Study Guide

Behind the Bullet: The Aftermath of Gun Violence from the Shooter’s Perspective

Timestamps

Opening Remarks
1:03 - Common Understandings
5:43 – Behind the Bullet Trailer

Panelist Presentations
7:49 – Heidi Yewman, Director
16:19 – Will Little
25:24 – Christen McGinnes
36:24 – Daron Dwyer

Q&A
46:28 – Can you say a few additional words about the impact upon people who are beyond the immediate circle of those directly affected by gun violence?
50:36 – How has the film festival experience impacted Heidi and the people featured in the film?
52:28 – Do any of the panelists have any closing comments or advice for the audience?

Helpful References

Behind the Bullet website
Watch Behind the Bullet
Presbyterian Peacemaking Program
Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
Standing Our Holy Ground Webinar Series
General Questions

1. How did this webinar engage your mind? What thoughts came to mind as you heard from the panelists?

2. How did this webinar engage your heart? What emotions and feelings did you experience while hearing from the panelists?

3. How did this webinar speak to your soul? What spiritual wonderings emerged while listening to the panelists?

Guided Questions

1. A central message of the film and the webinar is that whether you are the direct victim, the shooter or a family member, the process of surviving and moving forward after an experience with gun violence is hard and complicated. What did you learn about “surviving” from this webinar that you did not know previously? What did you learn about the shooter’s perspective before, during, and after instances of gun violence?

2. Both Will and Christen’s stories share a theme of a lack of access to proper help and assistance in the time period leading up to their experiences with gun violence. Will didn’t have access to good male role models and services to help him manage his anger while he was growing up and Christen lost her access to anti-depressant medication. Then when they were faced with an intense, emotional situation, they used a gun to try to resolve it. These are examples of society’s failure. What are ways the church can help ensure that people have access to the mentors, services and help that they need, as means of support and compassion, and as a method to prevent gun violence?

3. Will, Christen, and Daron’s experiences with gun violence have motivated their work. Will speaks to young men about changing their lives, Christen volunteers with trauma and suicide survivors, while Daron and Taylor hope to be able to renovate homes for families who have experienced tragedy. In their work, they each connect with people who have gone through experiences similar to their own, which is likely part of their own healing process. Do you know people with experiences of gun violence who have done similar work? If you have experienced gun violence, what has your own healing or “surviving” process looked like?

4. Daron Dwyer describes how his community of faith surrounded his family with love and support in the aftermath of the loss of his son. He issues a challenge to the faith community: “something that is so tragic and harsh and ugly in our society can be met with something even more powerful and beautiful in the hands and feet of compassion and the ways it can be shown as we not only try to love one another, but also stand in the ways that we should against gun violence and the ways that it shakes our society to its very core. I think it’s great to meet an ugly thing with a beautiful thing and when we do that, we truly live out our calling.” How has your faith community supported its members in the aftermath of tragedies like gun violence? What are other ways you can show compassion, love, and support?