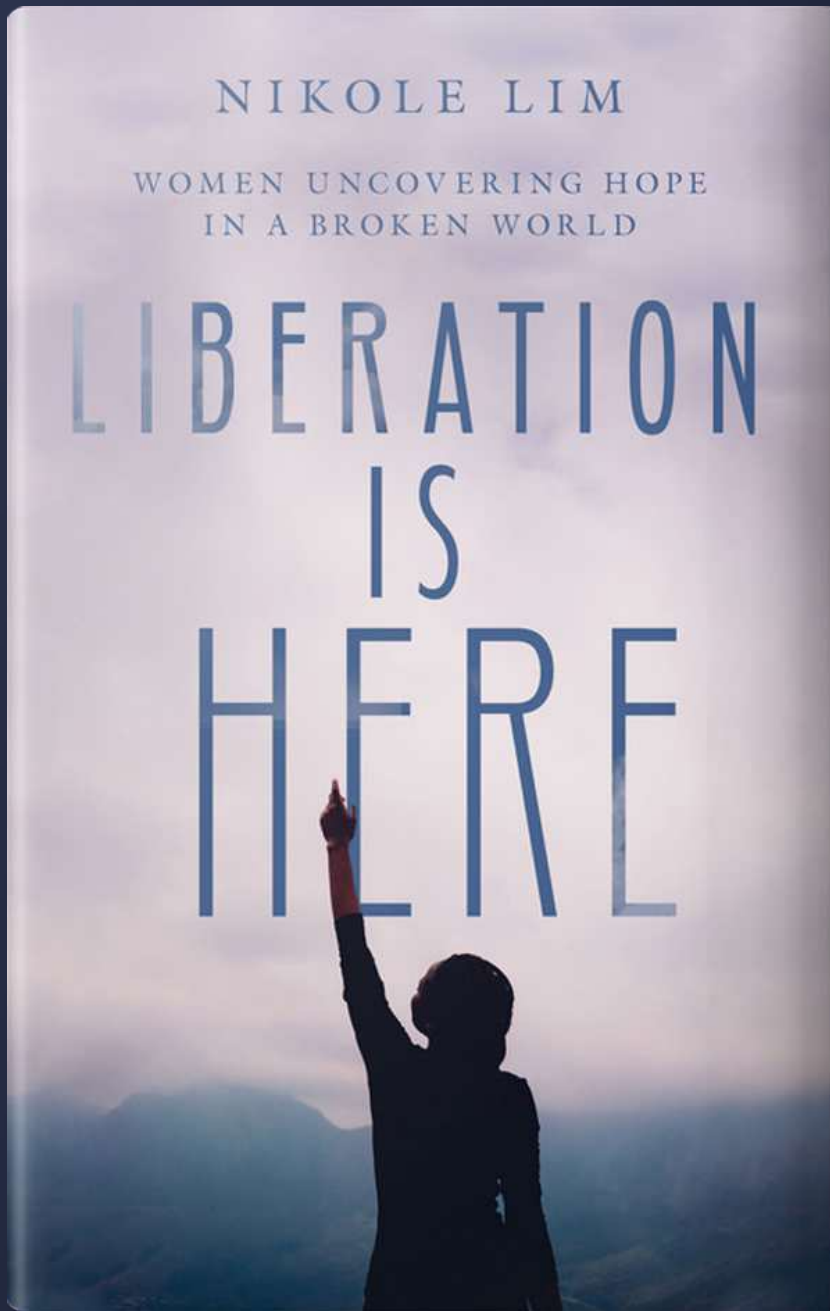


NIKOLE LIM

WOMEN UNCOVERING HOPE  
IN A BROKEN WORLD

# LIBERATION IS HERE



DISCUSSION GUIDE



## ABOUT

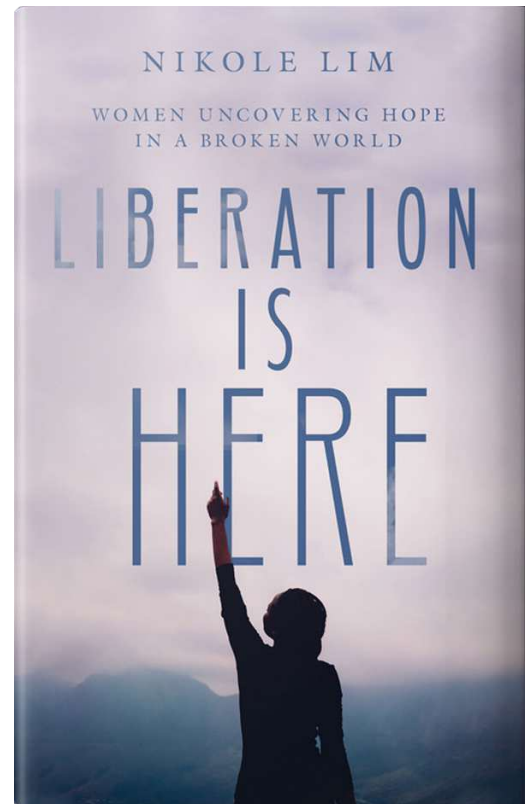
Hello! Thank you for taking a look at this discussion guide for my book, Liberation is Here. My book captures my journey of learning to live, love, and lead in a violent world. Through the stories in this book, I hope that you experience a sense of transformation in the same ways that I have. I hope that my failures, learnings and experiences of advocating with survivors of sexual violence challenge you in a new way. I hope these stories also give you hope—seeing how your liberation is interconnected with the liberation of the oppressed among us.

I prepared this discussion guide for you to start conversations in a group setting or to use for your own personal reflection. Choose the questions that resonate with you most and lead with your own story with authenticity, honesty, and vulnerability.

May liberation be ours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikole Lim', with a stylized, flowing script.

Nikole Lim



Follow Nikole on:

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/nikole\\_lim](https://www.instagram.com/nikole_lim)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nikolelim](https://www.facebook.com/nikolelim)

Buy the book at:

[www.buy.liberationishere.com](http://www.buy.liberationishere.com)

## 1. SHE REMINDS ME OF YOU

1. How has your history, heritage, and ancestral journey brought you to the place you are today?
2. Are there any unspoken or spoken expectations in your family or culture that has inhibited you from expression?
3. Was there a moment where you saw an image of yourself in someone else? What did that convict you or or propel you to do?
4. From the poem, what is your interpretation of the shadow of the former self?

## 2. A COMMON THREAD

1. What about Nekesa's story captured your attention?
2. Have you been faced with a choice to choose familial expectation or an unknown dream? What happened as a result?
3. What are the things that often hold us back from extending compassion and empathy to someone else?
4. From the poem, what might happen as a result of becoming closer through differences? What hinders us from closeness?

