

# LIGHTWORKERS



A Bobby Roth Film

Written and Directed by Bobby Roth

Produced by Bobby Roth, Jesse Kane, Monica Valdes

Music by Paul Haslinger, Edited by Jesse Kane, Executive Producer Lon Bender

Featuring Louis Abramson, Ed Begley, Jr., Debora Benchoam, June Berk, David Brooks, Rabbi Sharon Brous, Robbie Conal, Peter Coyote, Shepard Fairey, Jim Himes, David Hogg, Robert Hubbell, Adam Kinzinger, Ann Kuster, Charley Lang, Wendie Malick, Tom Morello, Keith Olbermann, Betty Osceola, Carmen Perez-Jordan, Peggy Dammond Preacely, John Quigley, Jamie Raskin, Adam Smith, Steve Van Zandt, Henry Winkler, Richard Wolff

## COMMUNITY ACTION TOOLKIT

# THE FILM

## Logline

Thirty-five diverse men and women confront the problem of saving their democracy from fascism.

## Synopsis

What can we do? I posed that question to fifty-two people I respect and they immediately understood what I meant. They acknowledged our country has been taken over by fascists. Our democracy is being disassembled. Forces from a formerly disenfranchised, but aggressive minority are destroying every aspect of decency and the rule of law.

I posed ten questions to a diverse and dynamic group of American citizens who I considered positive forces and recognized them as LIGHTWORKERS

I first asked what constitutes “activism” and followed with “what can you do?” I was interested in how “good people” lived their lives. I asked how people became who they were. I asked what is courage, empathy and joy. I approached these questions from a socio-historic perspective that I thought would be the best context for my audience, but who was I trying to reach?

Despite my desire for inclusivity, I knew I could not reach everyone, but I wanted to reach the widest swath of Americana that was possible. I decided to focus on the voting public, particularly those who might shift the balance of power in the congress... those voting in the midterms.

As I have never been active in party politics I was flying blind. I tried to use my ignorance as a springboard for an educational exercise. This was a journey. I would use the very tools I was trying to examine, particularly the “kindness of strangers.” As in GOOD MEN, I interviewed fifty citizens I identified as “do-gooders,” people who lived their lives prioritizing helping others... people who saw themselves as part of a social order they felt an allegiance to. I call them LIGHTWORKERS. This is the story of my journey.

## How to Watch the Film

*Lightworkers* is available for educational, community, and organizational screenings. To learn more or to request access, visit:

[lightworkersdoc.com](http://lightworkersdoc.com)

Virtual or in-person Q&A sessions with the filmmakers may be available upon request.

## ABOUT THE FILM

*Lightworkers* is a feature documentary directed by Bobby Roth that brings together a diverse group of individuals who have taken action in the face of social, political, and environmental challenges. Through a series of personal, interview-driven stories, the film explores how individuals contribute to the strength and resilience of democratic society.

Rather than following a single narrative, *Lightworkers* presents a mosaic of voices reflecting on a shared question: *What can we do?* The film highlights the power of individual choices and collective responsibility, inviting viewers to consider their own role in shaping a more just and compassionate world.

### Relevant Themes

- Civic Engagement and Democratic Participation
- Individual Agency and Responsibility
- Moral Courage and Ethical Action
- Community, Empathy, and Collective Impact
- Social Justice and Equity
- Environmental Stewardship
- Leadership and Public Service
- The Power of Personal Narrative

### Potential Audiences

- Middle school, high school, college, and graduate students
- Educators across disciplines, including social studies, civics, political science, ethics, and media studies
- Civic engagement centers and nonprofit organizations
- Community leaders, activists, and advocacy groups
- Film and media literacy programs
- Public forums, libraries, and community organizations
- Intergenerational audiences interested in democracy, social responsibility, and public life

### Screening Objectives

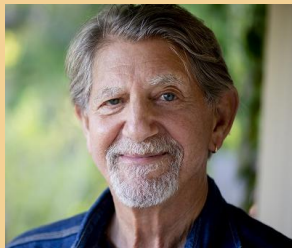
Community and classroom screenings of *Lightworkers* provide an opportunity to bring students, educators, and community members together to reflect on the role of individuals in shaping society. Through personal stories and lived experiences, the film encourages dialogue about civic responsibility, moral courage, and the importance of participation in democratic life.

We hope your screening event will meet the following objectives:

- Encourage reflection on the role of individual action in creating social change
- Promote dialogue about civic engagement, responsibility, and participation
- Highlight diverse voices and lived experiences across communities
- Foster empathy and understanding across different perspectives
- Inspire participants to consider how they can contribute to their communities
- Support critical thinking about contemporary social and political challenges

**“People who live with purpose, guided by compassion and a sense of responsibility to others, are who I call Lightworkers.”  
~Bobby Roth**

## **Selected Participants in *Lightworkers***



**Peter Coyote – Actor, Author, and Zen Priest**  
Emmy-winning narrator and activist blending storytelling, spirituality, and social conscience.



