Overview:

**Trigger warning:** This film is highly emotional and discusses an actual case of suicide, specifically self-immolation as sociopolitical protest. *Man on Fire* tells the story of a white minister, Charles Moore, who set himself on fire in 2014 to protest the racism in his small town of Grand Saline, TX.

**Objectives:**

As a result of using this media resource, participants will be able to:

1. Explore what small town racism looks like in contemporary America.
2. Question the efficacy of Charles Moore’s death by protest in changing the situation.

**Time:**
1 hour

**Group Size:**
Entire group

**Materials:**
Projector and access to the film (in [Links](#)).

*Note:* The film can be purchased through New Day Films or it can be streamed free of charge through Kanopy if you have a public library card or a university login that grants you access.

**Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:**

- Minimization
- Acceptance

**AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:**

**Cultural Self-Awareness:**

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

**Openness:**

- To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
- To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

**Empathy**

- To interpret intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview.
- To demonstrate ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.
**Other Skills:**

Diversity & Inclusion

**Instructions:**

1. Screen the film for participants.

   *Note: Before beginning the film, facilitators should inform participants about its sensitive content. You might also want to activate background knowledge for learners by crowd-sourcing definitions and examples for self-immolation and asking about what social justice protests they are familiar with or have taken part in.*

2. After viewing the film, the facilitator may choose to do a Thiagi Debrief (see link below), but the questions should be carefully adapted to the context of the film. Other potential discussion questions include the following:

   - In what ways does the film resonate (or not) with your own lived experience?
   - What most surprised or shocked you as you were watching the film?
   - Which people in the film did you identify/empathize with?
   - Was there anyone who you could not empathize with? Why?
   - What insights are you left with about the capacities and limitations of a single person to affect social change?
   - Do you have any critiques to offer about how the narratives were presented by filmmakers?
   - Are there any social justice causes that you care deeply enough about to work actively to support (not via self-immolation, mind you)? How have you or do you intend to get involved, and what are the possibilities and constraints on the impact of your personal actions?

**Related Tools:**

*Tools to use in conjunction with this activity:*

- [Thiagi Debrief](#)