## 3. CAUGHT UNAWARE

1. What about Mara's story captured your attention?
2. What were the nuances of Mara's demeanor that may have told a different story?
3. Nikole speaks about how her work got in the way of engaging in the suffering of Mara's experience. In what ways can work, even as we are doing good in our work, become a distraction?
4. From the poem, what is your interpretation of the mirror?

#### 4. WHERE ARE YOU?

1. How have you seen beauty arise out of seemingly broken situations?
2. What about Mubanga's story captured your attention?
3. Are there aspects of your culture or family system that you just don't talk about? What are the benefits and challenges of silencing those stories?
4. Have you questioned God's presence or sovereignty as a result of trauma or pain? What happened as a result?
5. From the poem, prayer is often meant to be a peaceful experience, but for Nikole in that moment, it became a war field. How have you felt different experiences of prayer?

#### 5. NOT A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

1. What are some words or phrases that are harmful to the world we are trying to create? How can we change our language to build hope, belief, and love in people?
2. What are ways that we can we empower, uplift, and honor the voices of others?
3. From the poem, what is the light that you hold?

#### 6. EDUCATION IS NOT THE KEY

1. Was there a moment in your life where someone believed in you enough to fund your desire, idea, or dream? What happened as a result?
2. Was there a moment in your life where you realized that telling your story was the first step to healing?
3. From the poem, share a story of a scar, whether physical or emotional, that has since healed.

## 7. PLAYING THE ROLE

1. In finally learning about Mara's story, was there something that surprised, challenged, or grieved you? What resonated most?
2. From the poem, are there experiences that need forgiveness from yourself? How will you extend compassion to yourself today?

## 8. CINEMATIC IMAGINATION

1. If we begin to open our eyes to the suffering of the world, by listening and engaging in stories that are not our own, what might we experience?
2. From the poem: Has your hope been tested? What happened as a result?

## 9. LUSAKA HEAT

1. Was there a moment where you rushed into fix, problem-solve, or control before being present to the suffering at hand? What might happen if we sit longer in the pain?
2. From the poem: Which way of trying resonates with you most?

## 10. LOW COST OR HIGH COST

1. Have you experienced a moment where you lost complete control? What did that experience reveal?
2. What is your go-to meal that you eat to feel a sense of familiarity?
3. From the poem: How might love open us up to transformation?

## 11. HEALED IN KILLING FIELDS

1. Have you felt God's silence before? What was that moment of suffering like?
2. When old ways are insufficient, how have you experienced the grief or practice of prayer in new ways?
3. From the poem: Where have you felt God's presence in difficult moments?

## 12. BODY WORK

1. There is often a disconnect between mind, body, and spirit that being in the body feels foreign. How have you maybe experienced this in your own life?
2. How do you practice presence in your own body? How might this practice inform your way of life—especially in moments of grief and despair?
3. From the poem: How can you move beyond limitations of oppression?

## 13. WE ARE GRADUATING

1. What practices have kept you afloat during seasons of anger, stress, or anxiety?
2. What unexpected experiences brought you joy, hope, and love? What did it remind you of?
3. From the poem: How do you hope to parent your children, future children, or younger people you support?

## 14. TUKO PAMOJA

1. Have you tied your success to the outcomes of others?
2. "Even at the risk of betrayal, love anyway." What does this statement mean to you?
3. From the poem: What are the ways in which you hope to do better as a leader, parent, or friend?

## 15. INVISIBLE WOUNDS

1. How have you learned to express anger?
2. What is anger's purpose? How might its expression be meaningful?
3. From the poem: What resonated with you?

## 16. CALL ME BY MY NAME

1. Have you experienced how labels oppressed or limited you? How might we learn to see others outside of the labels we place on them?
2. Has there been a moment for you, where the sharing of your story allowed someone else to find hope? What happened as a result?
3. From the poem: What do your shadows reveal in the light?

## 17. ON RETREAT

1. What moment was awe-inspiring for you? How would it feel to be in a space where both grief and joy are held in the same place?
2. Have you experienced a moment where you held two opposing emotions? How did that feel?
3. From the poem: Survey the mountains climbed in your own life—how do you feel to be in this place you are in today?

## 18. BEAUTY IN BROKENNESS

1. How do hope your vocation and career can bring a better future to the next generation after you?
2. "Scarves are evident that wounds do heal." How have you seen this to be true in your life?
3. From the poem: Have you experienced these juxtapositions before? If so, which one resonates?

## 19. HERE AM I

1. From the concluding story, what moment surprised you? Challenged you? Moved you?
2. What would it look like if we were to view those who are marginalized as liberators? How would that change the way our society operates?
3. From the poem: If our liberation was truly tied to each other's, how would that change the way we lead, love, and live in our world?



## SUMMARY QUESTIONS

1. Nikole discusses her ancestral lineage and the nuances of her family system that both propelled her and hindered her. In what ways have your family and cultural systems propelled or hindered you in life?
2. We meet Nekesa, an aspiring social worker, Mara, an aspiring journalist, and Mubanga, an aspiring doctor, each woman translating her own experiences into a unique drive to change the world in which she lives. Which woman's story resonated with you most, and why?
3. In learning about Nekesa, Mara, and Mubanga's cultural upbringing, societal , and personal transformation, was there a moment that challenged or informed your perspective?
4. Did you experience something new about culture, family upbringing, or belief systems?
5. How have the stories in Liberation is Here and the work of Freely in Hope formed or changed your thinking regarding how to engage cross-cultural non-profit work?
6. How can engaging in suffering expand our capacity to love?
7. How do you hope to take what you've experienced and advocate with survivors of sexual violence?

## WAYS TO BE AN ADVOCATE

1. Learn ways to respond to survivors of sexual violence: <https://www.freelyinhope.org/need-help/>
2. Save the number to the National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800.656.HOPE
3. Find your local help center and counseling center that supports survivors of sexual violence. Donate to this organization or have these contacts in mind to offer for survivors. Offer to pay for their therapy sessions when they're ready.