyes.

Let yourself return to reality.

Keep telling yourself: *“I’m fine. I’m safe now. No one can hurt me.”*

After watching the documentary:

- What are some emotions that emerge as you would use to describe the feeling of *Wuhan Wuhan*?
- Which of the main film participants did you have the most in common with and in what ways?
- What were the most compelling scenes in the documentary?
- What was difficult, in your experience, in watching this film? In what ways, if any, was your experience of watching this film helpful or healing?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Our Collective Humanity

山川异域 风月同天。

- 长屋王, 公元7世纪

“We are from different lands and are separated by mountains and waters. Yet above us, we share the same sky and the same feelings.”

— Nagaya no Kimi, 7th-century Japanese official in a letter to a Chinese official

At the core of *Wuhan Wuhan* are stories of individuals working together to survive and help one another through a crisis. We see this spirit in Yin who volunteers to drive front-line medical workers, and through the sacrifices of Dr. Xiannian Zheng, the ER Chief Physician, and Susu the ICU nurse. We see it in the 119 volunteer hairdressers who give free haircuts to medical workers to improve their PPE comfort.

When Yin asks a doctor in a car ride to the hospital if he is scared, the doctor responds, “How can a doctor be scared? I can’t treat anyone if I’m scared.” He then turns the question back to Yin asking him how long he has been volunteering and acknowledges the risk he is taking as well by driving medical workers to their hospitals. Yin responds only by saying “We want to help you as much as we can.”

- Thinking back, who did you lean on as support during the pandemic? Who were you able to provide support?
- Did you recognize any similar qualities, motivations, or sensibilities between your support system and the individuals featured in *Wuhan Wuhan*?

Yin and his wife Xu are expecting their first child in the midst of the lockdown. As we follow her pregnancy and eventual birth, the juxtaposition of this story with the pandemic is worthy of exploration.

- How do the juxtaposition of such different experiences impact your ability to relate to the storytelling in the film? What connections emerge in your mind and heart when thinking of Yin and Xu’s story alongside Dr. Zheng, Nurse Susu, and Dr. Zhang’s experiences?
- How do these different realities (those encompassing death, and those illuminating new life) reflect our collective humanity?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- While Yin says the baby is very brave, Xu shares her fears that no one is safe in this environment. How would you characterize their wide range of disposition and emotion?
- Is there one story that you like to share about your life during COVID? Do you have a story that you have not been able to tell yet?

Our Collective Experience

“Disaster is an abnormal event. Every single emotion we have during this is normal. Agitation, despair, panic: All of these are natural reactions and not exaggerated. The mental can affect the physical.”

— Dr. Zhang, Wuhan Wuhan

“Don’t panic during this pandemic. Everyone is involved in this battle.”

-Public announcement in Wuhan, China

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a universal experience, a source of instability, emotional and economic stress, and has been traumatic for many. COVID presents a shared experience that transcends borders. The openness to share experiences and information between health care workers around the world illuminated our interdependence, how we rely on one another to survive. Our common experiences of pain, uncertainty, and fear were also connective tissues reminding us we are not alone.

- Frontline medical personnel in Wuhan lived through unimaginable trauma and with so little information, or little precedent to rely on, doctors like Dr. Zheng carried so much.
 - After watching *Wuhan Wuhan* how would you describe the medical professionals you witnessed in this documentary, their work, and their spirits?
- Which scene or scenes reflected these individuals’ strength, integrity, and sacrifices?
- Another layer of hardship experienced globally is rooted in the flow of information, the rumors, the misinformation, conspiracy theories, and the politicization of the virus in the wake of so many deaths around the globe.
 - What is the relationship between knowledge and information and suffering? Is there a correlation that is important to acknowledge?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How have you experienced misinformation leading to harmful behaviors that have created more suffering, rather than lessening it?
- If comfortable sharing, what are one or two experiences you had during the pandemic of stress? How did stress or anxiety manifest themselves in your body? What are some tools you used, or practices, to cope with these experiences?
- If you were a frontline healthcare worker, did you connect with one or more scenes in *Wuhan Wuhan*? If so, in what ways?

Dr. Li Wenliang

Doctor Li Wenliang (34) was an ophthalmologist in Wuhan who was the first to sound a warning online about the dangerous cluster of viral infections located in Wuhan that could possibly grow out of control. He shared this information in late December 2019 in the confidences of his medical school classmates, online. In early January 2020, reports show that he was summoned by both medical officials and the Chinese police to sign a statement denouncing his own warning as a “unfounded and illegal rumor.”