**Shepard Fairey – Artist and Activist**  
Creator of the iconic “HOPE” poster, merging design and dissent to inspire civic engagement worldwide.



**Lee Grant – Actor and Director**  
Oscar-winning performer and filmmaker who turned blacklisting adversity into a legacy of fearless, compassionate storytelling.



**Adam Kinzinger – Former U.S. Congressman and Air Force Veteran**  
Stood for constitutional accountability and decency in public service despite political cost.



**Tom Morello – Musician and Activist**  
Guitarist and songwriter whose music channels resistance and solidarity across generations and movements.



**Jamie Raskin – U.S. Congressman and Constitutional Scholar**  
Defends democracy with intellect, compassion, and courage shaped by personal and national trials.

## Background Information



The themes explored in *Lightworkers*, including civic engagement, social responsibility, and individual agency, are increasingly relevant in today's social and political climate. Across the United States, there is growing concern about declining civic participation, rising polarization, and a lack of trust in institutions. At the same time, individuals and communities continue to find ways to engage, organize, and advocate for change.

- Civic participation, including voting, community involvement, and public discourse, plays a critical role in sustaining democratic societies. However, many individuals report feeling disconnected from traditional forms of participation or uncertain about how to engage meaningfully.
- Research shows that storytelling and personal narrative can be powerful tools for fostering empathy, increasing understanding across differences, and motivating civic action.
- Educators and community leaders increasingly emphasize the importance of civic education, media literacy, and critical thinking skills to help individuals navigate complex social and political environments.
- Social movements and grassroots organizing continue to demonstrate that individual and collective action can influence public policy, cultural norms, and community outcomes.

# Background Information



While many individuals express a desire to contribute to their communities, barriers such as time constraints, lack of access, limited resources, and feelings of disconnection can make civic participation feel out of reach. In an increasingly complex and fast-paced world, individuals may struggle to identify meaningful ways to engage or feel that their contributions will make a difference.

- Studies suggest that younger generations are redefining what civic engagement looks like, often prioritizing issue-based involvement, digital activism, and community-centered efforts over traditional forms of participation.

- Media environments and the rapid spread of information can both inform and overwhelm individuals, making media literacy and critical thinking essential skills for navigating public discourse and making informed decisions.

- Experiences of inequality, exclusion, or marginalization can shape how individuals view institutions and their willingness or ability to participate in civic life. At the same time, many communities continue to create spaces for engagement, advocacy, and mutual support.

- Across different sectors, including education, the arts, public service, and grassroots organizing, individuals are finding ways to contribute to social change through both small, everyday actions and larger collective efforts.

- Research and lived experience suggest that a sense of purpose, connection, and belonging can play an important role in motivating civic participation and sustained engagement over time.

## Using This Section

This background information may be used to support pre- or post-screening discussions. Facilitators may choose to highlight specific points to help participants connect the themes of *Lightworkers* to their own experiences, communities, and areas of interest.

**WHAT CAN I  
DO?**

## Find Your People (Action Exercise)

### **Step 1: Identify Your Values**

Service  
Justice  
Compassion  
Community  
Creativity  
Faith  
Environment

### **Step 2: Match Values to Spaces**

Faith community (church, synagogue, meditation group)  
Volunteer group  
Local nonprofit  
Arts or activist community  
Civic group or town hall  
Online community with real-world action

### **Step 3: Take One Step**

Attend one meeting  
Reach out to one organization  
Invite one person to join you  
Ways to Connect with Others  
Host something small  
A film screening  
A discussion circle  
A coffee conversation  
Join something existing  
Local nonprofit  
Faith-based group  
Civic organization  
Volunteer network  
Build something new  
Start a monthly meet-up  
Create a discussion group  
Organize a small action project

### **Closing Thought**

Values shape how we see the world and how we show up in it.

*What will guide your actions?*

## FROM VALUES TO ACTION: FIND YOUR COMMUNITY

Values become real when they are practiced with others. The individuals in Lightworkers do not act alone. Their impact comes from shared values and the communities they are part of.

### **Why This Matters**

Peter Coyote and Matt Palevsky are rooted in spiritual community.

Rabbi Sharon Brous leads through faith and justice.

Charley Lang works through healing and service.

Their power comes from connection, not isolation.

### **From Values to Action: Discussion**

#### **Connection**

Where do people in your community gather around shared values?

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Are you already part of a group that reflects your values?

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#### **Belonging**

What kind of community would support the person you want to be?

