



Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

Developer: Cynda Rushton, PhD, RN, FAAN, Mary Golway, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, Kimberly Buikema, MA, Anna Oakes MS

Description: This short film was created by the R³ Resilient Nurse Initiative team and the iDeas Lab at the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics to help foster a new narrative about nursing, build community, and invite nurses to rekindle a sense of joy and fulfillment that is integral to their irreplaceable work.

Goals: Use the words and sentiments of nurses to explore and shift current narratives around nursing and consider strategies to better reflect the essence of nursing – from its challenges and rewards to methods for building sustainability.

Objectives:

- Redefine what it means to be a nurse, the challenges and successes and what brings joy and fulfillment.
- Provoke discussions that offer action-oriented, community-based solutions to current issues and challenges in nursing.
- Practice techniques that can be utilized to explore the perspectives of other nurses and shift the narrative from depletion and negativity to empowerment and possibility.

Materials:

Internet access: laptop/computer with headphones for individual use if each person is viewing the film independently; projection screen connected to laptop/computer for displaying in a group or classroom environment. If facilitating online, make sure the audio and video are compatible with the online platform. Space to break into pairs or small groups is encouraged.

Preparation:

Facilitator: Preview the film, *Harnessing the Promise of Nursing*©

Time: Approx. 16 minutes to view the film. 30-45 minutes for discussions in pairs or large groups.

Audiences:

- Students, faculty, educators, direct care nurses (including new to practice), nursing leaders.
- Can be implemented in-person or virtually.
- Can be viewed individually or as a group.
- Can be used as preparation for a group session.

Instructions/facilitator guide:

- As you begin the session:
 - Begin with a pause to invite participants to focus attention and to calm the nervous system. Invite them to take a few slow deep breaths.



Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

- Review norms for respectful engagement:
 - One person speaks at a time.
 - Be authentic.
 - Speak with intention and from the heart—no need to overthink responses.
 - Listen generously and wholeheartedly. The goal is not to give advice or “fix” problems/concerns.
 - Hold a pause or silence between speakers to honor each person’s contribution.
 - Make space for everyone to speak—monitor your time.
- Review the objectives for this experience (listed above)

Design:

- Have participants view the film in class or as pre-work. If assigned as pre-work, give participants instructions ahead of time.
- Depending on time available, the film can be viewed:
 - 1) In its entirety before pausing for discussion (~16 minutes).
 - 2) One segment at a time, pausing after each to explore the related questions.
 - 3) Select one or more of the film sections and corresponding questions to focus on. Each segment and the time needed is listed below.
- After watching the film, divide participants into small groups or pairs to share their initial responses and gather insights about the content of the film. Pairs are often the most time-efficient way to get through the most content. You may consider dividing a larger group into smaller groups and assigning specific sections to each group – rather than having everyone respond to all the questions.
- Create a handout or use a flip chart with the questions listed
- If you are planning to cover all (or multiple) sections of the film, use a timer to alert participants that it’s time to move on to the next section/question.
- Using the questions below, encourage participants to discuss topics such as challenges faced in nursing, what is most fulfilling/rewarding in their own work, and how they find value in what they do. As part of the discussion, encourage participants to explore the perspectives of other nurses, and share potential ways to shift the narrative from negative to positive – or, to more fully reflect their perspectives.
- You may want to consider using a polling App to capture the comments to what it means to be a nurse. The responses can provide an effective way to capture the groups experience.
- Invite participants to complete an evaluation of their experience.

Tips for success/Troubleshooting:

- Allow for plenty of time for all individuals to reflect on the questions being asked and their responses.
- Provide a safe space for reflection and insight. Review norms of respectful engagement.



Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

Watch for communication patterns or behaviors that undermine safety or trust.

- If putting participants in pairs, it is recommended to have a more experienced nurses with less experienced, if possible. Also consider diversity of practice environments, cultural backgrounds, education level, etc.
- In pairs, encourage participants to talk directly to each other, to listen, and to allow time for the other to share their thoughts. The facilitator could have the pairs ask each other some or all of the questions, depending on time.
- Practice and encourage active listening. Pause briefly before responding, and don't interrupt unless necessary.
 - There may be a range of responses. Welcome them all.
 - Expect resistance. Engage in exploring it in the debrief.

Outline for conducting the session

As you begin the session:

- Begin with a pause to focus attention and to calm the nervous system.
- Review norms for respectful engagement (see above).
- Do a brief check-in to get a pulse on the group.

Introduction to the session

Narratives shape how people interpret events and relationships by using words, tone, and body language to create perspectives and mindsets. They gain influence through repetition and can frame reality through a specific lens.