Dr. Li contracted the virus and on February 6, 2020 died of COVID-19 leaving behind a wife, child, and another child on the way. In *Wuhan Wuhan* we see a memorial for Dr. Li in front of Central Hospital. Flowers, candles, and his picture adorn the entranceway with healthcare workers and individuals bowing in his honor. Cards say, “Hero, rest in peace!” and “RIP, Dr. Wenglian Li. We won’t forget you!”

- Why do you think the director included this footage of Dr. Li’s memorial in *Wuhan Wuhan*?
- How would you characterize the memorial?
- In what ways are ritual ceremonies, or memories, important for grievors? How did COVID impact the capacity for grievors to mourn in community? What lasting impacts might this have on us as a society?
- Were there similar memorials in your own community, and if so, what were they able to provide survivors?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Closing Reflection: Healing, Hope, and Survival

Watching *Wuhan Wuhan* years after the first outbreak and lockdown may feel like a distant memory or something very present still. The global pandemic persists. New outbreaks as a result of new variants continue, and the effects of long COVID continue to emerge in unforeseen ways. Those who lost loved ones face new realities in their day-to-day lives that are still unfolding.

As a closing ritual, acknowledging our collective struggle to survive and come out of the pandemic is important, perhaps even healing. Open up the space for audiences to share if it is comfortable. Alternatively taking a moment of silence to recognize the sacrifices so many made during the pandemic, and the millions of lives lost, could also be healing.

After taking this time, consider bringing your event to a close with the spirit of the Wuhanese people. In *Wuhan Wuhan* we witness again and again their fighting spirit during such extreme uncertainty. Faced with so much so quickly, their courage, compassion, and integrity is something to lift up and honor.

- In thinking back on your community during the pandemic, what is a memory or story that you want to remember and retain, and one that offers you strength to share with others?
- What are your hopes for us, collectively, and for future generations and the world we are creating to leave for them?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Grounding Activity: Breathwork

This activity can be used at any time throughout your conversation or after screening the film. It is a helpful tool for relief and release of overwhelming feelings, anxious thoughts, or discomfort and a useful activity to inspire feelings of calm and comfort. Invite all participants to join in the following step-by-step breathing exercises. As the facilitator, you can read these steps aloud, and throughout the breathing exercise hold the “4, 3, 2, 1” count for attendees.

1. Find a comfortable seat and rest your feet firmly on the ground;
2. Sit up straight, gently extending the top of your head towards the sky;
3. If you feel comfortable doing so, then gently close your eyes or send your gaze towards the floor and relax your eyelids;
4. Roll your shoulders slowly forward and then slowly back;
5. Lean your head from side to side, lowering your left ear to your left shoulder and holding for a count of three, then repeating on your right side;
6. Take a deep breath in through your nose allowing your chest to rise, then your lungs to expand; count 4, 3, 2, 1...and hold;
7. Hold for a count of 4, 3, 2, 1...and release;
8. Release for a count of 4, 3, 2, 1...and hold;
9. Hold for 4, 3, 2, 1...and inhale to the count of 4, 3, 2, 1...
10. Repeat for 5-8 rounds of breath

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RESOURCES & TAKING ACTION

As instances of anti-Asian racism and violence have escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic, here are some resources where you can learn more about the issues and how to take action towards a healthier and safer community:

- [Stop AAPI Hate National Report \(Through December 2021\)](#)
- [Asian American Health Initiative Mental Health Library](#)
- [Responding to Trauma in Your Classroom](#)
- [AANHPI List of mental health and behavioral services in all fifty states](#)
- [Download Stop AAPI Hate Signs](#)

Resources to support grievers and mental health:

- [Red Cross Virtual Family Assistance Center](#)
- [Because I Said I Would](#)
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)
- [Grief Anonymous](#)
- [Grief Share](#)
- [My Grief Angels](#)
- [NAMI \(National Alliance on Mental Health\)](#)

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Discussion Guide Author, Blueshift Education



Our work at [Blueshift Education](#) is to develop curriculum, resources, and relevant tools to deepen understanding on social justice issues in order to empower people, foster empathy, and bring about meaningful and lasting change..

Discussion Guide Producers, POV

Courtney B. Cook, PhD || Education Manager
William Tolliver, Jr || Education Assistant

Thanks to those who reviewed this resource:

Yung Chang || Director, Wuhan, Wuhan
Diane Quon || Producer, Wuhan, Wuhan