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What spaces make you feel connected, heard, or useful?

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#### **Action**

What is one group you could join, support, or learn from?

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What is one action you could take with others, not alone?

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**TAKE ACTION: CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE**

**Theme: Civic Engagement & Responsibility**

**Directions:**

Choose an issue you care about and take a real step toward addressing it by contacting the appropriate representative.

This activity asks you to think like a Lightworker—someone who recognizes a problem and takes action.

**Step 1: Identify the Issue**

What issue matters to you?

(Examples: education, environment, voting rights, healthcare, community safety)

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**Step 2: Why Does It Matter?**

Who is affected and why is this important?

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**Step 3: Identify the Level of Government**

Who has the power to address this issue?

- Local** (Mayor, City Commission, School Board)
- State** (Governor, State Representatives, State Senate)
- Federal** (Congress, Senate, National Agencies)

**Explain your choice:**

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**Step 4: Find Your Representative**

Write the name and position of the person you will contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5: Your Message**

What do you want them to know or do?

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**Step 6: Write Your Letter or Email**

Use the space below as your draft.

**Subject:** Concern About [Your Issue]

Dear [Representative's Name],

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a resident of \_\_\_\_\_.

I am writing to express concern about \_\_\_\_\_. This issue affects \_\_\_\_\_.

I would like to request the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

I believe this issue is important to our community, and I appreciate your time and attention.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 7: Take the Step**

How will you send your message?

- Email
- Online form
- Mail
- Phone call

**Optional Reflection**

How did it feel to take action on an issue you care about?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Closing Thought**

Democracy depends on participation.

*What step will you take today?*

## **US Federal Representatives (U.S.)**

Find your members of Congress:

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Find your U.S. Senators:

<https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

## **All-in-One Tool (Easiest Option)**

Enter your address to find all representatives (local, state, federal):

<https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>

## **State & Local Representatives**

Ballotpedia (great breakdown by location):

[https://ballotpedia.org/Who\\_represents\\_me](https://ballotpedia.org/Who_represents_me)

Vote.gov (voting + state info):

<https://vote.gov>

**Create a Local Action Plan**  
**Theme: Environmental + Climate**

**Directions:**

You will identify a real environmental issue in your community and develop a realistic plan for change. This activity asks you to think like a Lightworker—someone who recognizes a problem and takes action. Answer all questions in complete sentences.

**Step 1: Identify the Problem**

What is one environmental issue in your community?

(Examples: pollution, flooding, trash, water quality, loss of green space)

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**Step 2: Who Does This Affect?**

Who is impacted by this issue?

(Be specific: people, neighborhoods, animals, environment)

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**Step 3: Level of Government**

Which level of government is MOST responsible for addressing this issue?

- Local (city, mayor, city council)
- State (governor, state agencies)
- Federal (national government)

**Explain your answer:**

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**Step 4: Proposed Solution**

What is ONE realistic solution to this problem?

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**Step 5: Take Action**

What is ONE action YOU could take to help address this issue?

(Examples: raise awareness, contact officials, volunteer, educate others)

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### **Step 6: Action Plan Summary**

Write a short paragraph explaining your plan.

Include:

- The problem
- Who is affected
- The solution
- Who should be involved

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### **Sample Action Plan**

**Problem:** Flooding in my neighborhood after heavy rain

**Who It Affects:** Residents and local businesses

**Level of Government:** Local government

**Solution:** Improve drainage systems

**My Action:** Contact city officials and raise awareness

### **Closing Thought**

**What can we do?**

Even small actions can create change. Being a Lightworker means taking the first step.

## Where to Take Your Action Plan

Once you've identified your issue and solution, the next step is to **share it with the people or organizations that can help make change happen.**

### **Local Government (Best starting point)**

For most environmental issues, this is the **most effective level.**

- City Commission / City Council
- Mayor's Office
- Public Works Department (drainage, trash, roads)
- Parks & Recreation (green space, trees)
- Water & Sewer Department

### **How to act:**

- Attend a city meeting
- Submit a public comment
- Email or call your local office

### **State Agencies**

For larger environmental concerns:

- Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- State Environmental Agencies
- Wildlife / Conservation Departments

Use for:

- Water quality
- Wetlands
- Pollution
- Large-scale environmental issues

### **US Federal Resources**

For broader or regulated issues:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Army Corps of Engineers (flooding, waterways)

**Use for:**

- Major environmental violations
- National-level concerns

## **Community Organizations & Nonprofits**

These are often the fastest way to get traction

- Local environmental groups
- Community associations
- Conservation organizations
- Volunteer groups

These groups can:

- Help amplify your issue
- Connect you with others
- Support your action plan

## **Public Awareness Platforms**

Sometimes awareness = action

- Community Facebook groups
- Neighborhood apps (Nextdoor)
- Local news outlets
- Community meetings

Use these to:

- Share your concern
- Gather support
- Build momentum

## **Step 7: Where Will You Take This?**

Where will you share your plan?

- Local government office
- State agency
- Community organization
- Public platform (social/media)
- Other:

## **US Federal Representatives (U.S.)**

Find your members of Congress:

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Find your U.S. Senators:

<https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

## **All-in-One Tool (Easiest Option)**

Enter your address to find all representatives (local, state, federal):

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## **State & Local Representatives**

Ballotpedia (great breakdown by location):

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Vote.gov (voting + state info):

<https://vote.gov>

**Create a Protest Poster of Song Concept**  
**Theme: Art + Activism**

**Directions:**

You will design a protest message using art or music to bring attention to an issue you care about.

**You may choose to create:**

A protest poster

A song concept (lyrics or message idea)

A visual design

This activity asks you to think like a Lightworker—someone who uses their voice and creativity to inspire change.

Answer all questions carefully and be prepared to explain your work.

**Step 1: Identify the Issue**

What issue or cause do you care about?

(Examples: climate change, equality, education, violence, human rights)

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**Step 2: Define Your Message**

What message do you want people to understand?

(What do you want people to think, feel, or do?)

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**Step 3: Choose Your Format**

Protest Poster

Song Concept

Visual Design

Explain why you chose this format:

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#### **Step 4: Design Your Message**

How will you communicate your message?

Include:

- Words or slogans
  - Images or symbols
  - Tone (serious, hopeful, urgent, etc.) Describe your design:
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#### **Step 5: Explain Your Choices**

Why is your message important?

How do your design choices help communicate your message?

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#### **Final Product**

Create your poster, song concept, or design below or on a separate sheet.

#### **Sample Ideas**

**Issue:** Climate change

**Message:** "Protect Our Future"

**Format:** Poster

**Design:** Image of Earth with cracks and bold lettering

#### **Closing Thought**

Art and music can influence how people think and feel.

*What message will you share?*

## Where Can You Submit or Share Your Work?

Once you've created your poster, song, or design, you can submit it, share it, or use it to reach a wider audience.

### **Protest Posters & Visual Design**

- Amplifier  
<https://amplifier.org>  
Occasionally runs open calls for art tied to social issues  
Global poster competition (more formal/design-focused)
- Creative Quarterly  
<https://cqjournal.com>  
Accepts visual design and creative work
- Local galleries / community art shows  
Search: "call for artists + your city"

### **Song Concepts / Music**

- SoundCloud  
<https://soundcloud.com>
- YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com>
- TikTok  
<https://www.tiktok.com>

**These aren't "contests," but they are the most realistic way to be heard**

### **Lyrics / Poetry / Message Writing**

- Button Poetry  
<https://buttonpoetry.com>
- Poetry Foundation  
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org>  
(Resources + links to publications and submissions)

### **Activism + Impact Platforms**

- DoSomething  
<https://dosomething.org>

**These may not be traditional contests, but they help connect your work to real action**

### **Community-Based (Most Important)**

Don't skip this—this is where real impact happens:

- Share at a Lightworkers screening
- Partner with a local nonprofit or advocacy group
- Present at a community meeting or event
- Exhibit in a school, library, or public space

Write an Op-Ed  
Theme: Authors / Thought Leadership

**Directions:**

You will write a short opinion piece (Op-Ed) about an issue that matters to you. Your goal is to clearly express your opinion and support it with evidence and reasoning.

This activity asks you to think like a **Lightworker**, someone who uses ideas and writing to influence others. Answer each step carefully and use complete sentences.

**Step 1: Identify the Issue**

What issue or topic will you write about?

(Examples: environment, education, equality, public safety, community issues)

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**Step 2: Your Claim (Opinion)**

What is your opinion about this issue?

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**Step 3: Evidence and Examples**

List at least **two pieces of evidence or examples** to support your opinion:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4: Consider Another Perspective**

What is another point of view on this issue?

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How would you respond to this perspective?

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**Step 5: Plan Your Writing**

What is your main message or idea?

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## Where Can You Submit Your Op-Ed?

Once you've written your Op-Ed, you can share it with publications, organizations, or platforms that publish public opinion pieces.

### Local Newspapers (BEST PLACE TO START)

Local outlets are the **most likely to publish your work**, especially if your topic is community-based.

- Local city or county newspapers
- Community newsletters
- Regional magazines

Search:

“Submit Op-Ed + your city”

Example: “*Miami Herald Op-Ed submission*”

Most papers have a “**Submit a Letter to the Editor**” or “**Opinion**” section

### National & Online Platforms

- Medium  
<https://medium.com>  
Publish your Op-Ed directly—no approval needed
- Substack  
<https://substack.com>  
Start your own opinion column or newsletter
- The Hill  
<https://thehill.com/opinion/>  
Accepts Op-Ed submissions on public issues
- USA Today  
<https://www.usatoday.com/opinion/submit-a-column/>  
Accepts guest opinion pieces

### University & Thought Platforms

- College/university publications
- Public policy blogs
- Civic engagement centers

Especially good if your topic connects to research or public issues

### Organizations & Advocacy Groups

If your Op-Ed connects to a cause:

- Share it with nonprofits aligned to your issue
- Submit to their blogs or newsletters
- Offer it as a **guest contribution**

### Alternative (Very Effective)

Even if it's not formally published:

- Post on **LinkedIn** (great for thought leadership)
- Share on **Facebook with context**
- Email it to **community leaders or groups**

Sometimes **direct sharing = more impact than publication**

**Step 6: Where Will You Share Your Op-Ed?**

Local newspaper

Online platform (Medium, Substack)

Organization or nonprofit

Social media / community

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SHARE YOUR STORY: COMMUNITY ORAL HISTORY**

### **Theme: Legacy, Memory & Connection**

#### **Purpose**

Every person carries a story that reflects a moment in history.

By sharing and preserving these stories, we contribute to a deeper understanding of our communities and the world around us. This is not just about documenting the past, it's about connecting, honoring, and learning from lived experience.

#### **Step 1: Choose a Story**

Who will you speak with?

A family member

A friend

A community member

A colleague

Or reflect on your own story

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Connection: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Step 2: Start the Conversation**

Use these questions or follow the natural flow of conversation:

Can you share a moment in your life that shaped who you are?

What challenges have you faced, and how did you respond?

What changes have you witnessed in your community or society?

What values have guided your decisions?

When have you felt called to stand up or take action?

What does "making a difference" mean to you?

What would you want others to understand about your experience?

#### **Step 3: Capture the Story**

Choose what feels right:

Take notes

Record audio

Record video

Write a reflection or narrative

You may also choose to share excerpts rather than the full conversation.

#### **Step 4: Reflect & Connect**

What stood out to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

How does this story connect to larger social, cultural, or historical moments?

\_\_\_\_\_

What values or actions from this story resonate with you?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5: Share (Optional but Powerful)**

Consider sharing this story:

With family or friends

At a community gathering

As part of a screening discussion

Through writing, audio, or video

With an oral history archive or organization

**Why This Matters**

Stories build understanding.

They preserve memory.

They connect generations.

And sometimes, they inspire action.

Closing Thought

Every life is part of a larger story.

*What story will you listen to or share?*

## Where Can You Share Oral Histories?

If you choose to share your story, there are organizations and platforms that collect and preserve personal experiences as part of our collective history.

### **National Oral History Projects**

- StoryCorps  
<https://storycorps.org>  
Record and archive interviews; some stories are preserved in the Library of Congress
- Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/>  
Explore collections and submission opportunities for oral histories

### **Museum & Cultural Archives**

- Smithsonian Institution  
<https://www.si.edu>  
Some projects accept community stories and digital submissions
- Densho  
<https://densho.org>  
Collects and preserves personal histories (specific focus, but a strong model)

### **Community & Digital Archives**

- Local historical societies  
Search: “historical society + your city”
- University oral history programs  
Many universities collect community stories
- Public libraries  
Often host or archive community storytelling projects

### **Create Your Own Archive (Very Powerful)**

You don't have to wait for a formal platform:

- Share audio on SoundCloud  
<https://soundcloud.com>
- Upload video interviews to YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com>
- Publish written stories on Medium  
<https://medium.com>

**Media Literacy & Civic Awareness**  
**Theme: Understanding Information in a Complex World**

**Purpose**

We are constantly exposed to information—from news, social media, and public figures.

As a Lightworker, your role is to **pause, question, and think critically** before accepting or sharing information.

**Step 1: Identify the Content**

What are you reviewing?

- News article
- Social media post
- Video clip
- Podcast
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Title / Source:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2: First Reaction**

What was your initial reaction?

- Strong agreement
- Strong disagreement
- Emotional response
- Curiosity
- Confusion

*Why do you think you reacted this way?*

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**Step 3: Source Check**

Who created or shared this?

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Is the source:

- Known and credible
- Unfamiliar
- Opinion-based
- Unclear

What makes you trust or question this source?

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**Step 4: Look Deeper**

What evidence is provided?

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Is anything missing?

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Are other perspectives included?

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### **Step 5: Impact**

How could this content influence people?

