



## Background

Sonia and her husband John grew up in Poland, experienced the horrors of the Holocaust during World War II and came to the U.S. to raise their children far away from their country of birth, which had become a vast cemetery of beloved families and of thousands of years of Jewish life. For decades, Sonia kept those memories private, safely locked up in her head and in her heart - UNTIL Holocaust deniers challenged the existence of the Concentration Camps. Then she knew she had to use her voice to avoid recurrence of the evil she had survived from the age of 14 to 19 in multiple concentration camps and death camps. How could she honor all those who were murdered and had no one to speak for them? She began speaking

to students in middle schools, community organizations and ultimately to men and women who are incarcerated. In prisons, she discovered people who resonated with her life experiences in intimate, intense ways. As Sonia said to them: "It means so much to me to connect with you. You get it!"



# Post-Screening Discussion Points

Before seeing the documentary, appoint someone to facilitate the discussion. The following questions are meant to evoke your responses to help the group understanding how BIG SONIA can impact your lives. We suggest that you not have more than 10-15 in a group. Request someone in each group to take notes.

1. Why do you think the title of the movie is BIG SONIA?
2. How does trauma impact individuals? How does it impact their families? How does it impact future generations? How would your friends and relatives benefit from seeing this film?
3. Based on your experience and your family's history, how do you relate to Sonia's experience?
4. What messages does Sonia give in the film? Which message will you remember most? How will Sonia's message affect you?
5. How have your ideas and attitudes been affected by seeing this movie?
6. What is one thing you can do to honor the impact of the movie's message in your life and honor the *Sonia Effect*?
7. What impact might this film have on our society and/or the world?

In the movie, Sonia spoke with a group of men in a Kansas prison who were part of *Reaching Out From Within*, a nonprofit organization that sponsors self-help groups for incarcerated men and women. If you would like a ROFW facilitator to attend your screening please contact:

## **Reaching Out From Within**

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Please share feedback for research and evaluation with our production team:

## **Inflatable Film**

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We hope you will continue to have conversations on these issues, and that BIG SONIA has inspired thoughtful discussion – THIS is how you will help us spread the #SoniaEffect in a meaningful way.

This discussion guide is made possible by generous support and collaboration from:

