

GENERATE HEALTHY DISCUSSIONS

THE WOMAN WHO WASN'T THERE

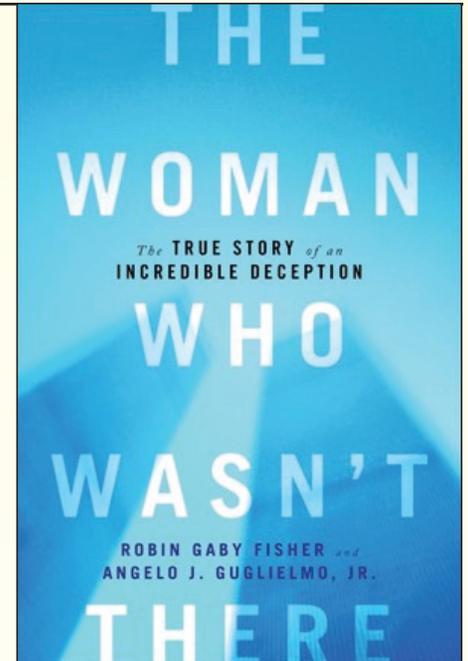
Tania Head, a woman who claimed to have escaped death during the September 11th World Trade Center (WTC) terrorist attack, worked tirelessly to provide support to all WTC survivors. She organized events, spoke at memorials and created a community amongst the survivors. But when the New York Times tries to write a story about Tania's efforts, they learn the unbelievable truth: Tania was never a September 11th survivor and made her whole story up.

PROGRAMMING SUGGESTIONS

This discussion guide is designed to facilitate educational programs after viewing the film *The Woman Who Wasn't There*. Its purpose is to generate discussion based on social issues found within the movie and for program participants to reflect on themes that may be pertinent to them. Therefore, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to questions in this guide.

The discussion facilitator may choose to utilize one of the following activities as a means of developing discussion:

- Discuss how the church helps to support others who experience traumatic events. You can discuss ways to show empathy and care in a supportive manner.
- Host a September 11th fundraising event. Invite attendees to donate funds that can be donated to a September 11th charity, such as the 9/11 Memorial & Museum.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Throughout the movie there are numerous memorials of the 9/11 terrorist attack. How do you observe the 9/11 attack anniversary, if at all? Do you remember where you were when you found out about the attack?
2. Several of the survivors shown in the movie discuss how they feel guilty about surviving the attack while others died. How would you have supported a survivor that felt that way?
3. There's a part in the film where we see a memorial for 9/11 victims that comes from Asian culture – placing lit lanterns to float on water. What are some ways that you honor others, living or dead?
4. There are moments in the film where some of the survivors talk about how they felt like there was something odd or amiss about Tania's story but never said anything because they felt bad about those feelings. Have you ever felt that way? How do you handle it when you are suspicious of someone?
5. Many people said that they liked Tania because she was very enthusiastic and energetic, particularly about the 9/11 survivors group. What are things in your life you are passionate about? How do you show your enthusiasm?
6. Tania said that she didn't like to share her story too much or left out details of her experience because she didn't want to put gruesome images in their head and that doing so was burdensome. How do you choose what information to share with others when relaying a difficult experience?
7. Linda shares that Tania taught her how to live her life with courage and not let her survivor experience define her as a person. Have you ever had someone do that in your life? How did they help you feel that way?
8. Several survivors said they were worried about Tania's mental state and feared she might try to harm herself. If you were one of those survivors, how would you have dealt with those feelings? How might you approach Tania about your concerns? Who else would you involve, if anyone?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONTINUED):

9. Gerry states that Tania tells him that she feels he has not been representing the survivors group aggressively enough to others. If you were Gerry, how would you have responded to Tania?
10. One survivor says that he wanted to share his suspicions but he was worried that he would lose his social support network. How would you have dealt with those feelings if you were him?
11. Eventually the survivors begin to learn that Tania lied about being a 9/11 survivor. If you were a member of the survivors group, how would you have reacted to the news?
12. There are numerous news clips that detail Tania's lying about being a 9/11 survivor. How do you think the media shape or portrays stories such as these?
13. Why do you think Tania lied?
14. If you were one of the survivors, would you forgive Tania? Why or why not?
15. Even though she did a lot of good work for the Survivors' Network, do you feel as though what Tania did was wrong?
16. How were Tania's actions morally wrong? Were her actions legally wrong? Did Tania commit a sin?
17. How did her actions hurt other people?
18. Should Tania be punished for her actions? How would you punish Tania?



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