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Could it:

- Inform
- Mislead
- Divide
- Inspire
- Oversimplify

### **Step 6: Responsibility**

Before sharing or reacting:

What responsibility do you have as a consumer of information?

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### **Step 7: TAKE ACTION**

Choose ONE:

#### **Verify**

- Look up additional sources
- Compare different viewpoints

#### **Pause**

- Take time before reacting or sharing
- Reflect on your emotional response

#### **Share Thoughtfully**

- Add context if you share
- Avoid spreading unverified information

#### **Discuss**

- Talk with someone about what you saw
- Ask questions instead of making assumptions

#### **Respond**

- Write a thoughtful response
- Share your perspective respectfully

### **Step 8: Your Action**

What will you do differently moving forward?

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### **Closing Thought**

Information is powerful.

*How will you choose to engage with it?*

## **Media Literacy Resources**

Use these tools to check information before you share it:

### **News Literacy Project**

<https://newslit.org>

Free resources to help people recognize credible information, misinformation, and how news works.

### **RumorGuard**

<https://www.rumorguard.org>

A News Literacy Project tool that breaks down viral rumors and shows how to check them.

### **Checkology**

<https://get.checkology.org>

Interactive news literacy lessons from the News Literacy Project.

### **Civic Online Reasoning**

<https://cor.inquirygroup.org>

Free resources built around three questions: Who is behind the information? What is the evidence? What do other sources say?

### **AllSides Media Bias Chart**

<https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/media-bias-chart>

Helps users compare news sources by perspective and recognize bias.

### **FactCheck.org**

<https://www.factcheck.org>

Nonpartisan fact-checking of political claims.

### **PolitiFact**

<https://www.politifact.com>

Fact-checks public statements and political claims.

### **Snopes**

<https://www.snopes.com>

Useful for checking viral claims, rumors, images, and internet stories.

### **Simple Reminder**

Before you share, ask:

**Who made this?**

**What evidence is provided?**

**What do other reliable sources say?**

**“People who live with purpose, guided by compassion and a sense of responsibility to others, are who I call Lightworkers.”**

**~Bobby Roth**

# Discussing the Film



## FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

Lightworkers brings together a wide range of voices and perspectives, each reflecting on the question: What can we do? Because the film explores themes of civic engagement, responsibility, and social change, viewers may connect to the material in very different ways based on their own experiences, values, and beliefs. Participants in your screening may bring a variety of perspectives shaped by their backgrounds, communities, and personal histories. Be mindful of this, and avoid making assumptions about how individuals may respond to the film. Some discussions may raise complex or sensitive topics, including issues related to politics, identity, inequality, or personal responsibility. Facilitators are encouraged to create a space that is respectful, open, and inclusive. The goal is not to reach agreement, but to encourage thoughtful reflection and meaningful dialogue.

## Guidance for Facilitators

To support a productive and respectful conversation, consider the following approaches:

- Encourage participants to speak from personal experience using "I" statements (e.g., "I think," "I feel," "In my experience").
- Create space for multiple perspectives, especially those that may not always be heard.
- Remind participants to listen actively and respectfully, without interrupting others.
- Invite participants to reflect before responding, allowing time for thoughtful engagement rather than immediate reactions.
- Emphasize that disagreement can be part of productive dialogue when approached with respect and curiosity.
- Be mindful of how much space individuals are taking in the conversation and encourage balanced participation.
- When discussions become challenging, refocus on shared values such as community, empathy, and mutual respect.

## Creating a Supportive Environment

Depending on your audience, you may wish to:

- Provide time for reflection before or after discussion (writing, small groups, etc.)
- Encourage participants to connect themes from the film to their own communities
- Offer opportunities for continued engagement beyond the screening

# Discussing The Film

You may choose to invite a moderator to guide discussion or allow participants to reflect and respond in small or large groups. The following questions are designed to support thoughtful dialogue and can be adapted based on your audience and setting.

## Discussion Questions

### Initial Reactions & Reflection

1. What does the term “*Lightworker*” mean to you after watching the film?
2. What were your initial reactions to the film? How did it make you feel?
3. Which story or individual resonated with you most, and why?
4. Did any moment in the film challenge your assumptions or perspective?

### Understanding the Film’s Themes

1. How do the individuals featured in *Lightworkers* demonstrate civic engagement in different ways?
2. In what ways can individual actions influence larger systems or communities?
3. What role do empathy and compassion play in creating change?
4. How does storytelling shape our understanding of social and political issues?
5. How do different perspectives in the film reflect the complexity of real-world challenges?

### Barriers & Challenges

1. What challenges or barriers might prevent people from taking action?
2. How can individuals overcome feelings of disconnection or lack of influence?
3. What role do institutions (government, media, education) play in shaping participation?
4. How might fear, uncertainty, or division impact people’s willingness to engage?

### Personal Connection & Application

1. What responsibilities do individuals have within a democratic society?
2. How can the ideas presented in the film be applied to your own school, community, or daily life?
3. What does meaningful participation or engagement look like to you today?
4. Have you seen examples of “lightworking” in your own life or community?

### Moving Forward

1. What is one issue or cause you feel personally connected to, and why?
2. What is one action, big or small, you feel inspired to take after watching the film?
3. How can individuals work together to create lasting change in their communities?

# Potential Partners



Inviting individuals and organizations to partner on your screening can create a more dynamic and meaningful conversation while helping you reach a wider audience. Partners can contribute diverse perspectives, participate as speakers, and help promote the event through their networks.

We recommend identifying two to three strong partners who align with the themes of *Lightworkers*.

## Who to Invite

- Students, alumni, and community members

Invite individuals to share their experiences with civic engagement, community involvement, or advocacy.

Encourage participation from people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

-Connect with local schools, universities, or alumni groups

Reach out to student organizations or civic clubs

- Educators, counselors, and school leaders

Educators can speak to the role of civic education, student engagement, and media literacy in today's classrooms. They may also offer insight into how young people are navigating social and political issues.

– Contact local school districts or university departments

– Reach out to teacher networks or education organizations

- Community organizations and nonprofit leaders

Organizations focused on social justice, environmental advocacy, public health, or civic engagement can provide real-world examples of the work highlighted in the film.

– Look for local nonprofits or advocacy groups

– Explore community centers or volunteer networks

- Artists, storytellers, and media creators

Creative voices can speak to the role of storytelling in shaping public awareness and inspiring change.

– Connect with local arts organizations or media groups

– Invite filmmakers, writers, or visual artists

- Public servants and civic leaders

Local leaders and policymakers can offer insight into how individuals and communities influence decision-making and public policy.

– Contact local government offices or civic organizations

– Invite speakers involved in community leaders

# ENGAGEMENT IDEAS

Incorporating an activity into your screening can help make the experience more meaningful and memorable. The following ideas are designed to extend the conversation beyond the film and encourage participants to reflect, connect, and take action in their own communities.

## Suggested Engagement Activities

### Host a Community Conversation Event

- Invite a moderator or small panel of speakers to respond to the film and engage with the audience.
- Include voices from different backgrounds (students, educators, community leaders, artists)
- Encourage audience participation through open dialogue or Q&A
- Focus on shared themes such as civic engagement, responsibility, and community action

### “What Can We Do?” Reflection Activity

- Invite participants to reflect on the film’s central question: *What can we do?*
- Ask participants to write a short response before or after discussion
- Invite volunteers to share their reflections
- Consider collecting responses to display or share with the group

### Showcase Creative or Community Work

- Encourage participants to express their ideas through creative or community-based work.
- Share student or community projects such as art, writing, video, or storytelling
- Invite participants to create something inspired by the film
- Highlight work that reflects themes of civic engagement or social responsibility

### Connect with Local Organizations

- Partner with local nonprofits or community groups to provide pathways for continued engagement.
- Invite organizations to share information about their work
- Provide opportunities for volunteering or involvement
- Create space for participants to learn how they can take action locally

### Facilitated Small Group Discussions

- Break participants into smaller groups to encourage more personal and in-depth conversation.
- Assign 1–2 discussion questions per group
- Encourage active listening and respectful dialogue
- Invite groups to share key takeaways with the larger audience

### Personal Reflection or Writing Prompt

- Encourage participants to reflect on their own role in their community. Suggested prompts:
- What does being a “Lightworker” mean in your life?
- What is one issue you care about, and why?
- What is one action you can take in your community?

### Commitment to Action

- Invite participants to identify one action they can take following the screening.
- Write down a personal commitment
- Share with a partner or group
- Follow up through school, organization, or community networks

## RESOURCES - Explore the Work of Lightworkers

The following books, writings, and organizations provide pathways for deeper engagement with the themes explored in Lightworkers.

### Books by Participants in Lightworkers

- The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life – David Brooks
- Understanding Marxism and Democracy at Work – Richard Wolff
- Unthinkable: Trauma, Truth, and the Trials of American Democracy – Jamie Raskin
- Sleeping Where I Fall – Peter Coyote
- The Amen Effect – Rabbi Sharon Brous
- Power to the People (co-author) – Carmen Perez-Jordan
- Unrequited Infatuations – Steven Van Zandt
- Obey: Supply & Demand – Shepard Fairey
- I Said Yes to Everything – Lee Grant
- Hank Zipzer series – Henry Winkler