Narratives have the power to:

- **Change culture** (e.g., “Healthy work environment”)
- **Create movements** (e.g., “Me Too”)
- **Shift perceptions** (e.g., “Nurses as Handmaidens”)
- **Alter reality** (e.g., “Acceptance/non-acceptance of vaccinations”)

While narratives can be positive and inspiring, they can also lead to **misinterpretation, unintended consequences, and disproportionate emotions**. They can:

- **Empower and motivate action**
- **Promote learning and insight**
- **Trigger fear or defensiveness** when negative messages activate the brain's threat response

Because narratives spread quickly, it's important to be intentional about the stories we tell—especially in nursing.



Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

Our goal is to explore prevalent narratives within and about nursing – and to be intentional about which narratives we choose to adopt about ourselves and our work.

View the film using the content above to guide design.

- Invite participants to pause to notice their own experience as they are watching the film. Invite them to notice how their bodies feel, the emotions that are present, and the thoughts that arise.

Questions for Reflection

Begin by asking participants a selection of the following questions (or, if working in pairs, have them ask each other). All the questions do not have to be explored. Depending on time, you may choose the questions that you consider to be the most impactful or the section you wish to focus on. Add your own questions.

Allow approximately 30 minutes for this section. The time stamps for each segment are given to allow the facilitator to choose specific segments if desired.

Opening (0:00-1:46): (this should be brief)

- Please share with me, how you decided to become a nurse.
- How long have you been in the field?
- What are some of the roles you have had in nursing?

Challenges (1:53-6:55)

- What was one of your most challenging experiences in nursing?
- How have these challenges impacted your work as a nurse?
- How have these challenges impacted you personally?
- What other challenges do you face as a nurse?

Rewarding (6:55-10:44)

- What was one of your most rewarding experiences in nursing?
- What unique contribution do you bring to your role as a nurse?
- How do nurses contribute to the healthcare landscape as a whole?

Sustaining (10:44-15:51)

- How do you find value in your work?
- What sustains you as a nurse?
- What resources do you draw upon to keep you going as a nurse?

What does nursing mean to you? A word or phrase (15:51-end)

- What is one word you'd use to describe nursing?
- Why did you choose that word?



Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

Additional Questions. Depending on time and goals, these may follow the questions above or be used as a second phase of the session.

For nursing students or aspiring nurses:

- How did the content you heard align with your image of nurses or the nursing profession?
- What did you hear about being a nurse that surprised you?
- What insights will you take away having viewed the film?
- What are your lingering questions?

For newer-to-practice nurses:

- What advice do you wish you had heard when you were starting out as a nurse?
- What would you like more experienced nurses to know about the newer generation of nurses coming into the profession?
- What do you hope to achieve in your career? What resources will you access to sustain you in your nursing career?
- What are your lingering questions?

For more experienced nurses:

- What's something you've learned from your time as a nurse that you'd like to pass on to other nurses?
- What would you like the newer generation of nurses to know about those who have been in the profession longer?
- If you were to leave behind a legacy in the profession, what would that be (or what would that look like)?
- What resources will you access to sustain you in your nursing career?
- What are your lingering questions?

Debrief

Close by bringing the larger group back together and asking them to share what they learned:

Thank everyone for engaging in the process of discovery.

- Mindfully listen with curiosity.
- Ask participants to reflect on some things that stood out in their discussion with their partner or group.
 - What did they learn about themselves, and each other?
 - What, if anything, did they learn about nursing?
 - Ask if anyone encountered resistance to what was being discussed. If so, what was that like? Was it addressed or resolved?
- Ask the group to offer insights into any solutions that they came up with to address some of the challenges or help shift the narrative from negative to positive.



Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

Ask the participants to consider the following:

- How can you use your voice to be a catalyst for change?
 - Where are the opportunities that are within your control?
- How do we amplify our narrative so that we are speaking in one voice?
 - Who else can you enroll in spreading this new narrative?
 - What are the ways that you could spread this new narrative?
 - Newsletters
 - Blogs
 - Social media (use with intention!)
 - Others

Thank the participants and offer them the opportunity to follow up with any questions, concerns or additional thoughts that they may have.

A short evaluation has been created for feedback about the film, insights gained, application to practice, etc. The creators would like your feedback as a facilitator, and would also appreciate feedback from those who participate in any facilitated discussions. Please use the link or QR code below to complete the evaluation, and share with participants as well.

https://nursingjhu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6YhodaTI7QezmeO



This guide and accompanying film were produced with the assistance of a Nurse Support Program II grant administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission and funded through the Health Services Cost Review Commission. The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Health Services Cost Review Commission, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Harnessing the Promise of Nursing ©2025

Short Film Facilitation Guide

April 2025



RESILIENT NURSES INITIATIVE
• M A R Y L A N D •