### Writing, Media, and Ongoing Work by Participants

- Robert Hubbell – Today's Edition Newsletter (<https://roberthubbell.substack.com>)
- Keith Olbermann – Countdown with Keith Olbermann (podcast <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/countdown-with-keith-olbermann/id1633301179>)
- Shepard Fairey – Artwork and civic campaigns (<https://obeygiant.com>)
- Phill Wilson – Black AIDS Institute (<https://blackaids.org>)
- Carmen Perez-Jordan – Gathering for Justice (<https://gatheringforjustice.org>)
- Steven Van Zandt – TeachRock (<https://teachrock.org>)
- Betty Osceola – Love the Everglades Movement (<https://lovetheeverglades.org>)
- Atossa Soltani – Amazon Watch (<https://amazonwatch.org>)
- James Thornton – ClientEarth (<https://www.clientearth.org>)
- David Brooks – New York Times columns (various publications)
- Jamie Raskin – Public service and commentary (<https://raskin.house.gov>)
- Richard Wolff – Democracy at Work (<https://www.democracyatwork.info>)
- Tom Morello – Music and activism (<https://www.tommorello.com>)
- Charley Lang – Narrative Counseling Center (<https://narrativecounselingcenter.com>)
- Adam Kinzinger – Public service (<https://www.adamkinzinger.com>)
- Jim Himes – U.S. Congressman (<https://himes.house.gov>)
- Adam Smith – U.S. Congressman (<https://adamsmith.house.gov>)
- David Hogg – Civic engagement (<https://leadersweddeserve.com>)
- Debora Benchoam – Human rights law (various publications)

Additional participants continue their work across education, advocacy, public service, the arts, and community leadership, including Louis Abramson, Ed Begley Jr., June Berk, Ann McLane Kuster, Wendie Malick, Matt Palevsky, John Quigley, Jennefer Russo, Dr. Monica Soni, and Peggy Precely.

## **Additional Resources**

The following resources provide additional context on civic engagement, social responsibility, storytelling, education, and community action. These materials may be helpful for educators, facilitators, students, and community members who wish to explore the themes of Lightworkers more deeply.

## **Civic Education & Democratic Participation**

- Pew Research Center – Research and public opinion data on civic engagement, democracy, media, and public trust.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org>
- Facing History & Ourselves – Educational resources focused on civic responsibility, ethics, history, and social justice.  
<https://www.facinghistory.org>
- National Civic League – Resources and programs supporting civic participation and community engagement.  
<https://www.nationalcivicleague.org>

## **Film**

- Lightworkers Official Website – Information about the film, screenings, and educational resources.  
<https://lightworkersdoc.com>

## **Community Organizing & Civic Involvement**

- League of Women Voters – Nonpartisan organization encouraging informed and active participation in government.  
<https://www.lwv.org>
- Rock the Vote – Youth-focused civic engagement and voter participation organization.  
<https://www.rockthevote.org>
- America Votes – Coalition supporting civic participation and voter engagement efforts.  
<https://americavotes.org>

## **Labor, Education & Worker Advocacy**

- National Nurses United – Advocacy organization representing nurses and public health issues.  
<https://www.nationalnursesunited.org/about>
- SEIU (Service Employees International Union) – Labor union supporting healthcare workers, public service workers, and community advocacy.  
<https://www.seiu.org/about/>
- AFT (American Federation of Teachers) – National organization representing educators, school staff, healthcare workers, and public employees.  
<https://www.aft.org/about>
- NEA (National Education Association) – National organization advocating for public education, educators, and student success.  
<https://www.nea.org/about-nea>
- AFL-CIO – National federation of labor unions supporting workers' rights and economic justice.  
<https://aflcio.org/about-us>

## **Environmental & Climate Advocacy**

- Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) – Environmental advocacy and policy organization.  
<https://www.nrdc.org/about>
- Third Act – Climate and democracy advocacy movement focused on older generations taking action.  
<https://thirdact.org/about/who-we-are/>
- Center for Biological Diversity – Environmental protection and biodiversity advocacy organization.  
<https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/about/>
- Sierra Club – National environmental organization focused on conservation, climate action, and community engagement.  
<https://www.sierraclub.org/about-sierra-club>

## **Closing Thought**

Community action can take many forms: education, storytelling, volunteering, organizing, advocacy, art, and public service. The goal is not to do everything, but to begin somewhere.

# CREDITS

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Thanks to:

Jack Baran  
Beth Broday  
Steve Burns  
Gary Fleder  
Bruce Alan Greene  
Richard Greene  
Brian and Cathy Kane  
Sara Nichols  
Laura Owens  
Joyce Hyser Robinson  
Deborah Ross  
Jay Roth  
Nancy Stephens  
Peggy Damond Trotter Preacely  
for the poem  
Lightworkers

Special Thanks to

Bruce Springsteen  
for Rocky Ground